

# Trump's climate colonialism

M Santos

US president Trump stunned and alarmed delegates with his arrogant and reckless one-hour rant to the UN's 80th General Assembly on 23 September. Most notably, he attacked the UN for not solving problems and called climate change "crap." The focus of the meeting was to have been on world peace and global warming.

Trump, who had pulled the US out of the Paris Agreement, stoked division and climate denial, describing the transition to renewables as "suicidal energy ideas," and climate change as the "greatest con job ever perpetrated on the world."

"If you don't get away from this green scam, your country is going to fail," he warned world leaders.

"I have a little standing order in the White House – never use the word 'coal,' only use the words, 'clean, beautiful coal.' It sounds much better, doesn't it?"

He lamented the fact that Scotland is sitting on some premium oil reserves in the North Sea, and that local authorities are currently "ruining" the countryside with windmills and solar panels. Scotland is a global leader with renewables generating the equivalent of 113% of Scotland's overall electricity consumption in 2022.

Trump boasted that the US is "the hottest country anywhere in the world, and there is no other country even close."

The UN World Meteorological Organization reported that 2024 was the hottest year on record, with average global temperatures 1.6 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels.

Instead of recognising the need for and urgency of climate action, Trump promoted an expansion of fossil fuel investment.

## UN CLIMATE SUMMIT

Country leaders were expected to announce new, stronger climate commitments at the Climate Summit held on 24 September. New commitments fell far short of what the science demands.

Ilana Seid, from the island nation of Palau and head of the Organisation of Small Island States, said that not acting on climate change will "be a betrayal of the most vulnerable."



March for action to fight climate change, Paris, September 2025.

Evans Davie Njewa of Malawi said, "we are endangering the lives of innocent people in the world."

Adelle Thomas, a climate scientist and a vice-chair of the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (UNFCC) said, "Millions of people around the world can already testify to the devastation that climate change has brought to their lives." "The evidence is not abstract. It is lived, it is deadly, and it demands urgent action."

According to the UNFCC, current national plans would only cut global emissions by 2.6 per cent by 2030 compared to 2019 levels, a fraction of the 43 per cent reduction

that scientists say is needed to keep global temperatures to no more than 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels. Even that figure is being questioned by scientists as inadequate.

The Australian government announced its totally inadequate and unlikely 62%-70% reduction in emissions by 2035, while failing to report on the rapid expansion of fossil fuel production.

## COLONIAL INJUSTICE

Carbon dioxide stays in the atmosphere for more than a century. As a result, the US is responsible for 24% of emissions since 1850 according to Global Carbon Project data. The entire continent of Africa, with four times

the population of the US is responsible for around 3%.

OXFAM International's recent report *Unjust Transition: Reclaiming the Energy Future from Climate Colonialism*, says "From transition mineral mining to debt burdens and unequal energy access, the current trajectory mirrors centuries of colonial injustice."

"In 2024, high-income countries accounted for roughly 50% of global clean energy investment, and China for 29%, while Africa accounted for just 2%, despite sub-Saharan Africa being home to 85% of all the people in the world without electricity.

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“The evidence is not abstract. It is lived, it is deadly, and it demands urgent action.”

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Join hands with China, embrace opportunities

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For genuine recognition of the State of Palestine

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# Guardian

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## Kids, Palestine and a Melbourne hospital

People who want to downplay solidarity with Palestine have a hard time denying that Israel is carrying out a genocide. Not wanting to be openly pro-genocide, they sometimes complain that Palestine is a long way from Australia. “What’s it to do with us?”, they ask.

Readers of the *Guardian* will know that’s a dishonest question. Australia provides weapons components to Israel, not to mention multi-million dollar contracts to Israeli arms firms. Israeli PM Netanyahu took the time to condemn Australia’s belated recognition of Palestinian statehood, so he obviously doesn’t think this country has nothing to do with the conflict.

There’s another way the war affects us, through a determined lobby group for whom Israel is always the victim. For them, defending Israel, no matter what it does, justifies almost any action.

Last month, that meant derailing an event aimed at helping health professionals help children.

The event, ‘Children and War’ was meant to discuss the effects of war on children. It was cancelled because of lobbying by a “body opposing antisemitism” as the ABC put it. Australia has a lot of children affected by wars in Sudan, Afghanistan, Syria, and elsewhere. The ‘Australian Alliance Against Antisemitism’ opposed the event because of possible criticism of Israel.

Sue Wareham, president of the Medical Association for the Prevention of War said, “it seems that we would have had permission to talk about children in war, anywhere else, except Palestine.”

“What does that say about our humanity when the plight of children in one place cannot be discussed from a health perspective?”

It certainly doesn’t say much about the humanity of transparent lobby groups like the ‘Australian Alliance Against Antisemitism in Healthcare,’ who use antisemitism as a cudgel to silence honest discussion of Israel.

It’s not about antisemitism really. The Australian government’s anti-semitism envoy has been very vocal on antisemitism when it involves university protests, and has spoken out in support of the Israeli Defence Force bombing hospitals. She lost her voice when actual Nazis fronted a racist march.

It’s about defending Israel by silencing criticism.

This is why Israel-right-or-wrong advocates have conducted campaigns to have Antoinette Lattouf dismissed from the ABC. This is why a Whatsapp group of “creatives” worked together to try to get Clementine Ford sacked for supporting Palestine.

This is not a Jews versus non-Jews issue. Groups like Jews Against the Occupation and the Jewish Council of Australia have been eloquent on the topic of Israel. They don’t want their religious and ethnic identity to be shackled to the actions of a state that’s committing genocide and war crimes. They don’t think that state should be above criticism.

The Children’s Hospital is yet another organisation that has tried to placate the Israel lobby and fallen on its face. Like the Bendigo Writers’ Festival which saw more than 50 writers withdraw rather than face a requirement to sign a tendentious definition of antisemitism that rules out valid criticisms of Israel, and the ABC which sacked Antoinette Lattouf after pressure from pro-Israel lobbyists and has since stumped up \$150,000 after the sacking was found illegal, the Children’s Hospital has found that buying off the lobbyists isn’t worth it.

So what’s the communist take on this? Israel is an imperialist colonial settler state, and an instrument of the USA’s imperialism in the Middle East. Communists support Palestine because we support anti-imperialist struggles everywhere. Communists support the right of health professionals to do their job to protect children without harassment. Social organisations like the Children’s Hospital and the ABC need to stand up to the Zionist lobby in the interests of Australians. So too does our government.

# Trump’s climate colonialism

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“The inequality is not only in where finance flows, but in how much it costs: clean energy projects in the Global South face interest rates of 9-13.5%, compared with just 3-6% in richer countries, slowing the pace of the transition. These costs are not inevitable – they reflect a system that prices risk through the racialised lens of colonial legacies. The impact is stark: Powering 100,000 people with clean energy costs about \$95 million in advanced economies like the UK, but \$139 million (45% higher) in emerging economies such as India and \$188 million (97% higher) in African countries such as Nigeria.”

“If just one year’s energy consumption of the wealthiest 1% were redistributed, it could meet the modern energy needs of all the people in the world without electricity seven times over, while redistributing the consumption of the top 10% global energy consumers could meet the needs of the entire Global South nine times over,” the OXFAM report says.

## CHINA

Trump’s denials of the climate emergency could not have been in starker contrast to the commitments and progress made by China, who Trump accused of greatly expanding production of greenhouse gas emissions. He didn’t let truth get in the way of his claims.

Chinese president Xi Jinping delivered his contribution to the Summit via video:

“Green and low-carbon transition is the trend of the time. While some country is acting against it, the international community should stay focused on the right direction, remain unwavering in confidence, unrelenting in actions and unrelenting in intensity, and push for formulation and delivery on NDCs [Nationally Determined Contributions], with a view to providing more positive energy to the cooperation on global climate governance,” Xi said.

“Fairness and equity should be upheld and the right to development of developing countries fully respected,” he said. “The global green transition should

serve to narrow rather than widen the North-South gap. Countries need to honour the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities whereby developed countries should take the lead in fulfilling emission reduction obligations and provide more financial and technological support to developing countries.”

Xi stressed the importance of deepening cooperation, adding that international coordination in green technologies and industries should be strengthened to address the shortfall in green production capacity and ensure a free flow of quality green products globally, so that the benefits of green development can reach all corners of the world.

China will, by 2035, reduce economy-wide net greenhouse gas emissions by 7%-10% from peak levels, while striving to do better. It will increase the share of non-fossil fuels in total energy consumption to over 30 per cent, expand the installed capacity of wind and solar power to over six times the 2020 levels, scale up the total forest stock volume to over 24 billion cubic meters, make new energy vehicles the mainstream in the sales of new vehicles, and expand the National Carbon Emissions Trading Market to cover major high-emission sectors – basically establishing a climate adaptive society.

“Let’s all step up our actions to realise the beautiful vision of harmony between man and nature, and preserve planet Earth – the place we call home.”

China will partner with the UN to establish a China-UN Global South-South Development Facility, with \$10 million in initial funding, and a global centre for sustainable development in Shanghai in cooperation with the UN Development Program.

