



The Workers' Weekly

#2161 8 September 2025

# Guardian \$5

COMMUNIST PARTY OF AUSTRALIA

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ISSN 1325-295X

# Isolate Israel

M Santos & Marcus Browning

**The Australian government in its complicity in Israel's genocide and ethnic cleansing against the Palestinians in the Gaza Strip now has as an ally an organisation of fascist thugs. Last weekend white supremacists running a nationalist March-for-Australia event attacked pro-Palestinian protesters at actions in various locations around Australia. The Albanese government now stands with these vicious racists as defenders of Israel's crimes.**

Australia must cut all trade and diplomatic ties with Israel. To say you will recognise a Palestinian state, as important as that is, is not enough. It alone without concrete measures is tantamount to appeasing the genocide and ethnic cleansing.

Contact your MPs, join the pro-Palestinian actions, write letters to the editor, use social media and talkback radio to demand the Australian government take concrete actions.

In an important step toward the economic isolation of Israel due to its genocide in Gaza, Norway's Government Pension Fund Global has decided to divest from yet more Israeli companies.

Norway's sovereign wealth fund is the world's largest, with total investments in Israel once estimated at US\$1.9 billion. The decision to divest was taken gradually but is consistent with the Norwegian government's growing solidarity with Palestine and rising criticism of Israel.

Taking a leading role along with Spain, Ireland, and Slovenia, Norway has been a vocal European critic of the Israeli genocide and man-made famine in Gaza, actively contributing to the International Court of Justice's investigation into the genocide, and formally recognising the state of Palestine in May 2024.

This diplomatic and legal stance, coupled with its financial divestment, represents a coherent and escalating effort to hold Israel accountable for the ongoing extermination of Palestinians.

## FASCISM

In a number of countries of Europe extreme-right political parties are making striking electoral gains. In Hungary, the



far-right has taken power. A fascist international is beginning to form.

At the centre of imperialism, and at the purulent heart of the web of fascism, is the US. This is displayed particularly clearly in the regime of Donald Trump. In the heartland of capitalism in its imperialist stage, we see before us the slow but steady march towards fascism. It has not yet consolidated itself into a fully-fledged system, but it is moving by increments.

There is only one way to defeat fascism: All the forces and people's movements and political parties from the centre to the left, including democratic socialists, social democrats, other left entities, and communists themselves, must put aside their differences and organise themselves into a mass united front to resist, confront and oppose every manifestation of fascism.

This will not be an easy task. Class collaboration and opportunism is rife among the non-communist centre and left, while communist parties throughout the capitalist-imperialist world are still in the slow

process of rebuilding their strength and influence following a period of counter-revolution. Still, it is a task which must be done. Fascism must be destroyed.

## FAMINE

The descent into a massive famine in Gaza has begun as Israel intensifies its brutal offensive on Gaza City. Hundreds of people, more than one third of them children, have already died of forced starvation or malnutrition, and many more from preventable diseases that are spreading rapidly due to lack of clean water and sanitation.

To say the situation is catastrophic is an understatement. The widespread famine, genocide and ethnic cleansing of occupied Palestine are shaping up to be the crime of the century.

Thirty per cent of children suffer extreme malnutrition. Hundreds of thousands, if they survive, will suffer developmental issues and lifelong mental trauma.

Since March Israel has issued 58 forcible

evacuation threats covering 80 per cent of Gaza.

At the same time as these ongoing escalations, humanitarian agencies still can't get to populations in dire need. Massive numbers of people are being displaced. 1.95 million people (93 per cent of the population) are classified as in crisis or worse by the International Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC).

## MASS ACTIONS

The magnitude of pro-Palestine rallies and sentiments continues to grow, calling on the Albanese government to go beyond its commitment to recognise Palestinian statehood and take meaningful action. In particular, people are demanding that Australia end direct and indirect exports of military equipment and parts to Israel, expel Israel's diplomatic staff from this country, and recall Australian representatives from Israel.

Continued on page 2

**... to say you will recognise a Palestinian state without concrete measures is tantamount to appeasing the genocide**

9



The price of genocide: US props up Israel

12



Venezuela: unity, music, resistance

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# Guardian

Issue 2161

8 September 2025

## The villain moment

In action movies, towards the end, there's often a moment of triumph. The villain's plans are revealed. All the world knows about their evil scheme. When that happens, it's all over. That's it for the villain. In real life, sadly, the villain often just shrugs it off. They spin the revelation, or they just wait for people to think about something else.

In the case of Qantas, they didn't even have to wait.

Qantas has been fined \$90 million by the High Court, not for sacking 1800 staff during Covid, but for doing it illegally. Even better, the court has directed that a large chunk of that money go to the Transport Workers' Union, which stuck by workers who were sacked to make way for contractors. The TWU will put the money to good use, fighting for hard-pressed transport workers as they should.

It looks like a 'villain's downfall' moment, and if this were a film we would be hearing uplifting happy music. Since life isn't a movie, here's what happened. Qantas didn't care. Qantas shareholders obviously didn't care. The company remains profitable and its shares are riding high. They've been nicknamed 'teflon shares' by financial commentators. The shares, company and executives have sailed through this \$90 million fine. They also sailed through an earlier scandal of Qantas systematically selling tickets for flights they knew had been cancelled. When that happened, the high-profile CEO Alan Joyce left with an obscenely large payout, while his deputy took over and tried to pretend that was some kind of fresh start. She was in office during the whole scandal as well as during the illegal sackings that have just cost the company \$90 million.

What does this tell us? Firstly, privatisation does not produce the promised results. Privatisation is supposed to save the government and the public a lot of money while also producing efficiency in the face of competition. Qantas has very little competition domestically and isn't about to get any soon. Like a lot of successful businesses, it's skilled at avoiding competition. Privatisation wasn't meant to produce an airline that sells tickets to non-existent flights, or illegal sackings, but that's what it produced this time.

The other lesson in Qantas' charmed existence is this: capitalism doesn't care about people. The 'villain revealed' moment came and went. Villains have victims, as Qantas certainly did, but the market didn't care about the workers or customers that Qantas victimised.

Under the system we have now, all companies have to do is worry about profits. That's a statutory requirement of being on a board. Capitalists only think about the needs of workers if they're forced to. Even then, what they're worrying about is the cost.

You might think that a \$90 million fine would get the market's attention, but it hasn't. Qantas has already 'priced it in' as part of the cost of doing business. As long as the airline looks profitable investors don't care.

So if a record-breaking fine won't make our national airline behave ethically, what will? What Qantas needs is what we all need. We need socialism, a system that works for people, that is run by the people who make the wealth. That way the welfare of workers is the starting point for any organisation. As it is, the suffering Qantas has caused and what it has cost them is just the cost of doing business.

# Isolate Israel

Continued from page 1

Globally millions of people are taking to the streets calling for an end to the genocide and action by governments. Some governments have cut off trade ties with Israel.

Australian university students have conducted a nationwide referendum on Gaza, marking the largest coordinated student vote since the anti-apartheid campaigns against South African apartheid. The referendum, held across campuses, called for censuring the government's role in the Gaza genocide and urged universities to sever ties with Israeli weapons companies.

## IMPERIALIST PLANS

At the same time as the genocide and ethnic cleansing was being intensified, meetings were taking place to plan the development of Palestine once it is cleared of Palestinians.

Reports have emerged that former British MP Tony Blair has been working with Israeli business people using financial models developed by the US firm Boston Consulting Group (BCG). The plans include the creation of a "Trump Riviera" and a manufacturing zone named after Elon Musk.

Last month Blair took part in a White House meeting to discuss the so-called 'postwar future' of Gaza. That same day, Secretary of State Marco Rubio sat across from Israeli Foreign Minister Gideon Sa'ar, pledging the US's "unwavering commitment" to Israel's security.

Absent from these and other discussions on the future of Gaza is any Palestinian involvement or inclusion in the plans for their land.

## WIDER AGENDA

The Western bloc of nations, under submission to US domination, have China and Russia in their

sights, along with Iran, DPRK, Yemen, Syria, Venezuela, Cuba, and Belarus.

NATO is at the heart of the US-led military imperialist forces alongside Israel, Australia, Japan, Indonesia, the Philippines, and South Korea. The aim is to break up China and Russia into smaller states with compliant regimes serving the business interests of Western corporations, in particular those of the US and UK.

China, with its socialist planning, is now the largest and most rapidly developing economy in the world, which the US sees as a threat to its economy interests.

Unlike China, with one foreign base, the US has 902 known US military bases and the UK 145 known military bases. The United States spends 21 times more on its military per person than China does on its military.

For further reading on US imperialism's aims, check out 'Hyper-Imperialism: A Dangerous Decadent New Stage,' Tricontinental Institute for Social Research. ✳

## In last 22 months Israel has:

- Murdered tens of thousands of children and babies.
- Murdered more than 270 journalists and media workers in Gaza.
- Murdered more than 600 aid workers.
- Murdered more than 1,580 health workers.
- Destroyed almost all health facilities.

# Congress Appeal

**From 27 February to 1 March 2026, elected delegates representing Communist Party organisations from all over Australia will gather in Melbourne for the 15th National Congress of the Party. There will be an opening on the Friday night, 27 February, to which all Guardian readers, their families and friends are invited. (Details will be provided in a future issue of the Guardian.)**

Over three days, delegates will discuss the work of the Party, make any amendments to and adopt a Political Resolution. In the lead-up to the Congress, Party members are discussing and submitting

amendments to the draft Political Resolution. In January 2026 the Central Committee will consider these amendments and finalise the draft to be put to Congress.

Congress will elect a new Central Committee to lead the work of the Party until the next National Congress. As the highest body of the Party, it can also amend the Party's Program and Constitution and adopt other resolutions as its delegates may determine.

The CPA has launched a Special Appeal to help defray the costs associated with holding a National Congress. These are considerable with delegates coming from as far away as Perth, the printing of documents, etc.

We are appealing to Party members, organisations, and all friends and supporters of the Party, including *Guardian* readers, to help us reach our \$10,000 target as soon as possible.

To contribute, please fill in the form below or write your details on a separate piece of paper to send with your contribution. Payment by credit card can also be phoned in on 02 9699 8844 or use the direct credit details.

All contributions will be acknowledged in the *Guardian*, with the names of contributors unless otherwise requested. We look forward to your support for this important occasion. ✳

## Direct credit details

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Include "Congress Appeal" with transaction. If you want to be acknowledged in the *Guardian* (give name as it should appear).



## 15th CPA Congress \$10,000 Financial Appeal

I, (Name) .....

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I enclose a Cheque/Money Order/Cash for that amount (made out to "CPA").

For Credit Card payments fill out the information below:

Credit Card minimum \$20 ☐ Visa ☐ Mastercard

Name on the card .....

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I agree/disagree to having my name published in the *Guardian* in acknowledgement of my contribution.

Send to 74 Buckingham St, Surry Hills, 2010 or phone through on 02 9699 8844.

**www.cpa.org.au**





# Greeting 80th anniversary National Day of Vietnam

The Communist Party of Australia welcomes the opportunity to celebrate the 80th National Day of Vietnam with you. We send our warmest fraternal greetings to the Communist Party of Vietnam on this heroic achievement of the Vietnamese State and People.

The story of Vietnam's struggle for independence is incredible; how one country could fight off French imperialists, then Imperial Japan, and yet again US imperialism. It is heroism of the highest order. But we know it was done through hard work and immense sacrifice of the Vietnamese people, under the political and organisational leadership of the Party and through the communist morality of comrade Ho Chi Minh, who read the Declaration of Independence on this day in 1945.

We pay respect to all those who died in the anti-imperialist struggle for the cause of Vietnamese independence.

Today the Vietnamese revolution continues in different conditions. From the leadership of Le Duan to Nguyen Van Linh, Nguyen Phu Trong, and now To Lam, Vietnam has developed a strong base level of its productive forces, suitable production relations and a scientific socialist and Marxist-Leninist orientation that is bearing extraordinary fruit.

Vietnam has chosen a socialist path of development, a path towards a socialist society, while continuing to defend the motherland and national sovereignty.

The Communist Party of Australia wishes the people of Vietnam and its leadership the best celebration for independence, sovereignty and socialism.

Long live sovereign Vietnam!

Long live proletarian internationalism!

**Communist Party of Australia, CPA  
International Department**

2 September, 2025

The Communist Party of Australia International Department was contacted with an invitation to attend the 80th Anniversary National Day of Vietnam, which falls on 2 September, at the Hyatt in Canberra. This is the day Ho Chi Minh read out the Declaration of Independence in 1945.

I represented our Party at the event on behalf of Party President Vinnie Molina and General Secretary Andrew Irving. I handed the Ambassador our letter and greetings from our Party President and General Secretary. Ambassador Pham Hung Tam insisted that we have a picture shaking hands which I think is telling about the warmth of our Party-to-Party relationship.

He extended comradely greetings to the Party leadership and offered well wishes for our success.

The Ambassador gave a speech that was well-received outlining Vietnam's path from hard-won independence to Vietnam's present status as one of the world's most robust socialist economic systems. Labor Senator Don Farrell's in return raised a few eyebrows when he finished with the line "one day we will achieve independence too."

Vietnam famously defeated French, Japanese and US imperialism: this was a triple victory of giant proportions that changed the history and future of World Communism.

Long live the CPV and long live the CPA!