The three cheapest electricity sources globally last year were onshore wind, solar panels and new hydropower, according to an energy cost report by the International Renewable Energy Agency.

Oxfam International stresses that a “just transition must redistribute power and resources, curb overconsumption, and prioritise dignity and rights for all.” ★

# 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. ★

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# Vale Beryl Miller

**The Guardian is sorry to report the passing of one of the Party's longest serving members, Beryl Miller, who has died aged 99 in South Australia.**

Beryl joined the Eureka Youth League at the age of 15, and was active for socialism ever since. Beryl joined the Party in 1952. Beryl was very active in the Union of Australian Women, as well as the Women's International Democratic Federation and the Australian Peace Committee. In 1964 Beryl represented South Australia when the Communist Party of Australia organised the first women's delegation to the Soviet Union. In 1971 she became a foundation member of the Socialist Party of Australia, the predecessor organisation to the modern Communist Party of Australia.

Beryl continued her solidarity into the 1990s.

During the special period for Cuba caused by the changes taking place in the Soviet Union, the Australia Cuba Friendship Society in South Australia was urgently organising medical supplies to ship to Cuba. This required hours of sorting, packing and finally loading the supplies into a container. Both Beryl and her husband Alan despite being in their older years, didn't hesitate to help and the Cuba Friendship Society was very grateful for their support.

Beryl was always a keen reader of *Guardian*, *The Workers' Weekly* and sold countless copies of the paper in South Australia.

The Communist Party of Australia, particularly the South Australian branch, is privileged to have been served for so long by such a dedicated comrade as Beryl Miller. 🇺🇦



## Remembering the dead, for the sake of the living

Speech delivered by Mining and Energy Union (MEU) General President Tony Maher at the 2025 Northern Mining & NSW Energy District Annual Memorial Day.

**I'd like to begin by acknowledging the special guests who are here today, including our political representatives, all the MEU members and delegates from Lodges across the District, our retired miners and of course – most importantly – the family and friends of those workers whose names are etched on the wall, whose lives were tragically taken too soon by our industry.**

The wall before us represents the cumulative history of hundreds of years of coal mining in the Hunter. It tells the story of our region and industry from early colonial settlement and the exploitation of convict labour, through the Federation of Australia and into the modern era. It tells this story via the workers who were killed at work in our dangerous yet vital industry.

The wall was first unveiled in March 1996 by then-Prime Minister Paul Keating. It was a conscious decision by the designers of the memorial that the wall should be outdoors, to always be accessible to the loved ones of those lost, and to create a solemn space for reflection for the broader community.

Nearly 30 years later, the Jim Comerford Memorial Wall has become an intrinsic part of the Hunter mining community, and the annual Memorial Day one of the most important dates in our calendar. I had the great honour of unveiling the restored memorial wall in 2021, and I'm proud of the small contribution I've made in ensuring the history and tragedy of our industry is immortalised in beautiful black granite. I am certain that this memorial will serve as a testament to the sacrifices of our community and industry for many generations to come.

Before I go any further, I must acknowledge Craig Hugo, the latest addition to this wall who was tragically killed at the decommissioned Astar mine since we were all last gathered together. Craig's death has had a devastating effect on his loved ones and workmates. I hope this memorial can bring them some solace and comfort.

Craig's death is also a sobering reminder that mines remain dangerous to workers even when they have ceased being productive. Employers must be held to robust safety standards even when mines cease to generate

profit, and approach care and maintenance or closure.

Just as with Craig, each name on this wall represents a great tragedy – a spouse, parent, child or sibling who never returned home at the end of their shift. Their loss reverberates through the community and across generations, impacting on countless others in their absence.

The wall also tells the story of the Northern District coalfields from the earliest days of colonial settlement and convict labour. The age range of the deceased, from eight to eighty, reveals an industry unrestrained by concerns about health and safety. The scale and frequency of multi-person fatalities is also striking, particularly when you take into account the much smaller and tightly knit coal community of the time. They betray the perilous nature of the work, wherein miners were taking their lives into their own hands in a way that would be incomprehensible to us today.

However, the wall also shows the progression in the fight to eliminate workplace fatalities from the very beginning up until today. The very first miners' unions in Australia formed right here in the Hunter, ad-hoc arrangements springing up around individual pits, eventually morphing into the Lodge structure at the heart of our union today.

We know from records at the time that protection of life and limb was a primary motivator for getting organised, in addition to what might be considered traditional industrial matters. Length of shift and fatigue, as well as adequate lighting underground, were some of the first issues campaigned on by these proto-unions, understanding from the very beginning that if workers didn't stand up for their own safety and conditions, no one would.

As these local unions coalesced into a district-wide structure, a new demand emerged from the miners. They sought to elect one of their own, a worker with first-hand experience at the coalface, to represent their interests in regard to health and safety. These representatives would be deputised with the power to stop unsafe work and be consulted on any changes to the regular performance of work.

These deputies would eventually be formalised into what we know today as Check Inspectors, or Industry Safety and Health Representatives, a system of elected, union-employed safety experts whose role is enshrined in legislation and who remain



Photo: MEU

unashamedly representative of workers. This unique system of worker involvement in their own safety is one of the great prides of our union, one which will continue to celebrate as we approach the 150th anniversary of this tradition.

Our union safety champions are only one component of how we manage risk in the workplace, however. We have seen time and again that securing the best outcomes requires tripartite action between workers, industry, and government. Real, lasting progress can only be made when these stakeholders work in concert and pull in the same direction.

However, we must also recognise that the greatest improvements to the safety of our mines have been in response to some of the lowest moments of our industry's history. The MEU has fought hard to ensure that every name on this wall results in changes on the ground, through agitation, education and legislation.

For example, the disaster at Bellbird, 102 years ago this month, led to the most significant rewrite of mine safety legislation in the history of New South Wales. Addressing the inadequacies that led to the disaster was hard-fought for but eventually won.

It would ultimately take two years, two coronial inquests, a royal commission and a Labor state government for the law to be changed, introducing many of the basic mine safety standards we take for granted today. These included the mandated use of safety lamps, banning the use of internal combustion engines underground, and setting minimum acceptable ventilation standards.

Likewise, the tragedy in Gretley in 1996, which I remember all too well, proved to be a step forward for accountability and responsibility in our industry. It took over seven years of fighting in court and in the media, but for the first time in over 200 years of the NSW coal industry, management figures were prosecuted for the deaths of workers in their mine. All the thousands of names on this wall before us, the lives destroyed through unsafe working conditions, and it took until the early 2000s for anyone to be held to account.

We are proud of the progress we've made, moving beyond the frequent mass-casualty events which populate much of the Wall, however that is no excuse to be complacent – as every name added to this wall reminds us.

We must remember that the potential for disaster that claimed all these lives immortalised here remains in our industry; and use the memory of those lost before us as motivation to improve conditions for those who come after.

As I leave here today, I ask all of you to hold the memory of the workers on this wall with you as you return to your workplaces. Please never allow complacency to fester, speak up when something is not right, and continue the work you all do to improve safety and ensure every miner gets home at the end of their shift. 🇺🇦

# if workers didn't stand up for their own safety and conditions, no one would



# What a driver's win against Uber means

Graham Holton

**In September 2025, the Fair Work Commission (FWC) ruled that Mohammad Shareef Hotak, an Uber driver, had been unfairly treated when Uber 'deactivated' him, meaning he wasn't assigned any work. The FWC ordered Uber to pay his lost wages. The Commission described the two-month deactivation as "plainly unfair," noting a lack of substantiation for the serious allegations made against him. The finding means drivers will now feel more protected against unsubstantiated and unfair deactivations.**

The Transport Workers' Union (TWU) and the ACTU see this ruling as a strong precedent for gig workers' rights; platforms such as Uber cannot deactivate workers without fair process and compensation. This may lead to more claims and litigation in the future.

This follows one of Australia's largest class action wins in 2024, when Uber agreed to a \$271.8 million settlement to compensate more than 8,000 taxi and hire-car drivers, operators and licence holders who claimed lost income and licence value when Uber entered the market. This settlement was approved by the Supreme Court of Victoria.

Law firms point out that there are eligibility thresholds that curtail how broadly these protections apply. The person must be a "regulated worker" or "employee-like worker," and must have worked through the platform regularly for a certain period, such as six months, to bring a claim. Uber may face increased legal and administrative costs to improve internal compliance documentation, set up review boards, and have faster dispute resolutions. Companies like Uber being what they are, any increased costs will be probably be passed on to customers, through higher fares.

This win will lead to further litigation to define what counts as "regular work," with ambiguity leading to inconsistent decisions. Platforms might adjust contracts or terms of service to include terms about deactivation, evidence, and buffer periods. Some platforms may be too cautious, and reduce flexibility for drivers. It also means that platforms that manage deactivation fairly and with transparency may gain a reputational advantage in attracting drivers.

The effectiveness of recent legislative changes such as the Digital Labour Platform Deactivation Code, and protections for "employee-like workers," provide some clarification of laws. Further regulation will probably be needed to close legal loopholes and abuses in gig work arrangements. ★

## HSU Allied Health Members rally for better wages, conditions, and services

**The Health Services Union SA/NT (HSU), representing Allied Health Professionals and Medical Scientists, has been negotiating a new Enterprise Agreement with the Finocchiaro government for more than six months.**

After making an abysmal pay offer, the NT government has forced the EA to a vote against the advice of unions – members are campaigning to vote NO against this deal. The vote closed on 24 September.