**A Carruthers for CPA  
International Department**



## Workers locked out while execs line their pockets

**Grain terminal workers at CBH's Kwinana terminal have been locked out of their workplace by their employer in response to a cost-of-living wage claim.**

Maritime Union of Australia (MUA) and Electrical Trade Union members from the CBH grain terminal were told at 8:30pm on a Sunday night to not attend their shift at 5:30am Monday morning.

The lockout of the entire workforce of 130 workers at the grain terminal came in response to 24 maintenance workers implementing rolling stoppages over five days after being informed that they would be paid only 9% of their salary for a full day's work where they only refused to do isolations. Isolations represent less than 10% of their work in any normal workday.

MUA members have been bargaining in good faith with the grain exporting giant since March this year, asking for a modest raise in wages of six per cent per year.

In response CBH have offered a sub-inflation 2.5 per cent increase despite a bumper grain season.

While the 2025 financial figures are yet to be released, CBH recorded a \$73.8 million surplus last financial year.

Meanwhile the CBH chairman Simon Stead pocketed \$260,000 last financial year representing a 7.3 per cent annual increase from 2023 and the CBH chief executive Ben Macnamara's take home went from \$811,000 to \$876,000 in the same period, representing an 8 per cent increase.

MUA WA Branch Secretary Will Tracey said it was unconscionable to strip away people's income with less than 10 hours' notice during a cost-of-living crisis.

"This is an extremely aggressive act of provocation by CBH especially coming on the back of stripping 91% of maintenance workers' income when they perform bans representing less than 10% of the work they do on any normal day."

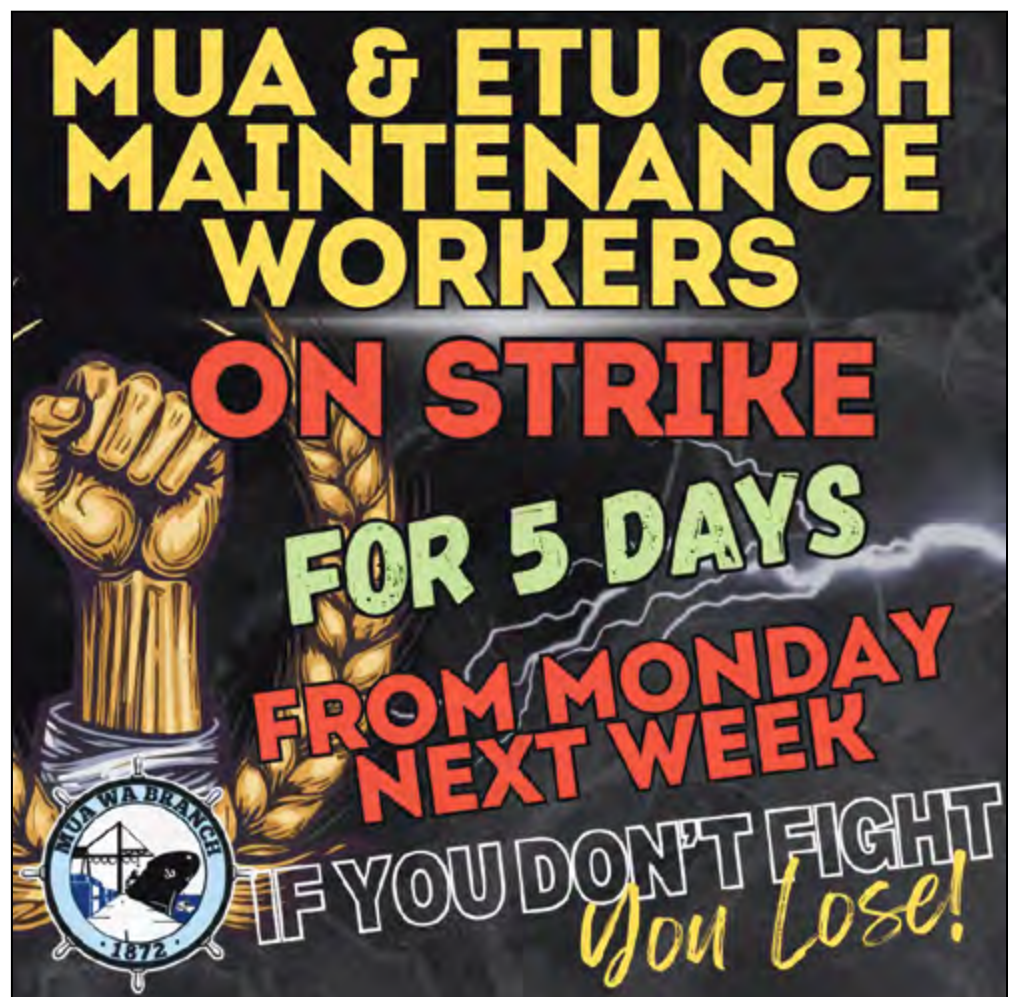
"Locking out the entire workforce of 130 workers off the back of 24 maintenance workers refusing to work when their pay has been cut by over 90% represents the worst of corporate bastardry."

"Corporate fat cats like the CBH CEO playing with people's livelihoods like they're pawns on a chess board is quite frankly disgusting behaviour," Tracey said.

"The workers at CBH have gone above and beyond to support the farming communities in getting their grain out to our export partners and this is how they're treated in response to a modest wage increase request and a refusal to work basically for free."

"It's clear that the industrial relations landscape favours the employers in this instance and yes we know it's a strategy that's CBH's legal right, but is it moral, is it ethical, is it fair? Locking an entire workforce of 130 out of their workplace because 24 maintenance workers refuse to work for almost nothing is offensive and wrong!"

Maritime Union of Australia



Graphic: MUA WA FaceBook



# Albanese keeps older Australians waiting



Photo: Naty Rive – flickr.com (CC BY 2.0)

**Anglicare Australia has told a Senate Inquiry that older Australians cannot afford to keep waiting for the care they need.**

Appearing before the Senate Standing Committee on Community Affairs Inquiry into Aged Care Service Delivery, Anglicare Australia's Executive Director Kasy Chambers said that the home care wait list has now blown out to over 87,000 people. Some are waiting as long as 15 months for support.

"These long waits mean that tens of thousands of older Australians are going without vital care," Chambers said.

"We hear from people who are pushed into residential care before they're ready, or end up in hospital

as their health deteriorates while they wait. That is cruel and unnecessary. Time is the one thing older Australians don't have."

Anglicare Australia has welcomed the government's new Support at Home program, due to start in November. But Chambers warned that the new system is being set up to fail if the existing backlog isn't cleared first.

"Our message is simple. If the new system starts with a massive waiting list already on the books, it will be weighed down from day one," Chambers said.

"We are calling on the government to release more Home Care Packages to bring down the wait list before Support at Home begins.

"We are also calling for a clear schedule for the more than 80,000 packages promised in the first year of the new program. Our Network is ready to deliver, but we need to know how many packages are needed and where. A roadmap would ensure older people and their families have certainty.

"This is a critical investment that will help older Australians get the care they need, when they need it, and where they need it. Clearing the wait list before the new system begins is the best way to set it up for success," Chambers said.

Update: the government has been forced to release more packages. 🌟

## Prac payments for international students

W Varga

**Why do most international students come to Australia? Unlike many young Australians who may choose to study overseas for the sake of adventure, or to find themselves, international students who come to Australia rarely do so merely for the sake of it. In many cases they are fleeing poverty, corruption, unstable political situations, and so on.**

When students have to do a 'prac' in order to complete their course in areas like nursing or teaching, they can face hardship, because they often have to give up part time work they depend on. The government recently started a Prac Payment scheme (see *Guardian* #2153) to address the problem but it does not include international students (and some professions).

I interviewed, M Hernandez.

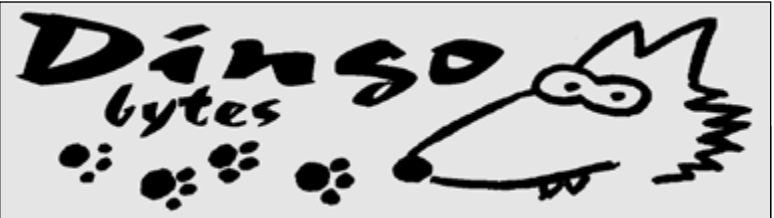
As an international student, M pays roughly triple the tuition a domestic student would pay. What's more, unlike many domestic students who can remain at home with their parents, M has to pay for all food and accommodation herself. To afford all this, she has to work four to five days a week for six to eight hours a day in addition to studying full time. Her visa prohibits her from studying part time. As part of M's law degree, M has to complete a pro-bono (no payment)

legal placement. This placement will significantly hinder her ability to support herself. For example, she wanted to take a babysitting job but couldn't because of her placement. If there is anyone who needs the Commonwealth Prac Payment, it is individuals like M.

Some will say that situations like M's are unfortunate, they are not our problem to deal with. They are not the hard-working Australian taxpayer's burden to bear. This is simply not true.

Australia exploits international students in several ways. They are charged an absolute fortune, to make up for governments, both Labor and Liberal, starving universities over several decades. When international students work, their visas, desperation and poor knowledge of working conditions in this country mean that they are easily exploited. Australia often contributes to conditions in their home countries that make students poor and in need of overseas education.

Australia could afford to include international students in the Prac payments scheme. Even under the exploitative logic this country uses towards overseas students now, it would make sense, making Australia a more desirable choice for students from other countries. The exclusion of international students from the Commonwealth Prac Payment scheme is both short-sighted and mean, characteristic of the Albanese government. 🌟



The NSW Public Service Association has congratulated all Art Gallery staff who walked out during lunch on 27 August in protest of announced \$7.5 million funding cuts and 51 job cuts. "Taking action during such uncertain times takes courage. Yet you showed that courage in abundance. When we stand together, we are strong," said the PSA.

The union also extended thanks to the many members from across the cultural sector who came out in support. "Your solidarity matters. We saw members from the State Library, Australian Museum, Museums of History, the Powerhouse, Create NSW, and the Botanic Gardens join in. This is what union strength looks like. United across institutions."

The action sent a clear message to the government: these cuts are not only unacceptable to the workers affected, but also to the public who deeply value our cultural institutions. The union warns that if the Minns government does not listen further union action will follow.

Staying in NSW, 300 jobs are to go at WaterNSW, the latest in 1,515 job cuts across essential services that have been revealed recently.

The 300 staff, critical to flood plain mitigation, dam safety, and water quality testing were told they would be joining the unemployment queues.

This comes on top of an announcement last week by the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development that 165 jobs would go even though they are vital for natural disaster response and in controlling pests like fire ants and varroa mite.

In recent weeks Transport for NSW also announced 950 jobs would go and TAFE NSW announced it would be cutting 100 jobs from regional centres including Dubbo and Orange.

Public Service Association General Secretary Stewart Little said regional communities will be without essential frontline workers if the cuts aren't reversed.

"These are researchers who provided safe drinking water to communities in Lismore and northern NSW during recent flood events," said Little.

"These are people who work in flood mitigation to try and protect communities from one in 100 flood events like we saw hit Eugowra in 2022.

"You can't cut jobs like this and expect it not to impact flood response or water quality."

Australian Services Union NSW & ACT Secretary Angus McFarland said the decision was devastating.

"This decision to cut hundreds of essential water jobs is a devastating blow to the workers and the communities they serve each and every day. It's outrageous that WaterNSW is slashing hundreds of jobs at a time when their expertise and labour has never been more essential."

"With climate impacts escalating, it's hard to see how a state-owned corporation can justify cutting the very jobs that protect our water and communities.

"What plan does the state government have in place for the next inevitable flood? How can the state government expect to respond to the climate crisis challenges if critical capacity is stripped away?

"Gutting the workforce now will only cost the state more in the long run. Plus just last week, IPART gave WaterNSW permission to increase their prices by 10 per cent per year for the next three years."

**PARASITE OF THE WEEK:** is DroneShield, a company which sells technology that blocks drones from communicating with their controllers. The devices can be mounted on vehicles and buildings but the most popular method is the DroneGun. DroneShield's shares have risen almost 200 per cent this year, benefiting from record global military spending, especially Ukraine and the Middle East. Said DroneShield chief executive Oleg Vornik, "Various countries are looking at the future of warfare, and drones are a force multiplier." Happy Days!



# Adelaide students vote against genocide

Adelaide CPA Comrade

**Student encampments might be a thing of the past, but students nationwide are still speaking up against genocide.**

On Wednesday 27 August, Students from the University of Adelaide, University of South Australia, and Flinders University gathered in the University of Adelaide's North Terrace campus to protest Australian government and university complicity in Israel's genocide in Palestine. The event was part of a nationwide student referendum organised by the National Union for Students and Students for Palestine.

Australia is not just a bystander in Israel's genocide, it could not happen without the ongoing material support of the Australian government. The current Labor government is closely tied to weapons manufacturers and provides a crucial component of the F-35 fighter jets that Israel kills innocent Gazan civilians with. The component in question is the uplock actuator system, which is used for quick release of the bombs, and is only manufactured in Australia. Contrary to what Penny Wong says, these components are extremely lethal. These components are part of the supply chain for the American and Israeli military industrial complex. This includes multinational corporations such as Lockheed Martin (American), Boeing (American), BAE Systems (British), and Elbit Systems (Israeli).

These companies aid US imperialism and Israel's genocide. They are also extremely prevalent in the STEM faculties of Australian university campuses. The presence of weapons

companies in Australian education provides a funnel for our national intelligentsia to aid US imperialism directly.