Allied Health covers a wide range of professions, including physiotherapists, radiographers, social workers, speech pathologists, occupational therapists, dietitians, psychologists, pathology scientists, and sonographers.

Allied Health work across NT Health in hospital settings, directly in the community, as part of mental health services, and across a range of other administrative and management roles.

Members rallied out the front of both Royal Darwin Hospital and Alice Springs Hospital. The rally was mostly over the workers'

lunch break, but the HSU notified of stop work action to ensure as many members could attend as possible. The HSU ensured that adequate skeleton staffing remained on site so that all urgent services could continue.

Allied Health is taking this action because it is fed up with a government that isn't listening to its concerns. Allied Health was ignored in bargaining and is being forced into a situation in which it has to campaign against a proposed EA that would leave it and the rest of the public sector lagging behind the rest of Australia.

If voted in, the proposed EA would result in Territory Allied Health staying as the lowest in the country – it was once one of the highest. Without decent wages and conditions, the NT simply won't be able to attract the workforce required to operate essential services. Allied Health are focused on reducing hospital stays and the rate of hospitalisation – without a strong Allied Health workforce the system will only get worse.

The HSU has put forward

claims which include an 18.5% pay increase over four years, improved recognition in the agreement with defined classification structures, a professional development allowance that actually covers the costs of professional development, stronger workload protections, and improved incentives for regional and remote workers.

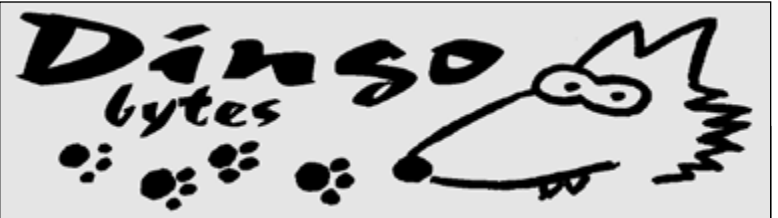
HSU SA/NT Branch Secretary, Billy Elrick said, "Allied Health are walking off the job to stand up for the essential services they provide to all Territorians."

"The HSU has organised the rallies with patient safety in mind, we have utilised lunch breaks and skeleton crews will remain where required."

"The Finocchiaro government needs to get serious about what it will do to ensure we can attract and retain an Allied Health workforce that Territorians rely on every day."

"The HSU is calling on all public sector workers who are covered by this agreement to vote no, it's a bad deal for everyone."

Health Services Union SA/NT ★



The foreign ministers of North Korea and China have agreed to deepen bilateral ties and resist hegemonism or unilateralism. In a meeting with her Chinese counterpart Wang Yi, North Korean Foreign Minister Choe Son Hui cited her country's leader, Kim Jong-un, saying further bolstering ties with China is North Korea's unwavering position.

The meeting took place as part of a four-day visit to Beijing by Choe and follows Jong-un's visit to Beijing earlier this month, where he attended an 80th anniversary commemoration of victory in the Chinese People's War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression (1931-45) and the World Anti-Fascist War.

During the meeting, Wang said the two countries should strengthen strategic communication and enhance exchanges and co-operation to better improve their people's well-being and jointly promote regional peace and development.

He said that China appreciated North Korea's firm support on issues regarding its core interests and major concerns and stood ready to strengthen co-ordination in international and regional affairs, oppose all forms of hegemony and safeguard the two nations' common interests, as well as international fairness and justice.

China's *Xinhua News Agency* cited Wang as saying China opposes "all forms of hegemonism."

It quoted Choe as saying that North Korea "is willing to closely co-operate with China in multilateral affairs, jointly resist unilateralism and power politics and promote a fairer and more just world order."

The North Korean foreign minister said her country supported the program of building a community with a shared future for humanity and China's major global initiatives, especially the newly-proposed Global Governance Initiative.

**PARASITE OF THE WEEK:** is Westpac bank. The Finance Sector Union (FSU) has slammed Westpac for axing 200 roles, warning it will strip away vital face-to-face services. Workers are being told to migrate customers to a digital strategy, forcing them to eliminate their own jobs.

These cuts follow other big banks slashing staff. The union says Westpac's decision to cut 200 jobs over the next 12 months will devastate staff and strip away essential face-to-face banking and put profit before people.

We've already heard of 1,500 job cuts leaked earlier this year – these cuts show Westpac is disguising a jobs cull as a digital transformation and the FSU says this is Westpac's opportunity to show workers that isn't the case.

The bank has announced a \$5 million 'development fund' to support existing staff in upskilling for the future and the FSU is calling for this to apply to those impacted by job cuts. The FSU is also awaiting further detail and engaging with Westpac on what this looks like for staff.

While Westpac claims it is cutting teller jobs to expand in areas such as small business and lending, the union insists redeployment is possible and must be the minimum standard.

Said Finance Sector Union National Secretary Julia Angrisano: "Westpac is asking loyal tellers to migrate customers to digital services that ultimately eliminate their own jobs. It's callous and short-sighted."

"Communities still rely on face-to-face banking and workers should not be sacrificed for cost-cutting dressed up as innovation."

"Our expectation is clear: no worker should lose their job. We will hold Westpac to account every step of the way. We still don't know how this 'development fund' will work, or whether it will genuinely protect jobs."

"Westpac must show leadership by redeploying every affected worker into new roles – not using digital change as an excuse to shed staff."

"This is a test case for what employers should be doing. When roles are cut, workers must be reskilled and redeployed – not discarded. That's the standard we expect, and we will fight for it."

## Help us cancel the Indo Pacific Expo

To be held in Darling Harbour

November 4-6

The fact that Israel is committing genocide in relation to Gaza has been confirmed by many prestigious organisations and experts. The companies that are making huge profits on the bodies of the innocent men, women and children of Gaza have been named by Francesca Albanese the UN rapporteur for Palestine.

These companies are: Elbit Systems, Lockheed Martin (F35's), Leonardo S.p.A, Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI), Boeing, BAE systems, Northrop Grumman (*the list is not complete*). These companies are invited to the Indo Pacific Expo – a display subsidised and sponsored by the NSW and Federal Governments!

Use QR code





# Aged care market nightmare

M Santos

**Changes under the Albanese government's new Aged Care Act are set to take a hefty toll on all but the wealthy who enter the My Aged Care system from 1 November 2025. The Act claims to prioritise the rights and dignity of older people. In reality it is another cost-cutting exercise.**

The system is already in crisis with more than 200,000 elderly people waiting for services they need to remain safely in their homes. 120,000 of these people are waiting for an assessment to join 90,000 others who have been assessed but are still waiting for a package.

The government had announced it would release an extra additional 83,000 packages in the coming year, but was forced by the Senate to release 20,000 immediately. Another 20,000 will be released by the end of the year with the remaining 43,000 by 30 June 2026.

It does not take a mathematician to work out that there will be a huge shortfall. That figure of 200,000 does not include countless others waiting for services such as Meals on Wheels, community transport, home nursing and other services under a separate program called the Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP).

The CHSP funding program covers such services as Meals on Wheels, community transport, community nursing and neighbourhood aid – vital services for older people. It is set to be ended in 2027.

CHSP provides services to more than 800,000 older people a year at a fraction of the cost of the individualised package market model that is being introduced. It is perhaps the only part of the aged care system that works well.

Support at Home is a program based on the former Howard government's "reforms" to redefine the care economy as a private for-profit market. The eventual destruction of the successful CHSP was part of that plan.

The lack of affordable, residential age care places is a major contributor to the public hospital crisis. There are close to 25,000 elderly patients who no longer require hospital care but have nowhere to go.

Federal and state governments should take responsibility to build and operate public residential aged care. As seen during COVID, the private-for-profit sector failed to protect residents.

## EXORBITANT FEES

The ABC's *Four Corners* program recently highlighted the introduction of higher fees and asset testing for services with whopping, and for the majority, unaffordable copayments which will only apply to new entrants to the scheme after 1 November.

According to the government, under the new Support at Home scheme, there will be no extra charges for clinical care such as nursing but for other services it classifies as "non-clinical" or "independence tasks" copayments will be necessary.

Everyone, including full pensioners, will pay copayments. Asset and income tests will determine the amount they pay.

Pensioners, part-pensioners and self-funded retirees will pay between 5% and 50% of the service provider's fee for "independence" tasks, such as personal care, including showers and assistance with medication.

As for tasks categorised as "everyday living" the aged will be charged between 17.5% and 80% of the price charged by the provider. This applies to services such as help with cleaning, cooking and laundry.

The Department of Health estimates that private providers will charge around \$100 an hour for "personal care" and around \$95 an hour for "domestic assistance".

Some part-pensioners and all self-funded retirees will be stung for around \$50 for an hour of personal care, such as showers and help with hygiene, and around \$75 an



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

hour for assistance with cleaning, laundry and cooking.