The motions of the referendum are as follows: 1. Students censure the Australian government for its complicity in the genocide in Gaza. We demand an end to all weapons sales to Israel by Australia and Australian companies, and call for sanctions on Israel. 2. Students call on all Australian universities to end their complicity with Israel's genocide by ceasing all partnerships with weapons companies.

Genocides are not ended through a change of heart in the perpetrators; they are ended when the perpetrators are stopped in their tracks by outside pressure and do not have the means to continue killing. Should the demands of the referendum be met by the Labor government, it would hinder Israel's material ability to kill Palestinians. The referendum was attended by hundreds of people from all three major South Australian universities, as well as some high school and TAFE students. Every single person in the room voted in favour of the motions.

After the event, there was a march in support of Palestine. There were many similar referendums happening in university campuses all across the country. The nationwide results of the referendum are unknown at the time of writing, but if the Adelaide results are anything to go by, will most likely be in favour of both motions. The Australian government is at a crossroads; continue business as usual by undemocratically funding imperialism and genocide, or listen to the demands of the Australian people and end all ties with the illegitimate Zionist state. ★



## OP-ED: The 'March for Australia'

Denis Doherty

**We appreciate the angst that many communities are experiencing after the hurtful and unnecessary 'March for Australia' held in many centres on 31 August. We like the Migrant Filipino group's sentiments when they wrote as follows:**

"This is not an issue for one

community, it is a threat to all of us and to the shared values of fairness, inclusion, and hospitality that define the best of Australia."

The basis of the complaints of this group seems to be that migrants are the cause of all our problems. Nothing could be further from the truth. This is the technique of Trump to blame migrants for our problems as if the small number of people who come here each

year relative to the total number of people in Australia will skew our lifestyle and job opportunities. What is threatening us is the move of the country's wealth to the upper 10% of the population leaving the rest of us bereft of benefits.

Marchers mainly held Australian flags which was ironic since that flag has a foreign flag in its corner. The handwritten placards observed said things like 'No immigration

from the Third World.' The slogan indicated that the person hadn't been to hospital lately – a lot of nurses are from countries like the Philippines, Nepal, Cambodia, Thailand, Pakistan and the usual mix of the Australian society. This is Australia. This is who we are.

As Migrant reminds us "The 'March for Australia' is not an isolated event. It is a local expression of a dangerous global rise in

white supremacist, xenophobic, and anti-migrant movements. We have seen this gain traction in the United States, Europe, and other parts of the world." The left has to know how to talk to these people and present a just alternative to what capitalism is doing to this society at the moment. ★

## Urgent action needed to address shocking rates of suicide among homeless youth

**New data from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare has revealed the scale of children leaving violence and neglect, and seeking support from specialised homelessness services without a parent or guardian.**

The heartbreaking statistics show 13,300 children sought help from specialist homelessness services in the past year alone.

Of those who were already homeless when they sought help, 77% remained homeless after seeking that support.

"This new data is absolutely heart-breaking. Homeless children, who are often leaving

domestic violence and abuse are not getting the help they need. It's completely unacceptable," Australians for Mental Health Executive Director Chris Gambian said.

"Having a stable and secure home is critical for mental wellbeing, especially during developmental years. Teenagers are going through enough change within their own bodies, but to be struggling to feel safe and supported is tragic," he said.

Data has also revealed that hundreds of children who have come into contact with homelessness services in the past decade, including in family groups, have died.

"The leading cause of death for the 520 children who died in the decade to 2023 was suicide. This has to be a serious wake up call. Homelessness can have significant effects on mental wellbeing. Australia cannot accept children dying because they are situations they have no control over," Chris Gambian said.

"Mental health is influenced by so many factors, and this data demonstrates just how important the role is for other departments to play in order to address mental ill-health in Australia. We need more arms of government to be accountable for our mental

wellbeing, because the homelessness crisis heavily affects mental health," he said.

Australians for Mental Health is a grassroots advocacy group calling for the federal government to get serious about addressing mental ill-health in Australia.

Actions the organisation is campaigning for include establishing a Wellbeing Act to ensure whole-of-government accountability for mental health, and to support the provision of quality affordable and accessible services where they are needed.

Australians for Mental Health ★

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

**communist.party.australia**

[www.instagram.com/communist.party.australia/](https://www.instagram.com/communist.party.australia/)

**Something to say?  
Write to the Editor!**

[editor@cpa.org.au](mailto:editor@cpa.org.au)



# Penalty rates protection welcomed

Peter Farmer

**The Australian Council of Trade Unions has welcomed the Senate's passage of the Albanese government's Bill to protect penalty and overtime rates for Australian workers.**

The new provisions are meant to safeguard penalty and overtime rates as part of changes to the Fair Work Act.

The passage of the Bill means that large employer lobby groups can no longer seek to win so-called "exemption rate" clauses in modern awards, which pay employees a higher base rate of pay, but scrap their penalty and overtime rates, leaving them worse off overall.

The legislation follows recent attempts by big employer lobby groups to erode workers' overtime and penalty rates in the retail, administration, banking, and finance sectors through applications to the Fair Work Commission.

Prior to the new legal protections, clerical workers stood to lose up to \$7,000 a year in entitlements and individual retail workers were at risk of being \$5,000 a year out of pocket, if employer group attempts were successful.

Millions of workers who work irregular hours will benefit from the new protections, including those who rely directly on modern awards for their pay and conditions, as well as those with collective agreements and employment contracts underpinned by such awards.

ACTU Secretary, Sally McManus said that penalty rates are "an essential part of working Australians' take-home pay."

"They compensate people for working unsociable hours and giving up time away from family and loved ones."

"Protecting penalty rates also protects the weekend. The minute employers can pay people the same no matter the day they work, Australians can kiss goodbye the weekend."

"Unions welcome the government delivering on this election promise. Without these laws, workers in retail, admin, banking, and finance would stand to lose thousands of dollars a year under proposals by big employer lobby groups."

McManus claimed that workers' pay "will no longer be at risk from employers engaging in a race to the bottom to strip away basic protections needed to maintain the services we all rely on." ✳



Photo: getarchive.net (public domain)

## Moreton Bay spends big on homeless evictions

Graham Holton

**The City of Moreton Bay has spent \$1.4 million, in the 2024-25 financial year, evicting its homeless. In March the council outlawed homeless camping citing growing concerns over public health and safety. The council's plans to destroy the Kallangur tent city were temporarily halted by the Supreme Court due to a legal challenge by Basic Rights Queensland.**

"We shouldn't have to rely on court action to prevent people's shelters being bulldozed," Sam Tracy, Legal Practice Director at Basic Rights Queensland, said. A City spokesperson ruled out supplying bins and toilets at the Kallangur homeless camp as it would be a cost to the Council.

Lawyers for people sleeping rough in a Kallangur reserve argued the destruction of their property constitutes a human rights violation. The council will fight a related Supreme Court legal challenge in November.

Basic Rights Queensland has welcomed the Supreme Court of Queensland temporarily stopping the City from dismantling the homeless camp.

Since December the city has issued 229 compliance notices which threaten fines of up to \$8,065 for people who refuse to move from council land within two weeks. The Council had previously sent in rangers with an excavator, a garbage truck, and police escorts, destroying the belongings of the homeless Eddie Hyland Park.

The council has paid \$232,862 to contractors to demolish homeless camps and \$175,381 to Queensland Police for staff protection. It also spent \$1,230,092 on Public Space Liaison Officers to refer homeless people to support services and \$3.7 million to build a Peninsula Support Hub. ✳

## Council tries to silence lifeguard union as outsourcing scandal explodes

**Coffs Harbour City Council has launched a shocking attack on transparency and workers' rights, attempting to gag the United Services Union (USU) after the union exposed the council's secret plan to privatise the local lifeguard service, a move that would devastate jobs, slash wages, and put public safety at risk.**

26 lifeguards are set to be axed under the plan.

The Council's move to silence

the USU in the NSW Industrial Relations Commission was a desperate and disgraceful attempt to suppress the truth. It failed.

"This is a Council that's not just turning its back on its workers, it's actively trying to shut them up," said Luke Hutchinson, USU Official.

"They tried to muzzle us for exposing their backdoor deal to privatise lifesaving jobs."

"They failed, and we will not be silenced."

"This Council is more interested in silencing workers than listening to them."

"They tried to shut us up for telling the community what's really going on, that they're planning to hand over a vital public safety service to a private operator behind closed doors."

The USU has revealed that six permanent lifeguards and 20 casuals are set to be axed under the Council's outsourcing plan.

Those re-hired by the private

provider face pay cuts of up to \$50,000 a year, along with slashed weekend penalty rates, a brutal blow to workers who risk their lives to protect beachgoers.

It's not just workers who will pay the price, ratepayers will be left to foot the bill also. If lifeguards are sacked, the Council will be required to pay out redundancy entitlements, costing the community even more for a decision made without consultation or consent.

"This is not just a jobs issue, it's

a public safety crisis," Hutchinson said.

"Privatising lifesaving services means fewer trained professionals, lower standards, and a community left vulnerable. And all of it is being done in secret, without a single conversation with the workers or the public."

The USU is urging the people of Coffs Harbour to listen, stand up and fight back against this reckless and undemocratic plan.

United Services Union ✳

## ACOSS calls for tax reform that doesn't raise GST

**The Australian Council of Social Service is pushing against calls by economists and business lobbies to raise and/or broaden the GST, and instead is calling for tax reform that doesn't raise prices but reduces inequality while lifting revenue and productivity.**

ACOSS has released a paper arguing that raising the GST would hurt people on low and modest incomes who are forced to spend more of their money than people on higher incomes who can save more.

"We are looking forward to an inclusive,

frank and ambitious discussion about pressing tax reform," said ACOSS CEO Dr Cassandra Goldie AO.

"We need a fairer and more effective tax system that secures the revenue we need to fund essential services and safety nets while encouraging more productive investment to create jobs and lift living standards."

"This can be done with reforms that lift productivity and overall revenue without increasing the burden for people on low and modest incomes."

"We welcome the Prime Minister's

comments that raising the GST is not tenable."

ACOSS is calling for reforms to improve the fairness of the income tax system, including by curbing personal tax shelters that waste public revenue, increase wealth inequality and undermine productivity.

"Our sector stands ready to work with the government and key stakeholders on this historic opportunity to reform our tax system," said Goldie.

In its paper on the GST, ACOSS shows that shifting tax from income to consumption

would widen wealth inequality, deepen poverty, and deliver only modest and uncertain economic efficiency gains.

"The income tax system is an essential source of revenue for the services and supports we need and is our main progressive tax. Without it we would live in a harsher and more unequal society," said Goldie.

ACOSS ✳



# Regional services under strain: New report warns of growing gaps in care

**A new report from Anglicare Australia is warning that people in regional and remote Australia are being left behind, with essential services stretched.**

The report, *In Every Community*, draws on the experience of Anglicare Australia members delivering services across the country. It finds that:

- Services in regional and remote areas are harder to access, and more likely to face underfunding, short-term contracts, and insecure staffing.
- Funding is often allocated based on population, rather than community need or service gaps.
- Providers are struggling to recruit and retain staff, and are being forced to deliver more with less.
- Community services are being asked to fill critical workforce shortages, with little or no government support.

“These are vital services – disability support, mental

health care, aged care, and family services. But instead of being funded to meet local need, they’re too often treated as one-size-fits-all,” said Anglicare Australia Executive Director Kasy Chambers.

“Governments are planning from the centre, but expecting communities to pick up the pieces around the edges when funding doesn’t meet demand, or staff can’t be found.

“Our network is stepping up. Across the country, our members are growing their own workforces, building housing for their own staff, and partnering with local schools, training providers, and First Nations organisations.

“These solutions are working, but they are too often treated as one-offs. We need governments to back them in – not just with words, but with long-term, flexible funding so services can grow and stay in the communities they serve.”

Anglicare 

## Desert megafires set to worsen under climate change

**Rohan Fisher, Senior Research Fellow at Charles Darwin University says “Hardly anyone’s heard of the Australian ‘Black Spring’ bushfires of 2023. But the fires that tore through the tropical savannas and northern spinifex deserts that year were the biggest Australia had seen in more than a decade – burning an area about eight times larger than the Black Summer fires along eastern and southern Australia.**

“Despite their size and potential impacts on cultural and biodiversity values, they are not acknowledged as a significant national event and barely registered in the national or global media.

“The limited media that did occur focused on the threat of fire to the small town of Tennant Creek in the Northern Territory, but most Australians remain unaware of the existence or full scale of the fires.

“Our satellite analysis showed just how fast these fires can move – in some cases spreading over 25,000 square kilometres in less than a week.”

What does this mean for future fire management? Fisher says that the encouraging news is that “where Indigenous ranger groups had been carrying out prescribed burning, we saw very different outcomes. These areas acted like natural firebreaks, disrupting the spread of the flames and reducing their intensity.”

“Ultimately the only effective

way to prevent these massive fires in very remote parts of Australia is through a long-term, well-funded strategy of using fire over our vast desert landscapes to control fuel, as was done during previous millennia.

“As climate change drives more extreme weather and rainfall patterns, we can expect spinifex deserts to fuel even larger fires in the future.

“The lesson from 2023 is clear: if we want to reduce the risk of megafires, we need to invest in Indigenous-led fire management on a much greater scale.”

Charles Darwin University 



A grass fire burns through an open area. Photo: Malcolm Paterson/CSIRO – commons.wikimedia.org (CC BY 3.0)

## PEACE NOTES

### Commemoration and a peace that lasts

This year is quite the year for war anniversaries. It’s 80 years since the end of World War II, 110 years since World War I, 75 years since the armistice was signed in the Korean war and 75 years since the Malayan ‘emergency,’ when the British sent troops into what’s now Malaysia to quash a communist-led independence movement.

In the anniversaries, heroism is celebrated. Sometimes the causes are forgotten, or misinterpreted. There is another article in this paper about the Chinese celebration of the war against Japanese fascism, and how China is wrongly treated as incidental in triumphant US and UK-focussed celebrations. It can be inspiring for people to remember heroic acts, but commemoration can sometimes set the ground for other wars. Too often there isn’t a commemoration of how the peace was won.

For the USA, it’s fair to say that Victory in the Pacific was more about having Japan as an ‘unsinkable aircraft carrier’ to make the USA stronger for wars to come in Korea, and, potentially, against the Soviet Union and China. The commemoration in Japan massively minimises the Japanese part in the conflict. People who only consume Japanese media could be forgiven for thinking the Japanese people were the only victims of the entire war. Iris Chang’s book *The Rape of Nanking: The Forgotten Holocaust of World War II* is a bestseller, but not in Japan where an informal agreement between publishers means no Japanese will see it. Reenactments of the bombing Japan suffered, nuclear and incendiary are very common. This non-commemoration is no accident – it was allowed by the US because controlling Japan was a higher priority than preventing another war.

Technically the Korean war didn’t end, but turned into what must be the world’s longest armistice. It finished with South Korea as an armed camp pointed at the DPRK. The largest US army base outside the USA itself is in South Korea, and every year aggressive joint exercises prompt the DPRK to stay armed and prepared. Another factor that keeps the Korean peninsula on a military footing is the precedent of NATO expansion up to the borders of Russia after the Soviet Union collapsed. China doesn’t want to be eyeballing hostile forces across its borders.

As for Malaysia the “insurgency” was defeated, and Malaysia became independent, but in a classically British way, leaving behind ethnic division and antagonism to this day.

Nobody knows how the genocidal Israeli attack on Palestinians and other countries in the region will end, but it certainly won’t be a real peace. Israel is pursuing expansion and power, not peace. Whatever happens, the survivors will have no reason to feel peaceful towards Israel. Israel’s neighbours and the rest of the world will not soon forget what they have done. The Roman historian Tacitus’ words might have been written of the Israeli approach: “where they make a desert, they call it peace.”

Real peace is not just the temporary absence of war. Real peace has to be worked for, and it has to involve justice. Communists know that the material conditions and contradictions that produce war need to be resolved in order for a peace to be lasting and just, not merely the calm before the next war.



# Mineworkers look to the future

**Over 70 Mining and Energy Union delegates from across Australia came together in Sydney last month for a two-day meeting on the shared challenges facing their industry and the actions needed to deliver the best outcomes for MEU members and their communities.**

This marked the first national meeting of energy industry workers since the establishment of the Net Zero Economy Authority, long advocated for by the MEU.

With workers from Collie, Latrobe Valley, Central Queensland, Lithgow and the Hunter Valley represented, there were varied experiences and common themes. In Collie, the WA government has invested heavily in worker support schemes and backing for new industries – including a medicinal cannabis facility, Green Steel smelter, and Green Magnum smelter; MEU members in the Latrobe Valley expressed dismay at a lack of support by the Victorian government for numerous projects proposed for the region, raising fears for the future of the region after further power station closures.

Queensland Delegates are grappling with having commitments to worker transition support ripped up by the new Crisafulli LNP Government. In NSW, delegates from Eraring Power Station and Myuna coal mine are the first to engage formally with the Net Zero Economy Authority about establishing an Energy Industry Jobs Plan to support workers affected by Eraring's closure, scheduled for 2027.

Delegates from the Lithgow area raised valid and deeply held concerns about the allocation of supports to the region, and its exclusion from being a NZEA focus region. They were able to express these concerns directly with the CEO, David Shankey, and the MEU is committed to continuing to advocate for targeted supports for the Lithgow region.

Common themes raised throughout the meeting included uncertainty about reskilling for future jobs, fear for regional communities and concerns about the safe operation of power stations amidst lack of investment in maintenance and fluctuations in renewable energy entering the grid.

MEU General Secretary Grahame Kelly said that with rapid change occurring in the energy industry – including closures at Eraring and Yallourn power stations by 2028 – the MEU would continue to foster engagement between sites and Districts; and would use all avenues to secure improved outcomes including backing new industries and technologies; getting better conditions in Enterprise Agreements and working with state and federal governments to maximise support for workers.

Delegates agreed on the following statement:

MEU Delegates from power stations and captured coal mines across Australia have



Some of the Delegates at the meeting. Photo: MEU FaceBook

## Net Zero Economy Authority, a significant achievement advocated for by MEU delegates

met for a constructive two-day meeting to discuss the shared challenges we face, political and industry developments, and actions to improve outcomes for our Members.

Delegates expressed concern and called for urgent action to address:

- Mental health and psychosocial well-being of members and families facing uncertainty about the future
- Safety, investment in maintenance, reliability and stability of the energy grid as facilities head towards closure
- Support for new industries to provide jobs in energy regions for the current workforce and future generations
- Support for coal-related industries and technologies including carbon capture, storage and utilisation (CCSU).

We will work together to address these issues through: lobbying and public advocacy, investing in relevant research and capacity-building projects, sharing experiences

and information, and collaborating with employers and project proponents who align with our priorities regarding jobs and community support.

We will stand up for all regions affected by energy transition to receive the support they need.

Delegates welcomed the establishment of the Net Zero Economy Authority with its remit to support workers displaced by the closure of power stations and captured coal mines. A statutory federal Authority is a significant achievement that was called for at our previous meeting in February 2023; and we recognise the efforts of MEU Delegates in advocating for this outcome.

We are committed to working with the NZEA to achieve concrete outcomes for members facing closure, including the establishment of comprehensive Energy Industry Jobs Plans at closing facilities; while also working to strengthen the powers of the

NZEA, including to compel employer participation in worker redeployment schemes, and expanding the scope to ensure all affected sites and communities receive support.

We call on State and Federal governments to fast-track investment and remove barriers to the development of new projects and industries in energy regions to create future well-paid jobs in our communities.

We call on mine and power station operators to take a proactive approach to supporting workers facing closure and to prioritise worker health and safety, including mental health, and to invest in the highest standards of maintenance.

We thank Industry Minister Tim Ayres and NZEA CEO David Shankey for attending our meeting to update delegates on federal government activities relating to workforce support and industry development.

Mining and Energy Union 🇺🇦

## Parents put Bowen on notice

**Parents for Climate has sent a legal letter to Climate Change and Energy Minister Chris Bowen, saying that, following the recent International Court of Justice advisory opinion and new scientific analysis, an emissions reduction target of net zero by 2035 to align with 1.5°C is now required to comply with Australian law.**

The letter from Equity Generation Lawyers, representing Parents for Climate, says that the recent International Court of Justice (ICJ) advisory opinion informs how Australia's climate change act works.

Failure to set a target that can achieve limiting warming to 1.5C could expose the government to legal and reputational risk, undermining Australia's bid to co-host COP31 with Pacific nations and

leaving families vulnerable to escalating climate harm. Before the ICJ opinion the Climate Change Authority published a draft advice on 2035 targets that were capable of limiting temperature rise to 2C.

Australia has currently committed to a net zero by 2050 target. It must submit a 2035 target this year.

David Barnden, Managing Principal & Director, Equity Generations Lawyers said "The International Court of Justice confirmed governments must set emissions reduction targets consistent with 1.5C and the best available science. For Australia, under the Climate Change Act, we say that means a net zero by 2035 target."

Nic Seton, CEO for Parents for Climate said "As parents, we expect anyone entrusted with our children's safety to comply with the

law. Following the recent International Court of Justice ruling, we say Minister Bowen is required by Australian law to follow best-available science and set a target of net zero by 2035. We need this to keep our kids safe. Anything less could be against the law."

"Target setting for 2035 by the Minister and Cabinet is a critical opportunity to set our kids up for success. Net zero by 2035 would make Australia a global clean energy leader, creating jobs, boosting regional economies, and giving our children the safe, healthy future they deserve. Parents want leaders who will rise to this moment, not shy away from it."

"The impacts outlined in the forthcoming National Climate Risk Assessment – heatwaves, infrastructure failure, economic shocks

– aren't abstract threats; they're warnings that inaction comes with a steep human cost. Every week of delay means more Australians are hurt, more systems strained, and more futures compromised. A stronger target means safer communities. Whereas a 65–75% target, previously mooted by the Climate Change Authority, would lock in 2.2–2.6°C of warming if adopted globally. That's not Paris-aligned. It's not safe. And we allege it's not lawful."

"This letter puts the government on notice. The science, the law, and the community all demand the same thing: a 2035 target that aligns with 1.5°C. Anything else is not good enough, may not be lawful, and not safe for Australian children. Families are watching, and they understand the law is on

their side. If Australia sets a target that is not science-aligned, it risks failing its legal duties under both domestic and international law."

The recent International Court of Justice Advisory Opinion has made clear the global legal consensus that emissions reduction targets must correlate with what the science demands if governments are to protect the environment and their citizens' human rights.

The ICJ also found that climate change threatens fundamental human rights including the right to life, health, food, water, housing, and especially the rights of children and future generations.

Parents for Climate 🇺🇦



# The price of genocide: US funding props up Israel

**In an important step toward the economic isolation of Israel due to its genocide in Gaza, Norway's Government Pension Fund Global has decided to divest from more Israeli companies.**

Norway's sovereign wealth fund is the world's largest, with total investments in Israel once estimated at US \$1.9 billion. The decision to divest is consistent with the Norwegian government's growing solidarity with Palestine and rising criticism of Israel.

Norway has been a vocal European critic of the Israeli genocide and man-made famine in Gaza, actively contributing to the International Court of Justice's investigation into the genocide, and formally recognising the state of Palestine in 2024.

The Israeli economy was already in a state of freefall before the genocide. The initial collapse was related to the deep political instability in the country, a result of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his extremist government's attempt to co-opt the judicial system, thus compromising any semblance of "democracy" remaining in that country. This resulted in a significant lowering of investor confidence.

The war and genocide, beginning on 7 October 2023, accelerated the crisis, pushing an already fragile economy to the brink. Foreign direct investments in Israel fell by an estimated 28% in the first half of 2024 compared to the same period in 2023.

Any supposed recovery in foreign investments, however, was deceptive. It was not the outcome of a global rallying to save Israel, but rather a consequence of a torrent of US funds pouring in to help Israel sustain both its economy and the genocide in Gaza, along with its other war fronts.

Israel's Gross Domestic Product was around \$540 billion by the end of 2024. The war in Gaza



Rally in support of Palestine, Sydney. Photo: Anna Pha

has already taken a considerable bite out of Israel's entire GDP. Estimates from Israel itself are complex, but all data points to the fact that the Israeli economy is suffering and will continue to suffer in the foreseeable future. Citing reports from the Bank of Israel and the Ministry of Finance, the Israeli business newspaper *Calcalist* reported in January 2025 that the cost of the Israeli war on Gaza had already reached more than US\$67.5 billion. That figure represented the costs of the war up to the end of 2024.

Ongoing war costs continue to rise exponentially, and with other consequences of the war – including divestments from the Israeli market by Norway and other countries – future projections for the Israeli economy look very grim. The Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics reported that the Israeli economy,

already contracting, shrunk by another 3.5% in the period between April and June 2025.

This collapse is projected to continue, even with the unprecedented US financial backing. Indeed, without US help, the precarious Israeli economy would be in a much worse state. Though the USA has always propped up Israel – with nearly \$4 billion in aid annually – its help in the last two years was the most generous and critical yet.

Israel is the recipient of \$3.8 billion of US taxpayer money per year, according to the latest 10-year Memorandum of Understanding signed in 2016. Equally, if not more valuable than this large sum are loan guarantees, which allow Israel to borrow money at a much lower interest rate on the global market. The backing of the US has, therefore, enabled investors to view

the Israeli market as a safe haven for their funds, often guaranteeing high returns. This applies to the Norwegian sovereign wealth fund as it did to numerous other entities and companies.

Now that Israel has become a bad brand, affiliated with unethical investments due to the genocide in Gaza and growing illegal settlement expansion in the West Bank, the US, as Israel's main benefactor, has stepped in to fill the gaps.

The US emergency supplemental appropriations act of April 2024 allocated a total of \$26.4 billion for Israel. While much of the money was earmarked for military expenditures, in reality, most of it will percolate into the Israeli economy. This amount, in addition to the annual military aid, allows the Israeli government to minimise spending on defense and allocate more money to keep

the economy from shrinking at an even faster rate.

Additionally, it will free the Israeli military industry to continue producing new, sophisticated military technology that will ensure Israel's continued competitiveness in the arms market. The military-industrial complex, a significant part of the Israeli economy, is thus not only sustained but given a fresh impetus by American aid, ensuring the war machine continues to function with minimal financial disruption.

All of this should not diminish the importance of divestment from the Israeli financial system. On the contrary, it means that divestment efforts must increase significantly to balance out the US push to keep the Israeli economy from imploding.