Beverly Baker from the Older Women's Network says that some pensioners and part-pensioners would go without basic care because their weekly income was so low. "A shower is essential hygienic care," she said. "To ask people to choose between that and food is really an obscenity."

Baker says the changes will force some pensioners to choose between basic care like showers and food. "We're talking about people who have worked all of their lives, who've scrimped and saved, maybe hung onto their own home, and who are doing it tough on a pension."

"At the system level, excessive and unaffordable fees will inevitably force vulnerable people who want to stay at home into hospitals and care homes. It contradicts the government's stated intention to reduce demand for residential care. It will

inevitably increase the number of older Australians being admitted to hospital suffering from neglect and will increase the cost of health and aged care overall. Plainly speaking, it is penny wise, pound stupid" says Professor Kathy Eagar.

Eagar has had extensive experience in the sector, including research commissioned by the Aged Care Royal Commission into the adequacy of residential aged care staffing.

"A fairer contribution model is urgently required. Consumer contributions should be capped at no more than 10% of a person's fortnightly income, with provisions for fee waivers in cases of financial hardship. Like other clinical services, personal care such as showering and toileting should be free. The artificial distinction between independence and everyday living should end. It simply makes no sense to charge people a higher percentage for Meals on Wheels

than for community transport," says Eagar.

## FAILED NDIS MODEL

Support at Home incorporates many of the worst design features of the NDIS. Under the scheme, a consumer pays for services in the competitive aged care market. It turns every aged care service, every day, into a financial transaction.

Like the NDIS, it will be difficult to change packages in response to changing needs.

The majority of people needing support to stay at home are vulnerable and open to exploitation, and the majority of services they need are delivered on a one-on-one basis in the privacy of their homes, far away from regulators and inspectors. What most frail, vulnerable people want and need is relationship-based care and support delivered by people they know by name, and by agencies they trust. ✚

# GrainCorp workers walk off the job as corporate greed reaches breaking point

**GrainCorp's shameful attempt to fob workers off with a pathetic 3% pay offer during an ongoing cost-of-living crisis has triggered a 72-hour stoppage by Maritime Union of Australia (MUA) and Electrical Trades Union (ETU) members at the Port of Newcastle.**

On the eve of the protected industrial action, Maritime Union of Australia Newcastle Branch Secretary Glen Williams said GrainCorp bosses have shown nothing but contempt for the workforce that built their bumper profits.

"Our members have carried this company on their backs all year. Every member has been working dozens of hours of overtime or weekend work every month to move massive volumes of grain while GrainCorp lines its pockets," Williams said.

"This year the company is on track to export 1.2 million tonnes of grain, with forecasts for next year to smash records again and rank among the top three years in the company's 60-year history. Yet the workers who make it happen are being told to cop stagnant wages and be grateful."

The escalating dispute comes off the back of managers at the terminal fumbling a scab workforce scheme that landed them in the news three years ago.

"We caught them red-handed trying to train up

a scab workforce last time, but they haven't learned their lesson in the time since. They continue to provoke and insult their employees," Williams said.

The MUA and ETU joined together to blast GrainCorp management for hiding from negotiations, refusing to return the Unions' calls on the eve of the strike.

"Bosses are running scared. Instead of fronting up and bargaining in good faith, they're ducking our calls and provoking the workforce to withdraw its labour," ETU organiser Brad McDougall said.

The two unions said workers' lives have been pushed to breaking point, with endless overtime destroying work-life balance while GrainCorp executives reward themselves with pay rises.

"Last year managers pocketed 4.5% pay increases, but the workforce that sweats on the job every day is told they're worth less. That's corporate greed, pure and simple," Williams said.

"This stoppage is about respect, fairness, and making sure GrainCorp can't keep exploiting workers while they rake in record profits. The company must stop stonewalling and start sharing the wealth with the people who actually make it."

Unless management comes to the table with a serious offer, workers stand ready to escalate.

Maritime Union of Australia – Newcastle Branch ✚

Proletcult presents Walyalup/Fremantle WA

## BLOKADE BUSTER

volume 1.0

POST NUT CLARITY

FLORA ROAD

SIBLING

BILLY BOWEN

CAVEWORKS

Oct 12th

Buffalo Club

Walyalup

Doors at 4pm

\$15 General

\$10 Members

All proceeds going to

Australia Cuba

Friendship Society



# Join hands with China, embrace opportunities together

Fu Lihua  
Consul General of the  
People's Republic of China in Perth

**I arrived in Perth on 16 September to assume the role of the 11th Consul General of the People's Republic of China in Perth. I am deeply honoured by this appointment and look forward to exploring this beautiful land of Western Australia, actively promoting exchanges and cooperation between China and Western Australia so as to bring more mutual benefits to our peoples.**

1 October 2025 marks the 76th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China. I would like to take this opportunity to share with you some observations about China.

Over the past 76 years, particularly since the launch of reform and opening-up over four decades ago, the Communist Party of China has united and led the people of all ethnic groups across the nation in relentless efforts, lifting nearly 800 million people out of poverty and having achieved two remarkable feats: rapid economic growth and long-term social stability. These accomplishments have transformed China from a poor and backward agrarian society into a modern industrial nation at an accelerated pace, forging a successful path to Chinese modernisation.

Today, China stands as a major engine of global economic growth. China now boasts the world's second-largest economy, leads in manufacturing output and trade in goods, ranks second in consumer retail sales, and holds the 10th position in the Global Innovation Index. For many years, China has consistently contributed around 30% to global economic growth. Despite mounting external pressures this year, the Chinese economy has maintained stable growth, with high-quality development advancing steadily and new quality productive forces growing rapidly. In the first half of the year, China's GDP grew by 5.3% year-on-year, while imports and exports of goods increased by 2.9%, demonstrating strong resilience and vitality.

Today, China provides a vast platform for shared development opportunities. China remains unwavering in its commitment to high-standard opening-up and a mutually beneficial strategy. China has been the world's largest trading country in goods for 8 consecutive years and has ranked among the top 3 global sources of outward foreign direct investment for 13 years running. China continues to ease market access for foreign investment, actively supports more countries in integrating into the global market, and expands

unilateral opening up to the least developed countries.

The China International Import Expo has served as a "window of opportunity" for participating countries, with intended transactions over the past seven expos exceeding USD 500 billion. From January to August this year, China recorded nearly 15.89 million visa-free entries by foreigners, a year-on-year increase of over 52.1%. China will continue sharing the opportunities of Chinese modernisation with other countries, leveraging its own development to drive progress elsewhere.

Today, China is a stabiliser for the international order. This year marks the 80th anniversary of the victory of the Chinese People's War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression and the World Anti-Fascist War. As a victor of World War II and a permanent member of the UN Security Council, China has always been a builder of world peace, a contributor to global development, a defender of the international order, and a provider of public goods. Reflecting on the past and looking to the future, on the occasion of the 80th anniversary of the founding of the United Nations, President Xi Jinping has proposed the Global Governance Initiative, advocating for a commitment to sovereign equality, international rule of law, multilateralism, the people-centred approach, and real results.

China's fundamental stance is to promote the reform and improvement of the global governance system, enhancing its implementation capacity and effectiveness, rather than overturning the existing international order or creating another framework outside the current international system. China will remain firm in safeguarding the international system with the UN at its core and the international order underpinned by international law. China is ready to work with all countries to advance the Global Development Initiative, the Global Security Initiative, the Global Civilization Initiative, and the Global Governance Initiative, jointly building a community with a shared future for humanity and better promoting human development and progress.

It must be emphasised that this year also marks the 80th anniversary of Taiwan's return to China, which is an important outcome of the victory in World War II and a key component of the post-war international order. The historical and legal fact that Taiwan is part of China is beyond doubt, the authority of UN General Assembly Resolution 2758 is indisputable, and the trend toward China's reunification is unstoppable. At the same time, China will always adhere to the path of peaceful development. The Chinese people will never impose



Chinese Consul-General Fu Lihua attends a photo exhibition commemorating the 80th anniversary of the victory of the Chinese People's war of resistance against Japanese aggression and the world anti-fascist war.

Photo: Consulate General of China in Perth's Facebook

the tragic experiences they endured onto other nations. The great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation is a pursuit of peace and progress. China will never seek hegemony or engage in expansion. It will always be a force for peace, stability, and progress.

Today, China is also committed to modernising its system and capacity for governance. As the ruling party, the Communist Party of China consistently attaches great importance to self-reform. On 4 December 2012, the Political Bureau of the 18th CPC Central Committee adopted the Eight Rules on Improving Party and Government Conduct and Maintaining Close Ties with the People, a major move in the Party's self-reform and the great new project of Party building. It has also provided a Chinese solution to improving global governance, with growing global significance. The Eight Rules have contributed to the modernisation of China's system and capacity for governance. They invigorated Party members and cadres to be proactive and dedicated, ultimately enhancing the Party's overall long-term governing capability. It has not only injected strong momentum into the cause of socialism with Chinese characteristics, but also provided political parties worldwide with a reference to enhance their party building and governance capacity, earning recognition and praise from an increasing number of foreign political leaders.