*Globetrotter* ★

## A black hole in collective memory: China and WW2

Biljana Vankovska

**A glaring gap exists in our collective memory of World War II – a war we call “global,” yet one where the role of the fourth allied victor, China, is consistently sidelined. China entered the conflict first in 1931, not 1939, and endured until Japan's surrender in 1945. Over 14 years, it suffered approximately 35 million casualties and tied down a million Japanese troops, enabling the USSR and USA to focus elsewhere. Leaders like Roosevelt, Churchill, and Stalin acknowledged China's pivotal role in shaping the war's outcome. So why is this contribution so often ignored and buried under layers of Western-focused narratives?**

For many, World War II's defining tragedy is the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, horrific acts that serve as a stark warning of humanity's destructive power, unleashed by the United States. These events deserve remembrance, but the subsequent US occupation of Japan and the imposed peace

constitution (also known as the MacArthur Constitution) were less about harmony than securing a strategic foothold in the Indo-Pacific during the Cold War. Today, Japan arms itself under the US nuclear umbrella, ostensibly to counter a “threat” from China. This narrative twist is as convenient as it is misleading.

Like Russia, which fiercely preserves its WW II sacrifices, China now demands recognition for its own. Its resistance to Japanese militarism remains a largely untold saga. A glimpse into this “black hole” of collective memory reveals atrocities that defy comprehension: the Nanjing Massacre of 1937, where 300,000 civilians were killed and mass rapes committed. Unit 731's chemical and biological experiments on prisoners, including children, were so vile they shocked even Nazi observers. German envoys urged Berlin to restrain Tokyo, while Japanese records meticulously documented their brutal chaos. Brave Japanese historians have since exposed these horrors, yet they remain marginal in global discourse. Why the silence?

Uncovering WWII's history from Asia's perspective exposes a shameful truth:

Western narratives, amplified by Hollywood and media, have selectively glorified some stories while erasing others. The result? Perpetrators are rehabilitated, and victims recast as villains. The West often clings to a biased stance that values some lives over others. Chinese victims have received scant global acknowledgment, their suffering overshadowed by Japan's post-war redemption narrative.

This hypocrisy echoes today in Gaza, where selective outrage, tears for Ukraine but silence for 22 months of Gazan suffering under Israel's policies, reveals the same double standard. European leaders, shaped by colonial legacies they frame as a “civilising mission,” are complicit. Meanwhile, the US fuels a trade war with China and, as some media outlets warn, braces for broader conflict, while painting China as “authoritarian and belligerent.” This clashes starkly with China's anti-fascist history and its modern commitment to global peace.

The adage that victors write history unravels here. China, a clear victor, was denied the platform to showcase its courage, sacrifices, and contributions. Today,

it's unjustly branded as a threat by Western discourse. World War II didn't begin or end in Europe. China, a founding UN member and the first to sign the UN Charter, remains its most steadfast supporter. It rejects the US-dominated narrative, crafted by a late-comer to the war that suffered the least yet unleashed atomic devastation. China's WWII legacy fuels its modern mission: eradicating poverty, aiding the Global South, building global infrastructure, and championing peace and a shared future for mankind.

Beijing's commemoration is a bold rebuttal to the West's monopolisation of WWII memory. As Warwick Powell aptly argues: “For eight decades, the West has rewritten World War II as an US and European victory, relegating China to footnote status. China's commemoration this year challenges that amnesia, reclaiming the country's role as a central force in defeating fascism.” In today's troubled times, however, remembrance alone isn't enough. From Gaza to beyond, the fight against inhumanity and fascism demands we confront these historical blind spots and their modern echoes.

*Globetrotter* ★



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

email: editor@cpa.org.au



Dear Comrade Editor,  
The *Guardian* is doing an excellent job covering the battle against the damaging cuts at the Australian National University and the attacks on its workers. I hope *Guardian* readers can sign this ANU NTEU Branch petition to ANU, calling for an end to the cuts and for the removal of the Chancellor Ave Vice-Chancellor.

Please sign the petition if you can! You can find it at megaphone.org.au or scan the

attached QR code to stand with ANU workers and the NTEU.

Solidarity,

Amelia, Canberra

scan here  
to sign the  
petition



Something to say?

Write to  
the Editor!

editor@cpa.org.au

## Worth Reading: Science fiction

Graham Holton

### Prey by Michael Crichton

Famous for techno-thrillers, such as *Jurassic Park*, Crichton speculates about how a self-replicating nanotechnology swarm can kill people and take over the world. Explores the dark side of modern technology. A great thriller worth reading.

### Tiger Tiger/The Stars my destination by Alfred Bester

An absolute sci-fi classic, this book (*Tiger, Tiger!* in the UK, *The Stars My Destination* in the US) is one of the few that shows an understanding of economics and an appreciation that 'progress' is not uniformly towards better things. This book is an adaption of Dumas' 'Count of Monte Cristo' in a world in which capitalism has become even more barbaric after the accidental discovery of teleportation. It's also a rollicking adventure.

### Three-Body Problem by Cixin Liu

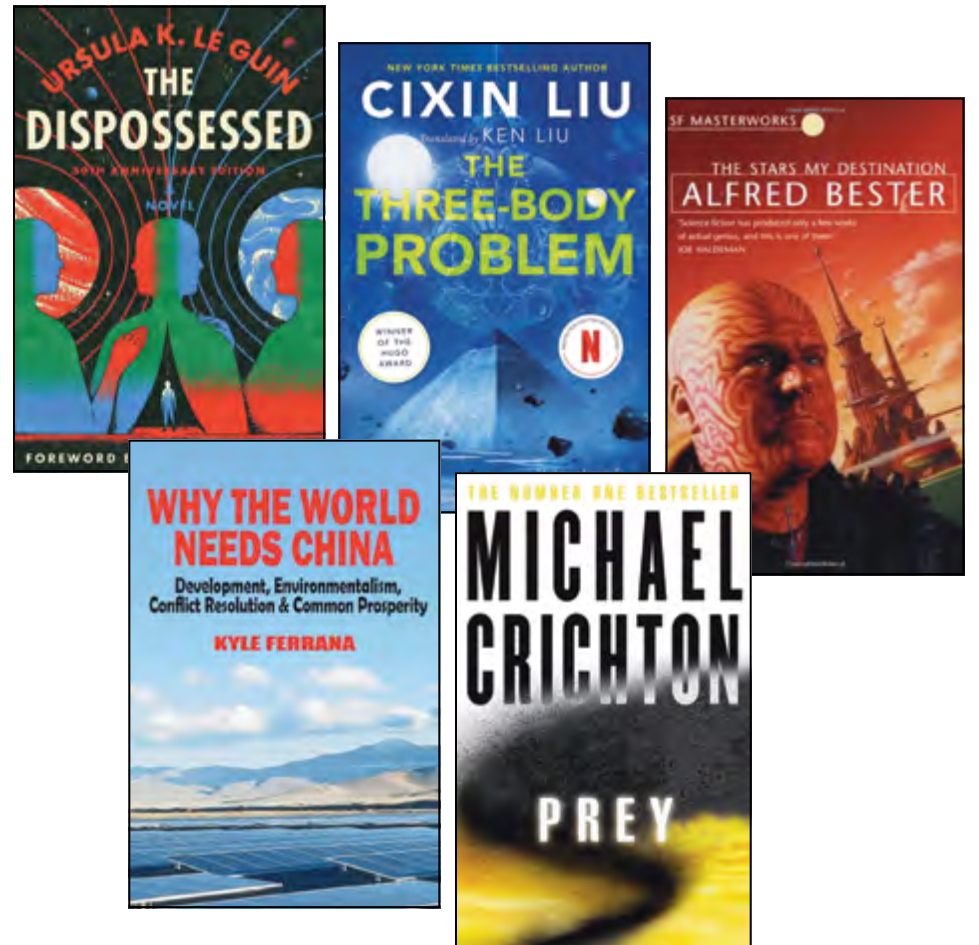
The first Chinese author to win the Hugo Award, Liu is very much 'hard science' sci-fi. When he describes future space craft, subatomic particles and the physics problem that gives the book its title, he's absolutely convincing. With future human developments, he's more vague, but the ambition of the science and sheer scope sweeps you along (the story, a trilogy starts with the Cultural Revolution and ends in the far future). The series isn't political as such, but raises general questions about how much trust is possible between civilisations.

### The Dispossessed by Ursula K Le Guin

Anyone who has immersed themselves in old-school sci-fi knows that a lot of it is pretty much our world as it is now plus ray guns/spaceships/time travel etc. But there's a reason the genre is often also called 'speculative fiction'. *The Dispossessed* is a classic, winning the Hugo and other awards because it speculates about how to run a society. Disappointingly for communist readers, the spotlight is on capitalist and utopian anarchist societies – there's a communist society which is mostly off-stage – but it's thought-provoking.

### WORTH RE-READING: Why the World Needs China by Kyle Ferrana

It is incredibly detailed and thoroughly researched. The book makes a detailed case for the importance of China's role in a 'multipolar' world where no one country dominates, and explains the benign nature of Chinese loans to other countries, usually demonised as debt traps by Western media. *Why I want to re-read it*: the range of detailed facts are really worth getting my head around at a time when media hostility to China is at a fever pitch.



## A martyr to the environmental cause

### How to Save the Amazon: A Journalist's Deadly Quest for Answers

by Dom Phillips and contributors

Reviewer: Gavin O'Toole

**We would like to think that the right-wing populism of Jair Bolsonaro is the main target of the writers who have picked up the mantle of murdered journalist Dom Phillips to complete the book he was writing when he was killed in June 2022.**

After all, it was in the climate of increasingly violent hostility towards those defending the Amazon nurtured by the then Brazilian president that Phillips and the Indigenous expert Bruno Pereira were shot. As one commentator observed at the time: "The Bolsonaro government's fingerprints are all over this tragedy."

But Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, Brazil's current leader – who has done more than most to protect the region – would also benefit from reading this book.

Lula was elected in large part for his pledges to preserve the Amazon and uphold Indigenous peoples' right to live in their ancestral lands – diametrically opposed to the catastrophic reversal of protections under Bolsonaro.

Yet there have been many instances where good intentions have been undermined by the instinct to promote growth.

Everyone accepts that the Workers' Party president has the best interest of Amazonia at heart, but a structural problem that resurfaces throughout this unique book is the development model with which he must work.

This is captured well by Federico Quitadamo, an Italian who gave up a career in private equity to join Amazon conservation efforts, when he says: "The fact is, is that as long as you work within the capitalist system, you can't save the Amazon."

Like most countries in the global South caught in the web of an international economic structure in which their role is to supply commodities, Brazil's left-wing government is rendered impotent by the tension between conservation and development. It is a tension laid bare on an epic scale in the Amazon, as Phillips makes clear on his many journeys through the forest to visit Indigenous people resisting the onslaught of extractivism – but also a global fault-line in the battle against capitalism.

It was this tension that explained Marina Silva's resignation as environment minister from the first Lula government, although she has returned to this position, and it was thrown into dramatic relief yet again in August when Brazil suspended the soy moratorium, a key agreement protecting the rainforest.

*How to Save the Amazon* is simultaneously an effort to grapple with this tension between conservation and development by considering concrete solutions to the many issues it raises, while being a testament to two environmental martyrs.

Dom Phillips had figured out that it was insufficient for journalists simply to record the destruction, and incumbent on them to offer ways of halting it. Accordingly, each chapter explores a key issue confronting the Amazon in order to tease out a viable conservation strategy.

The book examines the legal framework within which efforts to save the forest must operate alongside the endemic law-breaking that propels insatiable resource extraction. The fatal relationship between

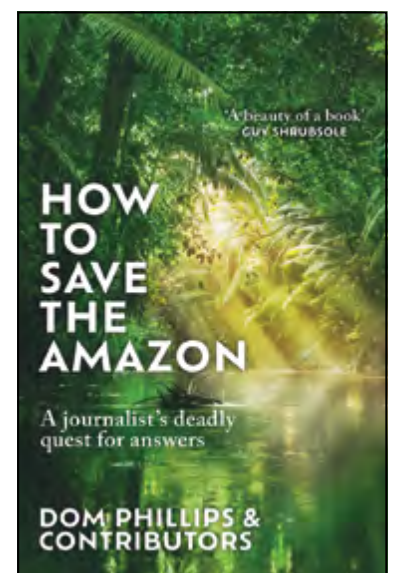
environmental crimes and politics in Brazil is put into context by the extremely powerful agribusiness and livestock lobbies. In such a situation, vast multinational meat companies are constantly supplied by small ranchers with cattle raised on deforested land but made invisible by flaws in traceability regulations.

Among the causal factors of this mess of destruction is a corporate culture quick to turn a blind eye to abuse of otherwise laudable rules. Among the viable solutions to it are the strategic use of smart technology and well-proven methods of sustainable ranching.

*How to Save the Amazon* considers how agroforestry, sustainable fishing – but also urban poverty reduction – can play a role in providing the livelihoods that are the motives of migration to the forest.

The most recurrent theme is the inspiration already provided by Indigenous people defending nature that can drive sustainable solutions to deforestation, payment for ecosystem services, and the bioeconomy.

It is in this vein that the book concludes, pointing to the



Indigenous intellectuals who have published some of Brazil's most excoriating critiques of industrial capitalism.

They know instinctively what we all feel in our bones: the struggle to save the Amazon is ultimately the same struggle undertaken by all workers against capitalism.