As two important countries in the Asia-Pacific region with highly complementary economic structures, China and Australia share significant interests in strengthening cooperation for mutual

development and promoting global peace and stability. In recent years, the comprehensive turnaround in China-Australia relations has delivered tangible benefits to our peoples. In July, Prime Minister Anthony Albanese paid a successful visit to China. During their meeting, President Xi Jinping emphasised that both sides should continue to enhance strategic mutual trust, deepen and expand mutually beneficial cooperation, foster greater people-to-people friendship, and jointly address risks and challenges. China is ready to work with Australia to further advance our relations for the benefit of our two peoples.

Among all Australian states, Western Australia boasts the closest and most prominent practical cooperation with China. For many years, China has been WA's largest trading partner, largest export market, and largest source of imports. Chinese companies and Chinese community in WA have made significant contributions to local economic and

social development. Just 4 days after my arrival, I had the honour of meeting WA Premier Roger Cook before his visit to China to discuss further enhancing ties between China and WA.

I look forward to engaging with people from all regions and sectors of Western Australia, listening to your opinions and suggestions, providing high-quality consular services, and actively promoting exchanges and cooperation in various fields between China and WA to foster mutual benefits for our peoples and contribute to the development of China-Australia relations as a whole.

I sincerely encourage people from all sectors in Western Australia to initiate and deepen exchanges and cooperation with China. I also encourage more young people from Western Australia to visit China for study tours to experience the real China firsthand. Partnering with China means walking hand in hand with opportunities. 🌸

## Eight rules?

The Eight Rules on Improving Party and Government Conduct and Maintaining Close Ties with the People are eight principles introduced just weeks after Xi Jinping was elected General Secretary of the Chinese Communist Party. The rules are set down in just over 600 words.

The eight areas are:

- conducting better research and analysis and truly understanding actual conditions when doing grassroots-level studies
- streamlining meetings and improving the way meetings are conducted
- making documents and briefing papers more concise and improving writing styles
- standardising procedures for working visits abroad
- improving security and continuing to observe the principle of doing what improves relations with the people
- improving news reports
- having strict rules on the publication of articles
- promoting frugality and the strict observance of rules on incorruptibility in government.

In an article explaining the 8 rules, which are still being implemented, Xi Jinping has emphasised that good work conduct is critical to the survival of a governing party, and that the key requirement is maintaining a close bond with the people.

**China ... will always be  
a force for peace,  
stability and progress**



# Pseudo-cops

Paul Gregoire

The City of Melbourne council has embarked upon a law enforcement experiment that involves security guards carrying out policing functions that on-the-beat officers usually perform to plug an inner city gap where the state government is considered to be failing. Taken with the move to create “pseudo-cops” in the Northern Territory, this looks like an emerging and concerning trend.

The \$2 million Community Safety Officer program that Melbourne council determined to establish in June, will see 11 CSOs providing security in the Naarm-Melbourne CBD and it’s part of a broader \$4.5 million council 2025-26 budget investment in security. This initiative evolved out of a denied request that Victoria police provide two officers to escort council staff on the street enforcing bylaws.

The Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service (VALS) has outlined that there is sector-wide concern about “these

pseudo-cops patrolling the streets” and “intimidating some of our city’s most vulnerable populations.” VALS further set out that the CSO program is inherently racist due to the disproportionate number of First Nations people living on Naarm streets.

The legal service also considers the setting of pseudo-cops on the homeless to move them on when convenient is “akin to criminalising poverty,” and the initiative further evokes recent developments in the Northern Territory, which involve the Country Liberal government having passed laws that turn transport and housing inspectors into armed officers with quasi-policing powers.

For those living on Gadigal land in Sydney, pseudo-cops are not a thing. But NSW, Queensland, the NT and Victoria have all been cracking down on youth crime, while most of these jurisdictions have recently imposed wandering laws, with Victoria now looking to do the same.

Sydney Criminal Lawyers (edited for space) ☆



Police monitoring a pro Palestine rally in Naarm/Melbourne.

## Trump ‘peace plan’ presented as Israel kills 45

FK

As this edition goes to press, the world is learning about US President Trump’s 20-point ‘peace plan.’ Qatar’s Foreign Ministry spokesman has confirmed that Hamas’ negotiating team is studying the plan, which was agreed to by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. At the same time, Al Jazeera reports that Israeli forces have ramped up attacks

on the Gaza strip, killing at least 45 people on the day the plan was announced.

The plan is vague on many elements. It leaves Israeli military forces around Gaza, and proposes an international ‘stabilisation’ force for Gaza, without saying how the force would work or what that force would be made up of.

Trump said that he would give Hamas three to four days to agree to the plan, and made a warning that if they did not agree, he would

give Israel permission to “go and do what they have to do.”

Palestinians interviewed about the plan said that they remembered former UK Prime Minister Tony Blair’s role in the Iraq invasion. Trump has said that Blair would have a role in a future “technocratic” government of Gaza. One Palestinian told the BBC that the plan was “a new colonialism.”

A more substantial report will be published in next week’s Guardian. ☆

## PEACE NOTES

### Australia’s military spending and the military parade in Beijing

Denis Doherty

The recent military parade in Beijing, celebrating China’s role in the defeat of fascism, has alarmed and encouraged elements within Australia to push for more military spending. Lowy spokesperson on defence Sam Roggeveen said that the weapons on show, indicated that China’s weapons are mainly to protect their territory and are not aimed at the global projection of power. In other words, the weapons are defensive and not offensive. They indicate that China is not going to attack any place in the world at any time as the US plans to. Nevertheless, an instant cry has gone up for more military spending. China does not want war and is not aggressive. The US on the other hand has two proxy wars going on at the moment and wants to start a hot war over Taiwan.

#### Australian military spending

The Australian government is very secretive about how much precisely it spends on the military. It always seeks to play down what it is spending. Trump has applied pressure to massively increase military spending to take the load off the USA as far as the cost of imperialism goes. The Australian government maintains it spends around 1.9% to 2.1% of its GDP on the military but assures us it will rise to 3.1% and maybe reach 5% of GDP in a few more years. These figures sound small until you look at what they mean for Australians.

The military attracts the equivalent amount of money that education does, around 7% of the government’s official military budget. This is when the Australian government says Australia’s military spending is 2.1 of GDP. At 3.5% of GDP the military spending goes to 11% of government spending, equivalent to the education budget plus a quarter of the health budget. At 5% GDP the military spending goes to 16% of the government spending, making it equivalent to health. Increases in military spending will inevitably lead to raiding of other programs, so it is important that we keep spending down and concentrate on ways to work with China and our other neighbours instead of pursuing the USA’s agenda.

When Congressman Joe Courtney led the US delegation to the US/Australian leadership dialogue he was clear that Australia had to raise its military spending. Why? Courtney spelled it out. He wanted Australia ready to attack the People’s Republic of China and the DPRK! Two countries that are targets of US foreign policy but not to the advantage of Australia. We need to be more aware of the dangers of increased military spending. Already there are signs that the government is cutting back on aged care, and the NDIS.

#### Guam busters

One of the weapons on show at the Beijing parade was a missile called the Guam buster. While this is a depressing weapon, we must remember why there would be concern in China about Guam. Guam, a large island near the Philippines taken from Spain in 1898 has been converted into a giant military base using up half of the island and its water. The people of Guam, the Chamorro people have few rights and have been fighting to have their island removed from US colonisation for years. Some representatives of the Chamorro people toured Australia some years ago and they still appear at IPAN conferences. Of course, the people of Guam have not been consulted as to whether they want to be in the crossfire if there was an exchange between China and the US.



email:  
southerncrossbrigade@gmail.com

**Solidarity  
Brigade to  
Cuba**



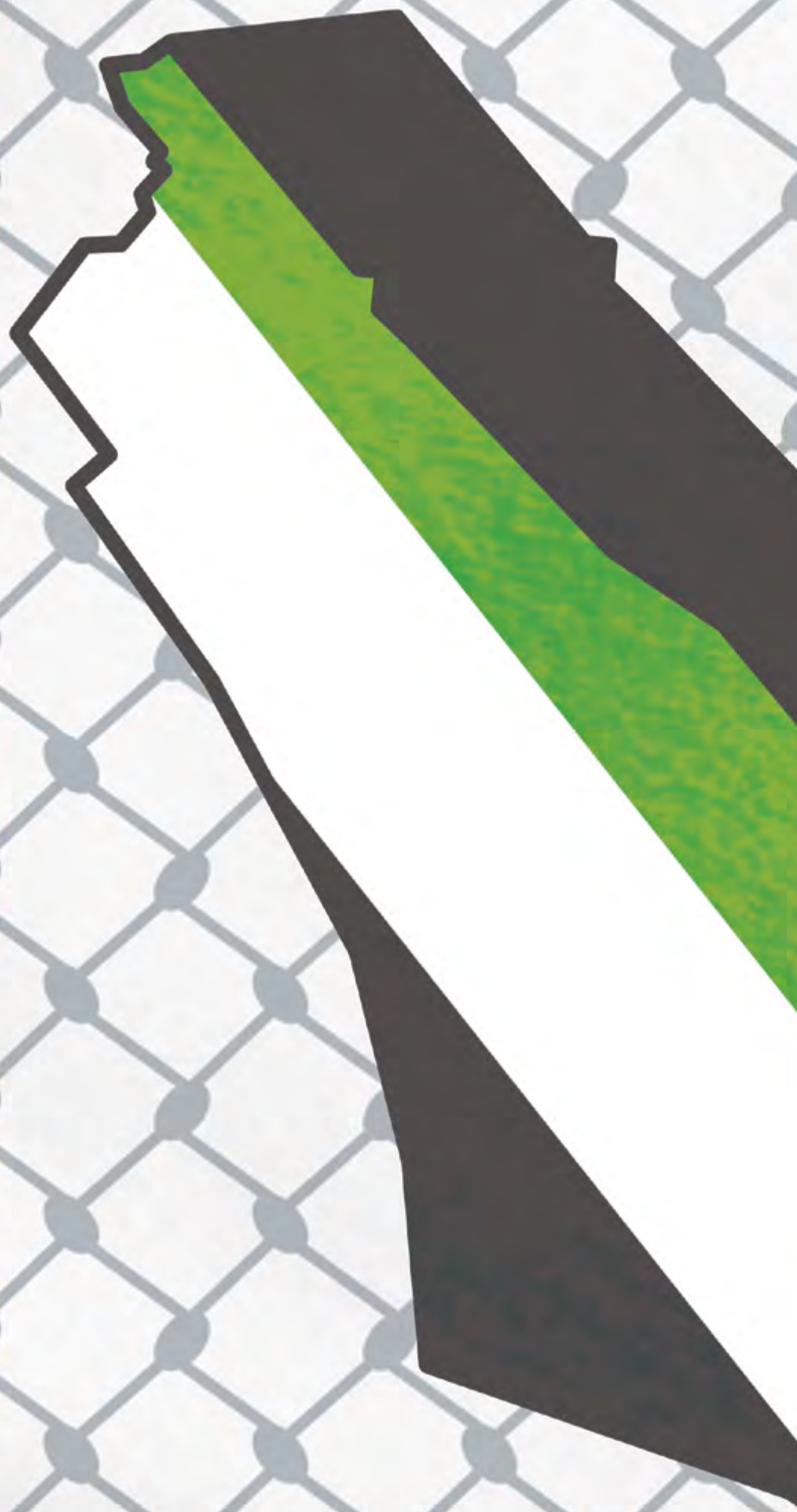
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21 December 2025 – 9 January 2026

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. In 2025 we will be celebrating the 65<sup>th</sup> 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, not including flights.



# STOP THE WAR IN GAZA







# FOR PEOPLE



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# Australian Indigenous films and TV make waves

Graham Holton

**Australian Indigenous films are highly praised internationally for their authentic storytelling, cultural depth, and cinematic innovation, and they stand out on the global stage for offering perspectives rarely seen in mainstream cinema. Indigenous Australian films have consistently been selected, awarded, and celebrated at major international film festivals such as Cannes, Berlin, Venice, Sundance and Toronto. Critics note the films' emotional power, unique storytelling traditions and political understandings.**

Examples include *The Tracker* (2002, dir. Rolf de Heer, starring David Gulpilil), which was widely acclaimed at Venice and Toronto for its confronting vision of Australia's brutal colonial past. The delightful *Ten Canoes* (2006, dir. Rolf de Heer & Peter Djigirr) won the Special Jury Prize at Cannes and was praised for its use of Yolŋu language and storytelling. *Samson and Delilah* (2009, dir. Warwick Thornton) won the Caméra d'Or at Cannes, and *Sweet Country* (2017, dir. Warwick Thornton) won the Venice Special Jury Prize. More recently *The Drover's Wife: The Legend of Molly Johnson* (2021, dir. Leah Purcell) premiered at SXSW Sydney film festival, and earned strong critical acclaim in the US and UK for its feminist and Indigenous reinterpretation of an Australian classic story. Netflix and SBS On Demand have boosted Australia's global reach beyond film festivals.

International critics and scholars frequently highlight how these films reject stereotypes and portray Indigenous people as complex, modern and dynamic. They are a key contributor to First Nations cinematic movements, weaving

Dreaming stories, Country, and kinship systems into contemporary narratives. They use language, performance and storytelling structures rooted in Aboriginal culture, offering perspectives radically different from Western cinematic traditions. Australian Indigenous cinema is regarded as a model for decolonising cinema, which reclaims the narrative from colonial filmmaking traditions. Powerful and transformative, they challenge ideas about what Australia is. They are visually and narratively distinctive, often blending realism with spiritual and mythic elements, using themes of love, loss, justice, and land within the Indigenous experience.

Universities in the US and Europe use films such as *Samson and Delilah* and *The Drover's Wife* to teach courses on postcolonial cinema, Indigenous sovereignty and world cinema.

Indigenous TV is also making waves. Prime Video is airing *Top End Bub* which follows on from the 2019 box office smash hit *Top End Wedding*. It is a heart-warming eight-part series that sees Miranda Tapsell (*The Sapphires*) and Gwilym Lee (*Bohemian Rhapsody*), reprising their roles as Lauren and Ned.

Next year a number of new TV series will be aired. ABC TV and ABC Iview will show *Goolagong*, a three-part mini-series on world champion tennis player Evonne Goolagong. SBS and NITV will show *Reckless* written by Kodie Bedford, who wrote *Mystery Road* and *Return to Paradise*.

There are also a number of documentaries, including *Dreaming Big*, a six-part NITV series examining the lives of talented young Indigenous Australian athletes and their journey to success.

All up, Indigenous film and TV takes us to a world away from what Hollywood has to offer. 🇺🇸



*Samson and Delilah*

## Video games industry: the canary in capitalism's coal mine?

George Kostaras

**In 1983 the video game industry crashed, plunging from an estimated global market value of \$42 billion in 1982 to only \$14 billion in 1985. It was catastrophic for what had seemed an unstoppable industry and, like most economic crashes, spawned many myths about its causes and outcomes.**

The popular imagination blames the crash on a combination of poor-quality games (most famously, *E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial*), the rise of home computers, and the increasing number of video game consoles for consumers to choose from. These myths have largely been accepted and perpetuated by historians, social media personalities, and popular culture.

Fast forward to 2025 and the video game industry seems to be going through another crash. Just this year alone, according to the website *GamingLayoffs.com*, the industry collectively has laid off 3,563 game developers. Gaming website Kotaku reports that Virtuous Ltd, the studio behind one of the biggest successes of the year with *The Elder Scrolls: Oblivion Remastered*, is laying off three hundred employees.

What the crash of 1983 and the ongoing crash of 2025 have in common is that in both cases, most media, historians and social media influencers have muddled the waters on the cause and source of the crisis.

In a way, the gaming industry is a canary in the capitalist coal mine. Video games are a sort of luxury goods – nobody ever died from not being able to play *Donkey Kong Country* or failing to grab the latest *Call of Duty* game. What this means in practice is that the capitalists who own and run the industry can be as greedy and rapacious as possible, above and beyond what they think they can get away with in more 'serious' industries.

Going back to 1983, Atari's home version of *Pac-Man* – considered one of the worst games ever made – still managed to sell a total of seven million copies. Subjectively that's an eye watering sum of units to sell; objectively it was the highest selling game the Atari console would ever produce. But despite this, *Pac-Man* for the Atari 2600 console reveals one of the unspoken truths about capitalism: it's not enough to be successful. While *Pac-Man* sold seven million units, the corporate executives had banked on selling twelve million – that target would have required every single Atari console owner, plus another two million people, to purchase a copy.

Now, fast forward to 2025. *The Elder Scrolls: Oblivion Remastered* sold nine million copies according to the parent company, Bethesda Studios. Many of these units were sold online without the company having to pay for manufacturing and distributing a physical game disc. Despite this and the fact that it opened up to universal praise from critics and players, the studio

who did the bulk of development is being hit with mass layoffs.

Back in 1983, Atari lost money on *Pac-Man* and *E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial* partly because, in that era, developers were financially responsible for buying back unsold games from retailers. But that wasn't enough to crash the industry – the problem wasn't with retailers or gamers, but with the executives. In 1982, Atari's parent company Warner Communications projected that revenues would only increase fifteen per cent, down from fifty per cent earlier in the year. This prompted a panic among investors, who sold off their stocks and withdrew investment money.

Video games are capital intensive and require a skilled workforce to produce, with the average game developer needing a bachelor's degree in computer science or software engineering. Many developers experience what's called "crunch," a time when mismanagement by corporate executives causes workers to go through mandatory 60-hour to 80-hour work weeks, often without overtime pay or sick days. At least half of industry employees have gone through crunch and, as a result, have experienced serious physical and mental health problems such as ulcers, memory loss, severe anxiety and PTSD.

When we are children, we love playing games in which we are super spies, Italian plumbers or magic heroes on a quest. As children we're also taught that capitalism is about being successful and making money.

Gaming journalist Stephanie Sterling once said, "Games are not too expensive to make – executives are too expensive to pay." The people who make all the money in the games industry don't do any of the actual programming, writing or art behind the games. They assume none of the risk and their whims and projections are based off of nothing but gut feelings that can destroy the lives of thousands.