Morning Star 🍌



## Sport: Leg Glance

# There is a reason why they call it a Test

Vijay Prashad

Over forty-six days, the Indian cricket team toured England for a five test match series that resulted in a teeth-grinding 2-2 draw. By the end of it, you had a player with a broken arm (Chris Woakes) trying to help England get six extra runs, while a player with incredible mental and physical stamina (Mohammed Siraj) castled the last English batsman to go and give India the victory at The Oval that levelled the series. If England had won, and the final test result was 3-1, it would not have showed how closely fought was this incredible display of test cricket.

Anyone who claims that test cricket is boring and that the One Day Internationals or the T20s are the way to go should go back, spend the time, and watch the tape for the fifty-three deliveries bowled on the last day of the final test, and go back and watch the tape for the last day of batting by Ravindra Jadeja and Washington Sundar in the Fourth Test. This is test cricket, friends, and it has its own magic.

On the fourth day of the final test, it appeared as if the match was to be won by England. Centuries by Harry Brook and Joe Root seemed to have sealed the win. They brought England within 73 runs of the enormous run chase of 374. Then, three wickets fell in sequence, as the scoreboard seemed to freeze: 301-4 (Brook out, attempting to play across the line, letting fly his bat from his hand), 332-5 (Bethell out, chops it on trying to cut), and then 337-6 (Root out, a wobble ball misleading his drive). A few minutes later, at 339-6, the umpires called it with bad light and then a downpour. Mohammad Siraj had begun to charge up his dynamo. He built his power overnight, to return the next morning, the final day, with England only 35 runs to go. It looked to go England's way, when Siraj came into the attack with only 27 runs for victory.

Siraj bowled with accurate speed, his deliveries just outside the off stump, trying to entice the drive. That just what Smith did, and he was caught behind. A few balls later, he got Overton, and then finally Atkinson. Siraj finished the innings with five wickets, and the match with nine. This was Mohammed Siraj's victory. No wonder he was selected as player of the match.

## CAPTAINCY

The term 'test' used to describe the five-game cricket match was first used by journalists in 1861 when England played in Australia. The phrase that became commonplace was that this kind of tournament was a 'test of strength and competency.' These five tests



Shubman Gill. Photo: CRICKETNEXT – creativecommons.org (CC BY 3.0)

were well named, a real contest of character alongside skill. It is not good enough to be a fine bat or a good bowler. One must know one's place in the team and learn what an opening batsman has to do with the kind of lineup. A lineup with depth allows the opening bats to be more flamboyant, a lineup that is a bit thin requires diligence from the top. The strike bowlers must learn to temper their enthusiasm so that they can go on for a long spell, a second spell when the sun is aloft, their energy sapped. If you are one of the wily spin bowlers, you watch the pitch, studying the scuff marks, wondering what to exploit on a turf that might crack at any time.

Captains are like druids, studying the entrails of their team, the stamina of their bowlers, the enthusiasm of their fielders, the shifts in the clouds and shadows that might hasten the rest of a certain kind of bowler, the field placements to make the traps work. This requires strategy and tactics, intelligence often outsourced to the coaching staff in the T20 games. On the field the captain is in charge. The five-day game is a test for every member of the team, but it is truly a test for the captain.

Shubman Gill, only twenty-five, brings to the captaincy of the Indian team a calmness that is welcome (he was also the highest run scorer in the series, by the way – a mammoth 754 runs, Joe Root far behind with 537 runs). When he ascended to the captaincy in the IPL, *Mystery Cricket* wrote that Gill "looked like the calmest figure on the pitch, even when things spiral." *India Today's* senior editor Amitabh Srivastava had a very good assessment of Gill:

From the start, Gill approached the role with quiet intent. There was no posturing, no overt displays of authority. What emerged instead was a leadership style defined by restraint, awareness, and deep empathy. For Gill, being captain is less about diktat than it is about understanding. It is about knowing when to assert himself and when to step back, letting his team breathe.

What Gill has brought to the men's team, Smriti Mandhana had brought earlier to the women's team.

While these are appraisals that are about

Gill, they also define the role of a good captain for a test – a person who remains calm, watches everything, assimilates information, makes good decisions, and allows the players to allow their skills to flourish. Moving to field in the slips as captain, Gill has developed the key qualities of cricket test captaincy: moral authority over the team, human understanding for the different players, and deep tactical intelligence of everything that is happening on the field.

Virat Kohli was the perfect captain for the confidence of unbridled neoliberalism: brash and nonchalant, victory being the way and if defeat came, so be it. It was overwhelming to watch Kohli lead the team. He was so energetic, almost sending a signal that any lack of perfection would be punished with his glare. This was Ayn Randian. Gill has brought back something of the charm of the game – a captain who will allow each of the younger group to build their own strength, and to allow them to improve through risks and failure. If you are too scared to fail, you will never try. That seems to be his attitude. It is a sentiment that is outside the boundaries of neoliberalism. ✖

## Music: Mudrat – I don't care about poor people

Peter Farmer

**Does loud aggressive metal have to have a particular politics? The answer is obviously 'no,' but the genre has something of an image issue – and metal titans Rammstein did a song just to protest that although both metal musicians and Germans, their hearts are always on the left (the song is 'Linke-2-3-4', it's a good one. This reviewer is a fan).**

Punk and nu-metal are usually

assumed to be bit on the lefty side. Naarm/Melbourne punk/hiphop hybrid MUDRAT are definitely that. 'I don't care about poor people' is a scathing, funny banger about 'naarmcore' tossers who make all the right noises and don't show up when it matters, using the Indigenous name for the city as a form of virtue-signalling. For the record this paper is very supportive of using Indigenous names. Mudrat is too, but the song is about the signalling from the people on the other side of 'trickle down economics.'

MUDRAT started as a solo artist, but formed a band called THE MISCHIEF with Emile Bat-tour (Ocean Grove) on drums, Noah Sole on bass, and Javier Langham (Dancing Water) on guitar. MUDRAT shifts between MC and punk/nu-metal frontman duties. It's not really metal, it's not bog-standard punk, it's a great beat with lots of metal noises.

MUDRAT's Social Cohesion tour will be in Brisbane, Sydney, and Melbourne this month. ✖



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# Venezuela: unity, music, resistance

When a country is demonised and mainly reported on as a problem for the USA, it's good to get an alternative view, especially one from the inside. Luis Laya, Charge d'Affaires at the Venezuelan embassy was kind enough to sit down for an interview with *Guardian*, *the Workers Weekly*.

Interviewer: A Carruthers

*Guardian: The Trump administration's deployment of US destroyers in the Caribbean Sea is the latest escalation of attacks on Venezuela and a flagrant attempt to undermine the Bolivarian Revolution. What is the situation, how bad is it, and why now?*

**LL:** A new escalation of imperial aggression against Venezuela is underway. The Trump administration is threatening the peace of our country and the entire region by sending military vessels to the Caribbean under the guise of combating drug trafficking. This constitutes a new level of siege in Washington's interventionist plans for Latin America and the Caribbean, focusing on the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, which has stood up as an example of resistance, dignity, sovereignty, and independence. As in the face of all previous attacks, President Nicolás Maduro has been emphatic: "Venezuela will once again triumph over all the extravagant, bizarre, and criminal threats of North American imperialism."

*Guardian: US imperialism has a despicable history of regime change and political meddling in the affairs of other countries. The US Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM) now being deployed in the Caribbean is the same military entity that was used in the invasion of Grenada and the assassination of Maurice Bishop from the People's Revolutionary government in 1983. Allende in Chile and countless others also fell victim to US interventions. We will never forget nor forgive this. Why does the US have problems with Latin American governments that seek their own sovereignty?*

**LL:** As President Maduro pointed out during the 13th Extraordinary Summit of ALBA-TCP, held on 20 August; the United States power axis wants to replace the independent regimes and republics of our countries, and especially Venezuela, with dependent, subordinate regimes with colonial characteristics.

Historically, based on the Monroe Doctrine, the US has considered Latin America and the Caribbean as an area of influence. Under the Monroe Doctrine the US thinks of our territory as a space to serve not only as a supplier of raw materials under favourable conditions for Washington, but also as an exclusive geopolitical space from which positions on political, economic, and military issues are articulated.

An example of this is the so-called Inter-American System, headed by the Organization of American States (OAS), as a tool to monopolise the positions of supposedly sovereign states and amalgamate them into pronouncements and courses of action favourable to Washington, which acts as the

metropolis in a neocolonial North-South relationship. As Fidel Castro said in 1962, the OAS is the United States' colonial ministry. Venezuela began the process of withdrawing from this organisation in 2017 and finally left in 2019, as the OAS promoted actions against the sovereignty of our homeland.

To answer your question, the US's problems with Latin American governments emerge from the clamour of the peoples of the South, who refuse to continue being manipulated and exploited by local elites allied with transnational capital. When the clamour of the people merges with political leadership, organises, and seizes power, an intolerable equation is established for this pact of continental elites, which uses its media, economic, political, and military power to try to overthrow, sometimes successfully, the progressive governments of the region.

*Guardian: We have seen that right-wing forces have been ready to lend a hand to US imperialism in Latin America. We saw this with Bolsonaro, now Milei, and Bukele – a worrying trend. However, when I was in Venezuela, I saw an emerging unity from progressive and anti-imperialist forces from the Global South. How important is unity across Latin America right now?*

**LL:** You were certainly able to see with your own eyes the popular unity, the support for the government, the consolidation of forms of organisation like the communes; you were also able to witness the discipline and conviction of a people who have decided to be free, who understand the concept of homeland, and who assume their own destiny with dignity and courage.

All of these, dear Andrew, are decisive elements when it comes to confronting the thousand-headed monster. It's not just a military contingent or a threat of invasion; it's cultural slavery, the imposition of consumption patterns, the annihilation of our historical heritage – all these systematic actions undertaken by the empire with the help of its internal allies.

It's not just about confrontation. We are proposing – through tireless work with a leader who decided to invest every second of his life in building strategies – new paths and new alternatives to the permanent seige of the largest empire humanity has ever seen.

Latin American unity is essential. During Chávez's time, much progress was made on this idea. Unity is a central element of our country's foreign policy. CELAC (Community of Latin American and Caribbean States) and UNASUR (Union of South American Nations) were created, MERCOSUR (the Southern Common Market) was strengthened with the entry of Venezuela, and ALBA-TCP (Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America) was created. This Latin American and Caribbean unity was and is the key to the definitive emancipation of the entire region. The answer lies there. Only through this unity can we achieve development, reduce poverty, and minimise the gap between rich and poor. We know it, but so does the empire, which will play all its cards to prevent it.

*Guardian: The United States of America, though commanded by a white-imperialist and neo-fascist Trump government, is in fact*



*a mass of land that was once stewarded by Indigenous people, by peoples of the Americas. There are several internal struggles and contradictions in US society now, with mass action against ICE and its attacks on immigrants. The US can no longer hide that society is turning against Trump. Can we hope for a greater unity with progressive forces within the US – Indigenous, migrant, union and other political groups – to resist their repressive government and bring about change?*

**LL:** The situation you describe reflects the internal reality of the United States. We, as defenders of sovereignty and self-determination, understand that this is an issue that is their responsibility to address. The people of Venezuela are friends of the people of the United States. Differences between governments should not affect that relationship.

Regarding migration, since its birth as a Republic, Venezuela has been open to the world, a nation that has historically received migrants for more than 200 years, and it is only in the last decade that the country has seen an increase in emigration due to an induced and unprecedented phenomenon. Venezuelan migration occurred for economic reasons and was largely encouraged by a national and international psychological warfare campaign orchestrated by the media and right-wing governments in the region, which promised ease of migration and have promoted a sense of hopelessness and a lack of alternatives.

However, many of our migrants have been stigmatised and placed in a vulnerable position. For this reason, the Great Mission Return to the Homeland was activated, a Venezuelan state policy that facilitates the return of our fellow citizens, and a major campaign guided by this principle has been launched.

Migration is not a crime. This great mission has been key in this era, when unprecedented persecution against Venezuelans has been unleashed by Washington. This fight is not only in defence of our fellow citizens: it also calls for respect for the migrant population in general.

*Guardian: The world should know more about Venezuelan culture. In Australia we should not let geopolitical differences dictated by certain political forces get in the way of cultural appreciation and people-to-people relations. It was wonderful to see the film about Ali Primera the other day. What are two aspects of Venezuelan culture that you love (or miss!) the most?*

**LL:** Venezuelan culture is immeasurably diverse. Our musical, literary, and culinary wealth, as well as our popular culture, is truly impressive. One of our greatest ambassadors around the world is the National System of Youth and Children's Orchestras and Choirs of Venezuela, an educational program that offers free musical training to children and teenagers, especially in the popular and vulnerable sectors.

This year, "El Sistema," as we call it, celebrates its 50th anniversary, and is one of the most widely replicated initiatives worldwide, having been adapted in more than 60 countries around the world, including here in Australia, where Sistema Australia operates, offering programs in Aboriginal communities.