The lie of capitalism, which the video games industry lays bare, is that it's not enough to be successful. Even if you make money, you and your job will be destroyed because investors will forever expect astronomical profits, and mass layoffs are the only way to give the illusion of eternal growth.

*E.T.* didn't kill Atari – capitalism did.

*People's Voice* 🇺🇸

### Solutions to Crossword

Guardian 29 September 2025 #2164

#### Across

- 3 **Treaty** – Victoria has one
- 7 **Intervision** – Soviet alternative to Eurovision, recently revived
- 8 **Target** – Albanese's is not high enough
- 9 **Independence** – PNG celebrates it, Australia ignores it
- 12 **Royalties** – Queensland doesn't charge coal companies enough

#### Down

- 1 **Governance** – Big problem at Australian universities
- 2 **Genocide** – UN Committee confirmed Israel is doing this
- 4 **Trillionaire** – Elon might be the first
- 5 **Warnings** – Optus ignored a bunch of these. People died.
- 6 **Henderson** – Latest money pit for AUKUS
- 10 **Paracetamol** – US President made nonsensical claims about this
- 11 **Humanity** – Duterte is charged with crimes against it



# 'The street will write the budget'

## French unions slam Macron austerity

Dennis Broe

**Building on the *Bloquons Tout* movement, a national protest against French President Emmanuel Macron's austerity budget, which drew supporters from both left and right, the combined might of the French unions led an even more impressive mobilisation.**

"Let's Block Everything" was an attempt to bring the country to a standstill, which did not quite happen and was met with a good deal of police repression, with somewhere between 200,000 and 300,000 protesters in the streets.

The union movement, building on demonstrations or *manifestation* or *manif* of earlier this month, most likely doubled or tripled those figures. In 2023, in a 14-day mobilisation against the increase of the pension age from 62 to 64, Macron's government ignored this expression of the people's will and then passed the unpopular measure by an undemocratic mechanism whereby a law can be enacted without a vote, simply on the will of the president and prime minister.

The stakes are higher this year with the 2026 budget attempting to put the full weight of cuts on the workers while leaving the richest, who have benefited greatly in Macron's two terms, practically untouched. So, numbers in the street are important in making sure that the will of the vast majority cannot again be ignored and overturned.

The official figure for the latest rally was 500,000, but the CGT, the most radical

union, estimated the figure at the magic number of 1 million, a touchstone needed to convince the powers that be how out of touch they are. The Thursday protest was followed up on Friday, but an interunion meeting to decide what action to take next.

There were more than 250 *manifs* throughout the country, and in fact, because of the participation of the French transportation workers in Paris, with subway and bus service effectively halted and schools shut down. The last demonstration came much closer to the goal of *Bloquons Tout* (block everything). Though there were between double and triple the amount of people in the streets, the demonstrations were for the most part peaceful, with only 181 arrests throughout the country and only 31 in Paris.

What violence there was was often instigated by the *Black Bloc*, a group of mostly youths clad in black from head to toe and often wearing masks. They took a place at the front of the union cortege with a combative stance toward the police, though it has been frequently rumoured that some of their number are paid police agitators.

At the actual head of the cortege, marching from Bastille, site of the instigation of the French Revolution to République to Nation were the police in numerous vans and on foot, also clad from head to toe in black, stressing the similarities between the two groups.

The placards the demonstrators carried expressed their anger at the unequal taxation and the privileges of the wealthiest and the richest corporations. One banner read,

"Pay Your Taxes or We Burn Your Castles," recalling the feudal nature of this unequal treatment, of turning citizens back into serfs. One of the marchers noted how much Macron had reduced taxes on the rich (who have seldom had it so good) "and then once the cash registers were empty, they tell us it is necessary to cut expenses."

All age groups were represented. At Besançon in the north, a steel plant, owned by ArcelorMittel, has threatened to cut 350 jobs, and workers in that town and in Paris took up the cause of the company retaining the jobs. In Paris, the high schools were out in force, with one group marching behind a banner that read, "Money for Schools, Not for Cops and the Army."

Again, there was widespread support for the demonstrations, with traditionally regarded as more right-wing *Gilets Jaunes* and the left parties of Le France Insoumise (France Unbowed), the Communists, the Greens, and the Socialists cheering and marching with the union cortege. A proponent of this newfound unity, one *Gilets Jaunes* protester said, "There are not enough of us here to have the luxury of division," a recognition that, like the protest last week, all sides of the political spectrum will need to come together to defeat this full-on austerity attack."

Macron and his new Prime Minister LeCormu were silent, but they are listening to the roar from the streets because, after the first eruption, now called the September 10th Movement, LeCormu announced the

cancellation of the plan to strip the French workers of two of their holidays.

On the front of one truck in the cortege, reading "They Want Austerity [but] Another Budget Is Vital" was a people's response to Macron's tax cuts for the rich. This included: the Zucman 2% tax on billionaires, which would bring in 15 to 25 billion euros; reinstating the luxury tax on wealth, which Macron abolished, accounting for 10 billion; suppression of a flat tax – a disproportionate tax on the poorest, for 9 billion; and reduction of public aid to the largest corporations, which would bring in 211 billion.

Other demands were more modest and indicated the scarcity conditions of French workers who are already experiencing austerity.

One worker mentioned being able to go to a restaurant once a month, being able to go on vacation, go to an amusement park once a year, and pay for his kid's education. These union members were also wise about how they are portrayed in the media, with one woman adding that, "All they will show on the television tonight will be burning garbage."

The hope, desperation, and growing movement of resistance was probably best expressed by CGT President Sophie Binet, who concluded, "It's the street which will write the budget. If not, LeCormu will finish in the street."

People's World 🇺🇸

## Workers bring Italy to a halt in strike for Palestine

Cameron Harrison

**Nearly a million workers across Italy staged a massive general strike, transforming city squares from Val d'Aosta to Sicily into seas of protest against their government's complicity in Israel's genocide in Gaza. The action coincided with the World Federation of Trade Unions' call for a "Global Week of Action" in solidarity with Palestine as well as several Western governments officially recognising the State of Palestine.**

The country ground to a standstill on 22 September as a wave of walkouts and blockades, much of it organised by the rank-and-file union *Unione Sindacale di Base* (USB), a WFTU affiliate, in over 80 cities, shut down ports, train stations, factories, schools, and major highways. The message from the Italian working class was clear: "We are not complicit."

The call to action came from the docks of Genoa, where workers declared, "Let's block everything." Block everything they did. The ports of Genoa and Livorno were paralysed, logistics hubs froze, and local transport was halted.

In Rome, 300,000 protesters occupied the main railway hub before marching through the streets, waving Palestinian flags and chanting, "Freedom for Palestine."

"Workers have returned to centre stage and are calling on citizens, all citizens, to stand up. They are not doing so for a contract renewal but to demand justice for a distant and tormented people," the USB said.

"In this age of selfishness and individualism, this seems unthinkable. But no, solidarity between peoples and brotherhood beyond borders are not dead and buried values; on the contrary, they are alive and kicking."

This was not a strike for a new contract or higher wages, the WFTU said in their press release. Italian workers prioritised

humanity over profit and internationalism over nationalism. They struck "to demand justice for the Palestinian people."

The strike was a direct challenge to the warmongering policies of Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni's far-right government, as well as to the US-EU-NATO imperialist policies. The workers demanded an immediate end to supplying weapons and ammunition to the Israeli settler forces, as well as breaking off all diplomatic and commercial ties with a "barbaric state acting contrary to every international rule."

The response from the ruling class was telling. Instead of heeding the people's demand for peace, police met the peaceful mobilisation with violence, turning water cannons on those calling for an end to the arms sales to the Israeli state.

Among those leading the charge were firefighters' union representatives, who made their position clear. "First responders will never be complicit in genocide, and we are

protesting a government that is entrapping us in rearmament," they said. Their statement cuts to the heart of the class struggle. It is a rejection of a war economy that transforms workers' labor into a service for the death and destruction of other workers.

This historic mobilisation, which involved an estimated one million people, was a demonstration of concrete solidarity action to disrupt the machinery of Israel's genocidal war.

The shutdown of Italy is only one part of a larger struggle. Italian dockworkers are now set to host an international meeting to coordinate with other unions capable of disrupting Europe's arms flows to Israel.

Further national demonstrations are planned in Italy with workers' eyes fixed on the Global Sumud Flotilla to ensure its peaceful arrival to deliver much needed humanitarian aid to the Gaza Strip.

People's World 🇺🇸

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# Iran: 'No War, No Sanctions; Liberty and Justice'

Navid Shomali  
International Secretary of  
the Tudeh Party of Iran

**Amid the continuing cacophony of war in the Middle East, and the horrific toll on the Palestinian people in particular, an ominous drumbeat is becoming increasingly pronounced. The international community, meanwhile, looks on, unable or unwilling to act decisively. The threat of a renewed attack upon Iran sounds the alarm bell, and calls on the peace movement internationally to mobilise for action before it is too late!**

This threat has escalated sharply in the wake of the United Nations' endorsement of the "Snapback" of a regime of sweeping sanctions on Iran, effective from Sunday 28 September, following the expiry of a 30-day countdown triggered by the European Troika (Britain, France, and Germany) for the country's "significant non-performance" of its commitments under the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action 2015 (JCPOA). This comes despite the valiant attempts of China and Russia to extend the JCPOA for a further six months and thereby delay "Snapback" until 18 April 2026.