What I love most is music. I was part of El Sistema myself. I can still play some simple pieces on my old clarinet. What I miss most is the food. That fantastic blend of flavours brought from all over the world to a generous country, which welcomed people from every continent to form one of the most diverse, tolerant, and happy societies on the globe. ✨

**a people who have decided to be free,  
who understand the concept of  
homeland, and who assume their own  
destiny with dignity and courage**



# Call for solidarity against 'War on Blackness'

## Statement from the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists (CBTU)

**It's remarkable but perhaps inevitable that this American president would impose a military occupation on the capital city itself. This atrocity, this brazen power grab from a population already denied statehood, is not a random, petty act of a vengeful man. It is an open and explicit declaration of his War on Blackness.**

Trump's War on Blackness runs deep. It is relentless and ruthless. But we cannot flinch in this fragile moment. We must stand on legacy and overcome. We know the worst blows recently to democracy have been levelled at Black populations – from LA to Texas to DC. In July, the Trump regime sent 4,000 California National Guard troops and 700 Marines to quell ICE protests in Los Angeles, whose mayor is a well-respected Black woman, Karen Bass, former chair of the Congressional Black Caucus.

Trump's illegal takeover of a city run by a Black woman was meant to erase her power and elevate the military presence in a city 70 per cent non-white – over the mayor's objections. The Coalition of Black Trade Unionists stands with the state in its lawsuit to end Trump's illegal seizure of California's National Guards.

Next on Trump's War on Blackness is Texas, where he is bullying the Republican legislature to rip up the current congressional

map and draw a new, even more discriminatory political map that would potentially add five more Republican seats in Congress from Texas to help Trump impose his authoritarian agenda after the 2026 elections.

The new GOP seats would come at the expense of members of Congress who now represent hundreds of thousands of Black voters in the Houston and Dallas-Fort Worth area. This partisan gerrymandering will disenfranchise Black and Brown people to help Donald Trump rig the pivotal 2026 midterm elections. He's not even trying to disguise his corrupt power grab. Black folks stand in his way of keeping a rubber-stamp majority in Congress. Trump is also plotting now to steal Democrats' seats in other states where Black folks will stand in his way to grab more power, including Ohio, Indiana, and Missouri.

Trump's attempt to redraw congressional maps before the midterm elections and before the next census is unprecedented but very targeted. He's not trying to shrink representation of white voters in Congress. He only wants to erase the voice and power of Black voters who see through his MAGA lies and distractions. CBTU applauds Texas Democrats for taking a stand against Trump's redistricting scheme. We are inspired by your courage and determination to defend democracy.

So here we land, in DC under Trump's fabricated occupation – in spite of crime statistics trending downward in major categories, including violent crime, which has reached its lowest level in 30 years. As he did in Los Angeles, Trump intentionally bypassed DC's Black mayor, Muriel Bowser, in taking control of the city's police force and deploying over 200 National Guard troops. He also berated her intelligence and demeaned her leadership, as he did to LA Mayor Karen Bass.

It's no coincidence that he has tried to embarrass and erase two Black women in powerful positions.

But why does Trump's authoritarian occupation of DC matter so much and cut so deep with Black folks beyond Ben's Chili Bowl and the capital beltway? Trump wants to put his racist brand on a city that has symbolic meaning to Black people across the country. He wants to humiliate Black leadership and reinforce the racist stereotype of Black incompetence.

After all, doesn't John Wayne or some white superhero always come to rescue a lawless town from "them"? But for a people who have survived slavery's lash and Jim Crow's noose and saw their beloved leaders cut down by bullets, this moment is only the test before the triumph.

We condemn Donald Trump's rampage against Blackness – from LA to Texas to DC; from his federal DEI purge to his union-busting and destruction of public education. He cannot purge Blackness from America's DNA no matter how many executive orders he signs or insults he hurls at strong Black leaders.

We reiterate our call for statehood in the District of Columbia, not National Guard troops patrolling city streets.

We strongly urge our white allies in this struggle to openly and consistently denounce the racist targeting of Black leaders, Black populations, and institutions that preserve, teach and elevate Black history and culture.

Silence in this moment could have deadly consequences. Be clear, the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists has not and never will bow to evil. We do not believe our future is beyond our control. We will not relinquish the power of our labour solidarity and the strength of our resilient Blackness.

Occupied but not subdued!

People's Voice ✳

**Something to say?**  
**Write to the Editor!**



## Global Briefs

**USA:** The military occupation of Washington DC continues to escalate as the Trump administration prepares for a similar occupation of Chicago. Republican governors from six states have fulfilled Trump's request for additional National Guard troops to be deployed in the capital. Trump has also threatened to remove DC Mayor Muriel Bowser and establish federal control under his own command. White House Deputy Chief of Staff Stephen Miller labelled the Democrats a "domestic extremist organisation" and accused them of turning blue cities like DC and Chicago into "killing fields." All the states which have sent troops have cities with worse crime rates.

**Yemen:** The head of Ansar Allah's Supreme Political Council Madhi al-Mashat, has promised revenge against Israel following the assassination of the prime minister and other top officials by the IDF. Madhi al-Mashat has also called upon "citizens throughout the world" to boycott Israeli goods, demanded that occupiers return to their home countries, and warned that companies dealing with Israel "should leave before it's too late."

**Lebanon:** US envoy to Lebanon Tom Barrack has been condemned after he referred to local journalists as "animalistic" and "uncivilised" at a press conference. The Lebanese Press Editors Syndicate demanded a public apology, threatening to boycott future visits from US envoys. The Lebanese Communist Party labelled Barrack's comments "an explicit expression of an arrogant colonial mindset," calling attention to the longstanding trend of Washington treating Lebanon as a subordinate to US imperialist interests.

**Colombia:** The Colombian government has doubled down on its ban of all coal exports to Israel, in response to some shipping companies illegally continuing trade. Exports were first banned in June 2024. The new decree establishes "strict and without exceptions" restrictions which will remain until Israel compiles with the provisional measures issued by the International Court of Justice, or until there is an end to Israel's war on Palestinians.

**Sahel:** Mali and Burkina Faso have boycotted the African Chiefs of Defence Summit hosted by Nigeria. Tensions remain between Nigeria and the Alliance of Sahel States (AES), made up of Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger. Nigerian President Bola Tinubu had, in his role as head of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), threatened invasion of Niger and imposed economic sanctions. Nigeria has also proposed fencing its borders with the Sahel, calling the region unstable in the face of ongoing terrorism and refugee crises. Burkina Faso and Mali have cited colonialism and French imperialism as the root causes of regional instability, calling on the need for African sovereignty and unity. Both countries have continued to pursue the nationalisation of resource mining and have also rejected French and US military intervention.

**Korea:** Trump and South Korean President Lee Jae-Myung have discussed potential talks with Kim Jong Un of the DPRK, with Trump maintaining that he has a "very good relationship" with Kim. Lee has pursued increased diplomacy with the DPRK and said that he will restore the 19 September Military Agreement suspending military activity across the northern border as a display of trust. The DPRK has noted that these statements came at the same time as South Korean participation in joint military exercises with the US. While the US has maintained its 15% tariff on South Korea, Lee offered a \$150 billion package named "Make America Shipbuilding Great Again" aimed at the construction of new US shipyards and the training of shipbuilding and ship maintenance personnel. Lee has also promised to increase military spending so that South Korea can play a "leading" role in regional security posturing. Trump, meanwhile, pushed for South Korea to hand over ownership of land hosting US military bases.



**Solidarity Brigade to Cuba**

21 December 2025 – 9 January 2026

The Southern Cross Brigade is a study and work tour aimed at building solidarity with Cuban people. It offers friends of Cuba the opportunity to learn more about the island nation's unique, yet often misunderstood, political history and to participate in Cuba's rich cultural heritage. We will be celebrating the 65th anniversary of the Cuban Institute for Friendship Amongst the Peoples (ICAP) with other participants from across the world. Open to all! Estimated cost for 2025/26 is \$2500.

Find out more: Attend an online info session at 5pm on 7 September by scanning the QR Code.

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# Niger's revolution against French neocolonialism enters third year

Pavan Kulkarni

**Under siege by France's monetary strangulation and a war against their state by armed groups, Nigeriens marked the second anniversary of the 26 July revolution against French neocolonialism this year.**

The wave of mass protests against French military deployment in its former colonies had already washed away the regimes it had propped up in Mali and Burkina Faso when Niger's then-president, Mohamad Bazoum, was also toppled in a coup in 2023.

With the support of pan-Africanists, the left, and the mass movement protesting against French domination, the coup leader, General Abdourahamane Tchiani, established the National Council for the Safeguard of the Homeland (CNSP) as a military government.

"Since 26 July 2023," when Nigeriens made a "patriotic commitment to take our destiny into our own hands, the reactionary neocolonial system ... has continued to unleash itself against our country and its people," Tchiani said in an address on the anniversary.

When his government ordered the French troops out soon after the CNSP was established, France mobilized 13 member states of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), for a war against Niger.

The left and pan-Africanist forces in these countries counter-mobilised with demonstrations against the planned invasion of Niger. In the meantime, Mali and Burkina Faso, also former ECOWAS members whose popular military governments had already expelled the French troops, formed a defence pact with Niger, which evolved into the Alliance of Sahel States (AES).

Tchiani's government consolidated popular support domestically by successfully holding the fort against the threats from France and expelling its troops by the year-end. However, sanctions by ECOWAS strangled landlocked Niger's underdeveloped economy.

## FRANCE TIGHTENS THE MONETARY NOOSE

Even after these sanctions were lifted in February 2024, Niger remains in the clutches of a de facto embargo enacted by France through its control of Niger's currency, the CFA Franc.

Established by France in 1945 and imposed on eight West African and six Central African colonies, this currency was originally pegged to the French Franc and then to the euro in 2002. Printed in the Bank of France, the CFA has no independent value outside the guarantee of conversion to the euro.

France is using this currency, which has survived the formal independence of its former colonies, as a noose to choke Niger's ability to trade, said Aboubakar Alassane, a Nigerien member of the anti-imperialist West Africa People's Organization (WAPO).

All foreign currency exchanges and transactions by the eight member countries of the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU) that use the CFA Franc are handled by the Central Bank of West African States (BCEAO) or its authorised intermediaries.

Created by the French state in the late



General Abdourahamane Tchiani. Photo: Présidence de la république du Niger/Page Facebook

50s, BCEAO was required until 2020 to maintain 50% of all its foreign reserves in the Bank of France. France also had guaranteed representation in its governing bodies.

Some of these overt means of control were done away with in "symbolic" reforms by the turn of this decade to obscure its neocolonialism, against which mass movements were rising in the Sahel.

However, with CFA Franc still pegged to the euro at an exchange rate guaranteed by France, BCEAO remains an arm of French neocolonialism.

"If we export, say petrol, the money we are paid goes into the BCEAO, even when we are trading with the BRICS countries. Since we have refused this subjugation to France, it has become almost impossible to export," said Alassane.

"If we need to import something, we need to put our money in BCEAO to have the CFA Franc converted to euro by the Bank of France. Without euros or dollars, we are unable to import," he explained.

## THE PROLONGED STRUGGLE FOR MONETARY SOVEREIGNTY

"So to overcome CFA and establish our own currency is the next task of the revolution," Alassane maintains. He is hopeful that the solid foundation for this transition will be laid with the establishment of the AES Confederal Bank for Investment and Development (BCID-AES) this year. A draft

text for the establishment of this bank and a roadmap for its implementation were prepared by 25 May, when the three AES member countries' finance ministers met in Mali's capital, Bamako.

A three-day meeting of finance experts in Niger's capital Niamey was followed by a meeting of its ministers from Mali, Burkina Faso, and Niger.

Le Sahel reported that the draft's "terms of reference relating to the preparation of the legal documents ... procedure manuals and information system" were among the subjects discussed at this ministerial meeting ahead of the 26 July anniversary.

Expelling French troops and leaving ECOWAS was a matter of "political will", Alassane explained. But to break free from France's monetary chains is a "technical" problem that needs time to devise a solution, especially for one of the world's poorest countries, emerging from over a century of French colonial exploitation, continuing post-independence.

Nevertheless, even under these economic constrictions, the CNSP has accomplishments to show.

## "FOR THE FIRST TIME IN NIGER, WE HAVE NOT EXPERIENCED A SO-CALLED LEAN PERIOD"

"The Large-Scale Irrigation Program" rolled out last year is yielding "tangible

results," Tchiani said in his anniversary speech.

"Since the CNSP came to power, the area under irrigation has been expanding," especially in main agrarian regions like Dosso and Tillabéri, Salia Zirkifil, a 53-year-old rice farmer from Tillabéri's Kandadji locality, told *Peoples Dispatch*. "This has increased the food grains availability and made the prices more affordable."

The ECOWAS sanctions in mid-2023, followed by unprecedented floods last monsoon, had sent food prices skyrocketing. "A 25 bag of rice was costing between 16 and 20 thousand CFA. It is now available for 11 to 12 thousand," he said.

"For the first time in Niger," Tchiani added in his speech, "we have not experienced the so-called lean period."

It is common for farming families to cope with grain shortages during these periods by eating the seeds from the previous harvest. This leaves them with a shortage for the upcoming planting season.

"Since there was no lean period this time, farmers were able to save all their seeds for sowing," Zirkifil said, hopeful that the next harvest will be even larger.

The CNSP has also nationalised uranium mining, instituted payment of scholarships to students, and commissioned a 30 megawatt solar plant.

Peoplesdispatch.org (edited for space) ✳

# Cuba approves landmark bill legalising gender change

**In a major win for Cuba's LGBTQ+ community, the country's parliament has passed a new law granting people the right to legally change their gender.**

The Law of Civil Registration does not require "a previous modification of appearance" or

gender-affirming surgery. Individuals can use the law to change their gender twice as long as the first time happened when the person was a minor.

In recent years, Cuba has blazed a trail for LGBTQ+ rights in the region. The 2019 Constitution opened the door to progressive

reforms and the 2022 Family Code legalized same-sex marriage and adoption by same-sex couples.

Until now, it was nearly impossible for people to change their gender without gender-affirming surgery. Previously, trans people could not legally change their name unless the new name corresponded

to their legal gender. That provision was revoked in 2022, but the process remained long and difficult, according to activists.

Cuba's first gender-affirming surgery occurred in 1988, and the procedure became more common in the 2010s. But none have been performed in recent years as

hospitals have been forced to stop many surgeries due to the ongoing and worsening economic blockade by the USA, which has caused an economic crisis.

Belly of the Beast ✳



# How the free market killed New Orleans

Michael Parenti  
(Republished on the 20th anniversary of the Hurricane Katrina disaster.)

**The free market played a crucial role in the destruction of New Orleans and the death of thousands of its residents. Armed with advanced warning that a momentous (Category 5) hurricane was going to hit that city and the surrounding areas, what did officials do? They played the free market.**

They announced that everyone should evacuate. Everyone was expected to devise their own way out of the disaster area by private means, just as the free market dictates, just like people do when disaster hits free-market developing countries.

It is a beautiful thing, this free market, in which every individual pursues his or her own personal interests and thereby affects an optimal outcome for the entire society. This is the way the invisible hand works its wonders.

There would be none of the collectivistic, regimented evacuation as occurred in Cuba. When an especially powerful hurricane hit that island, the Castro government, abetted by neighbourhood citizen committees and local Communist Party cadres, evacuated 1.3 million people, more than 10% of the country's population, with not a single life lost, a heartening feat that went largely unmentioned in the US press.

On day one of the disaster caused by Hurricane Katrina, it was already clear that hundreds, perhaps thousands, of American lives had been lost in New Orleans. Many people had "refused" to evacuate, media reporters explained, because they were just plain "stubborn."

It was not until Day Three that the relatively affluent telecasters began to realise that tens of thousands of people had failed to flee because they had nowhere to go and no means of getting there. With hardly any cash at hand or no motor vehicle to call their own, they had to sit tight and hope for the best. In the end, the free market did not work so well for them.

Many of these people were low-income African Americans, along with fewer numbers of poor whites. It should be remembered that most of them had jobs before Katrina's lethal visit. That's what most poor people do in this country: They work, usually quite hard at dismally paying jobs, sometimes more than

one job at a time. They are poor not because they're lazy but because they have a hard time surviving on poverty wages while burdened by high prices, high rents, and regressive taxes.

The free market played a role in other ways. Bush's agenda was to cut government services to the bone and make people rely on the private sector for the things they might need. So, he sliced \$71.2 million from the budget of the New Orleans Corps of Engineers, a 44% reduction. Plans to fortify New Orleans' levees and upgrade the system of pumping out water had to be shelved.

Bush took to the airways and said that no one could have foreseen this disaster. Just another lie tumbling from his lips. All sorts of people had been predicting disaster for New Orleans, pointing to the need to strengthen the levees and the pumps and fortify the coastlands.

In their campaign to starve out the public sector, the Bushite reactionaries also allowed developers to drain vast areas of wetlands. Again, that old invisible hand of the free market would take care of things. The developers, pursuing their own private profit, would devise outcomes that would benefit us all.

But the wetlands had served as a natural absorbent and barrier between New Orleans and the storms riding in from across the sea.

As for the rescue operation, the free-marketeers like to say that relief to the more unfortunate among us should be left to private charity. It was a favourite preaching of President Ronald Reagan that "private charity can do the job." For the first few days that indeed seemed to be the policy with the disaster caused by Hurricane Katrina.

The federal government was nowhere in sight, but the Red Cross went into action. Its message: "Don't send food or blankets; send money." Meanwhile, Pat Robertson and the Christian Broadcasting Network called for donations and announced "Operation Blessing," which consisted of a highly-publicised but totally inadequate shipment of canned goods and Bibles.

By day three, even the myopic media began to realise the immense failure of the rescue operation. People were dying because relief had not arrived. The authorities seemed more concerned with the looting than with rescuing people. It was property before people, just like the free marketeers always want.

*People's World* (edited for space) ★



Damage from Hurricane Katrina to New Orleans – taken seven months after the hurricane.  
Photo: Gregory Varnum – commons.wikimedia.org (CC BY-SA 3.0)



## Not-so super gaps

The government has introduced superannuation payments on government-funded paid parental leave (PPL), a welcome development after years of lobbying by women's organisations and industry (union) funds. The Association of Superannuation Funds of Australia (ASFA) says that for a woman taking the full 24 weeks paid parental, PPL super contributions will add an additional \$7,200 to her fund. Previously she would have received nothing. From 1 July 2026 PPL will be extended to 26 weeks seeing the full PPL super hitting \$7,800.

"This is a major win for Australian women who take time out of the paid workforce to have and raise children," ASFA CEO Mary Delahunty said, adding that "While compulsory superannuation has been delivering on its purpose of providing a dignified retirement for most Australians, it's long been known that women are often financially disadvantaged in retirement due to time taken out of work to have and raise a family."

In 2021 the median superannuation balance for men aged 60 to 64 was around \$212,000 for males but just \$159,000 for females – a gap of 25%.

Many women are subjected to a double whammy. For example, those who take say nine or 12 months of parental leave face a loss of superannuation contributions as well as being victims of the gender pay gap. The average weekly earnings of males is \$1,791.10 compared to \$1,303.10 for all women – a whopping \$490 a week gap. There are a number of factors at play such as women being more likely to be found in part-time or casual jobs, or the concentration of women in low-paid, caring professions as well as outright sexism.

Early childhood education and care are for many women a financial barrier to working longer hours. Grandparents are used where to cover some days, but that is not possible when they also work or are themselves reliant on care. Again women are more likely to be carers for elderly parents – just one example of unpaid labour that women do.

More than 80% of women experiencing menopause say their work was negatively affected and 70% report not being comfortable talking to their boss about ways to support them, according to a study commissioned by the Victorian Women's Trust.

Australian women pay a superannuation savings penalty as they transition through menopause. Research collated by Menopause Friendly reveals one in four women considered leaving work during their menopause transition, thanks to the sometimes debilitating physical and mental health impacts. 83% report lost productivity due to symptoms and 67% have related mental health concerns. According to ASFA, each year around 20,000 women will be forced to switch from full-time to part-time work and another 10,000 will leave the workforce but return later and around 4,000 retire early – all as a result of the often-debilitating symptoms of menopause.

It is not easy for a woman to approach a male boss to discuss needs resulting from menopause, especially when cultural issues are at play. That's why as part of the Senate Inquiry into Issues Related to Menopause and Perimenopause, ASFA called for a comprehensive survey of Australian women regarding the impacts of menopause transition on work and career, including early retirement.

The ACTU reports that 25% of working women retire before the age of 55, despite women in the 45-54 age group typically reporting they wanted to retire at 64.

A number of trade unions have done significant work on issues relating to menopause and reproductive health more broadly. This includes surveying members on the issue, bargaining for reproductive leave and workplace adjustments, and developing materials and resources. There's a lot more work to do.

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Guardian

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

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

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



# 11 September

## Remembering the coup

Dr Bev Hall

**The 11 September 1973 Chilean coup had more far-reaching and sinister repercussions than it first appears. The Chilean coup was based on the Jakarta method which had been successful in overthrowing Sukarno in Indonesia in 1965. Over a million people were killed.**

This 'model' removed democratically elected governments which the US disapproved of. It became a system to ensure that those removed could not regain the position they were elected into. In November 1975, a similar process to unseat and replace Gough Whitlam was carried out. One action was to intervene in the supply of basic food products. In Australia, as in Chile, for months leading up to the coup, first flour was not available in the supermarkets. Then, suddenly, flour would reappear and then sugar would be removed from shelves. This process continued with various basics. The idea was that the people would become angry and stage demonstrations to overthrow the government. In Chile's case the US approved regime took over in a bloody coup.

In Australia Gough Whitlam was a believer in the rule of law and didn't consider that the powers that be in the UK would also take part in his removal. Australian voters were easily swayed and this led to a bloodless coup. The British Information Research Department had been training journalists and media workers, and lobbying influential people to disseminate false information, working in with far-right bodies to develop

"strategies of tension" and assassination. They were stationed in countries of concern hiding behind 'accredited press passes.' In Australia they began operations in the 1970's working in with the Defence Signals Directorate and the National Security Agency.

In 1973, Whitlam's administration heard about two Australian intelligence officers stationed in the embassy in Chile and ordered them to leave. They refused and became useful in the destabilising operations, as it was difficult for US officials to operate openly. On 11 September 1973, the dictator Pinochet quickly swept in with the assistance of the CIA to control any progressive people from rising up in objection. The Popular Unity government led by Salvador Allende was rounded up, and any progressive people were taken to a large stadium where thousands were murdered. Some have wondered if the progressive Australian people rebelled against this action over the Whitlam dismissal would we have suffered the same fate as the Chilean people? This became the model to remove democratically elected governments who the US didn't agree with.

In Australia Chilean immigrant groups were under constant surveillance. In Queensland, a base for DINE (Chilean Army secret police) agents was established, assisted by CIA operatives. Although a large number of political refugees from Chile were mainly involved with the Popular Unity party only a few had been in the Chilean Communist party and the MIR (Revolutionary Left Movement). A Dine /CIA agent from Brisbane once approached me to find out how many Chileans were visiting South Australia



Bombing of La Moneda (presidential palace). Photo: Biblioteca del Congreso Nacional – creativecommons.org (CC BY 3.0 CL)

and who they were. I refused to cooperate. However, there were some DINE operatives amongst the Chilean immigrants.

The Chilean Solidarity organisation was established to assist from many progressive Australian groups and Unions to support the refugees. This organisation also raised funds to assist the Chilean people in Chile who were facing incredible hardships under the regime. In South Australia we developed a bridging programme for Chilean teachers to gain accreditation and employment with one of the Teachers Colleges. Unfortunately,

two 'refugees' who I found a job for in kindergartens where I worked ended up reporting to CIA operatives. However, I was asked by the Chileans nationally to attend a meeting with them at parliament house in Canberra with the Minister for Immigration to discuss increasing the numbers of refugees from Chile.

The Chilean Solidarity group dissolved in the late 1980s, but the coup is still commemorated. It still casts a shadow and reminds us of the USA's approach to progressive and independent nations. ★

## The Iran beat-up

Marcus Browning

**Israeli interventions prompted the Albanese government to expel Iran's ambassador to Canberra. Israeli government spokesperson David Mencer praised Albanese for taking "threats seriously" against the Jewish community, which he said had come after a "forthright intervention" from Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.**

Mencer claimed that Netanyahu had "made very forthright comments about the Australian prime minister himself," which spurred Albanese to action.

"He (Netanyahu) made those comments because he did not believe that the actions of the Australian government had gone anywhere near far enough," Mencer added.

Netanyahu last week accused Albanese of being "a weak politician who betrayed Israel and abandoned Australia's Jews," days after Albanese announced Australia would move to formally recognise a Palestinian state in September.

Reading from the CIA/Mossad script, Albanese said "intelligence services" had linked Iran to an arson attack on a cafe in Sydney in October last year, and another on a synagogue in Melbourne in December.

To further enhance the drama, Albanese added the two incidents were "attempts to undermine social cohesion and sow discord in our community." Albanese's real concern is the growing public opposition to the now clear embrace by his government of the genocidal Zionist regime, and his government's collaboration in that genocide.

Ambassador Ahmad Sadeghi and three other Iranian

officials have been ordered to leave Australia, which has withdrawn its own diplomats from Tehran. Iran's foreign ministry spokesman added the decision to expel their envoy was "driven by Australia's domestic policies."

Iranian Ministry of Foreign Affairs spokesman Esmail Baghaei said Iran "absolutely rejected" Australia's accusations regarding the attacks and noted that the claims had come after Australia had directed "limited criticism" at Israel.

"Any inappropriate and unjustified action on a diplomatic level will have a reciprocal reaction," Baghaei said.

### MAINTAIN THE MOMENTUM

It is vital that the pressure on the Albanese and Israeli governments is maintained. This can be done through letters to politicians, letters to the print media, getting onto talkback programs, and use of social media. If you can, keep showing up at protests against the genocide!

Write now to Prime Minister Anthony Albanese, Foreign Minister Penny Wong, and Defence Minister (aka minister for war) Richard Marles.

#### Demand:

- Sanctions on Israel and its leaders
- An end to all trade, including arms trade with Israel
- Expulsion of Israeli diplomats and withdrawal of Australian diplomats from Israel
- Active support for the charges in international courts against the Israeli government
- Recognition of an independent and sovereign state of Palestine NOW. ★

### Questions not answered about Iran

- ASIO director Mike Burgess said the investigation was led by ASIO and the AFP "in liaison with foreign partners." Who were the foreign partners?
- Why would Iran do this?
- What's in it for them?
- If Iran has crossed a red line, as determined by ASIO and the government, what's the red line for Israel?
- Why is the killing of an Australian aid worker, Zomi Frankcom not on the wrong side of a 'red line'?
- Was an Israeli government spokesperson wrong to claim that Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was partly responsible for the expulsion of the Iranian ambassador?
- If so, will the government be rebuking the spokesperson?



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