This move by the foreign ministers of the E3 is obviously due to the aligning of their stance on Iran with that of the Trump administration. In particular, they cite Iran's refusal to cooperate with the UN nuclear watchdog, the International Atomic Energy Agency – a position all the more unconscionable given that, according to the IAEA itself, Iran had complied to the very letter of its obligations under the JCPOA prior to the unilateral abrogation of that agreement by the first Trump administration back in 2018.

The Troika further stressed Iran's non-authorisation of IAEA inspectors to access the country's nuclear sites, despite the reality that the suspension of said inspections began only after the US and Israel launched a 12-day-long campaign of bombardment against Iran in June – killing over 1,000 civilians, maiming many more, causing huge damage, and targeting its nuclear facilities – in flagrant violation of international law. The agency has since confirmed, on Friday 27 September, that inspections have resumed.

On the other hand, the bellicose rhetoric and reckless posturing of the Islamic Republic regime, as it

continues to engage in games of "cloak and dagger" and "will they, won't they" with the international community – eerily reminiscent of the Saddam Hussein regime's posturing in the lead-up to the 2003 invasion of Iraq – constitutes a fundamental abrogation of its ultimate responsibility towards the people of Iran, as well as the safeguarding of the country and its inalienable interests.

Nobody should be under any illusion. The re-introduction of this crippling sanctions regime will hurt first and foremost the long-suffering Iranian population at large, not those presiding over the now 45-year-old brutal theocratic dictatorship.

Of course, this is a familiar playbook – the economic strangulation and deliberate degrading of a country's critical infrastructure over years, with UN approval, bookended with the launching of unilateral military action to bludgeon the said country into complete submission or effective dismemberment – followed to horrific effect in neighbouring Iraq. Indeed, the parallels between the situation of ordinary Iraqis from 1991, in the wake of the first Gulf War, until 2003 and the one now facing the Iranian people are stark.

The majority of Iran's population are already enduring immense socioeconomic hardship amid an economy in complete freefall – primarily the result of three decades of the theocratic regime's disastrous imposition of neoliberal economic policies. This, in turn, has led to the hollowing out of Iran's rentier dollar-based economy, creating conditions that have enabled the US to wantonly inflict its unjust and damaging financial and economic sanctions on the country.

The current situation is particularly perilous given US imperialism's urgency to arrest and shore-up its dwindling hegemony coupled with the erratic, unpredictable, but dangerous machinations of the increasingly fascistic Trump administration and the carte blanche it has seemingly afforded the criminal Netanyahu regime in Tel Aviv.

Iran is now in the eye of the proverbial storm, with the reconfiguration of the map and balance of forces in the Middle East taking place in earnest to assure continued US hegemony as well as the implementation of Israel's expansionist designs. Our country is in a deeply vulnerable situation – its security and legitimate national interests

continually exposed to attacks, sabotage, and malign interference from abroad.

The people of Iran find themselves caught in a perilous situation between the machinations of a brutal clerical dictatorship on the one hand, and the increasingly aggressive and threatening manoeuvres of an unpredictable Trump-led US on the other.

Even according to estimates acknowledged by officials in the regime itself, public support for the Islamic Republic and its continuation does not surpass 20% of the population. However, this widespread antipathy does not translate into support for foreign interference in Iran let alone the doctrine of regime change – as vividly demonstrated in the Iranian public's reaction to the 12-day war against Iran in June, when the rallying around the country's flag and in defence of national sovereignty was discernible.

The people of Iran do not want to become another Iraq, Libya, or Syria and see their country similarly devastated by bloody foreign intervention, war, and prolonged instability – essentially sacrificed on the altar of their ruling dictators'

reckless brinksmanship, critically false projections of military might, and hollow anti-imperialist posturing.

The worsening water shortages, with Tehran projected to be on course for a Day Zero-type scenario; frequent electricity outages; the steep and continuing rise in the cost of living; the near-collapse in the value of the national currency; and a catalogue of environmental disasters, have all wrought havoc on the lives of the majority of ordinary Iranians and the economy. The regime is manifestly unable to manage the adverse effects of these compounding crises, leaving the nation in a state of limbo – paralysed by uncertainty and facing the ominous possibility of a looming war on the horizon.

Across the country, calls for "No War, No Sanctions; Liberty and Justice" are resonating with growing urgency. Yet, due to unrelenting systemic repression by the theocratic dictatorship, Iran lacks the fundamental structures that could channel these popular demands into organised and coordinated action. There is no functioning peace movement, no independent women's movement

or functioning trade unions. Civil society groups have been rendered ineffective. The absence of these democratic pillars in Iran leaves the public there without a collective voice, while the regime continues its misrule without accountability – driven not by the national interest, but the imperative to preserve the theocratic dictatorship at whatever cost.

Thus, the struggle for freedoms, human and democratic rights, and social justice is inextricably bound to the struggle for peace and national sovereignty in Iran. These two struggles are inseparable; neither can exist meaningfully without the other.

Iran's future remains the sole preserve of the Iranian people themselves. This is precisely why communists, left and progressive campaigners, and peace movements around the world while opposing imperialism and its incessant drumbeat to war – must also recognise and support the Iranian people's struggle against reaction and dictatorship, in pursuit of human and democratic rights, liberty, and social justice. ✳



## HANDS OFF IRAN!

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## Workers' Party of Korea turns 80

Graham Holton

**The Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) is celebrating the 80th anniversary of the Workers' Party of Korea (WPK), founded on 10 October 1945. The WPK had its origins fighting Japanese occupation, the early communist movement in Korea and the liberation from Japanese colonialism in 1945. The party was established on 10 October 1945 as the North Korean Branch of the Communist Party of Korea, and reorganised into the Workers' Party of North Korea in 1946. It**

**was the central force behind the creation of the DPRK in 1948, becoming the Workers' Party of Korea in 1949. The WPK is the largest party represented in the Supreme People's Assembly. A communist party, it is guided by the ideas of Kim Il Sung and Kim Jong Il.**

The anniversary celebrates the unbroken revolutionary lineage from Kim Il Sung, Kim Jong Il to Marshal Kim Jong Un, who continues the legacy. The party's 80-year heroic struggle against imperialism, poverty, and political betrayal has culminated in today's strong and independent state. The anniversary will reassert the guiding principles

of Juche (self-reliance) and Songun (military-first politics) as unique Korean alternatives to Western political systems. The WPK is presented as a historical force and a guarantor of the nation's destiny.

In Korean culture the number 80 signifies longevity, resilience and maturity making the celebrations culturally significant. Kim Jong Un said the WPK "maintains the improvement of the people's living conditions as the most important of the numerous state affairs." The DPRK's scientific and technological innovation has ensured economic and social improvements in industrial output, cultural and social trends and living standards, while

resisting illegal UN and US sanctions. China has been invited to attend, and has sent congratulatory messages.

A large-scale military parade with mass gymnastics, art, dancing and cultural performances represent military strength, national unity, and the Party's legitimacy. The celebration emphasises the Party's role as the "brain and heart" of the revolution, guiding all aspects of society from politics, economics, culture, to defence. It sends a message to the world of the Party's resilience and its ambitions for the 21st-century. The anniversary serves as a mirror of the DPRK's past and the Party's projection into the future. ✳



# Cuba remembers Assata Shakur

Graham Holton

**Assata Shakur (born Joanne Deborah Chesimard) died in Havana, Cuba on 25 September. Cuba regarded her as a political refugee and a victim of racial and political persecution in the United States. The Cuban government consistently refused US requests for her extradition, describing Shakur as a “freedom fighter” and “revolutionary” who was unjustly prosecuted for her political beliefs and activism.**

Shakur, a Black Power activist was the first woman to be placed on the FBI’s “most wanted terrorists” list after escaping to Cuba from a New Jersey prison, where she was serving a life sentence for the killing of a state trooper. She maintained her innocence, testifying her hands were in the air when she was shot. Doctors testified Shakur’s bullet wounds were consistent with her hands being raised.

The Cuban newspapers *Granma* and *Juventud Rebelde* portrayed Shakur as a victim of systemic racism, police brutality, and political repression in the US during the Black liberation struggles of the 1960s and 1970s. Cuban officials argued that granting her asylum was consistent with Cuba’s policy of protecting people persecuted for fighting racism and injustice, aligning her with other political exiles and revolutionaries sheltered in Cuba.

Cuba considers Shakur a part of the global struggle against colonialism, racism, and US imperialism. Shakur has been cited in Cuban academic and cultural discussions about the US civil rights movement and the Black Panther Party. Shakur’s story is an example of US oppression of Black activists, with claims of torture in custody,



Graphic: dignidadrebelde – flickr.com (CC BY 2.0)

and systemic bias in the US justice system.

Since the 1980s, the US has repeatedly demanded Shakur’s extradition, and offered a US\$2 million reward. The FBI placed her on its Most Wanted Terrorists list in 2013. Havana has consistently refused extradition, citing the political nature of her case and the principle of non-extradition for political crimes under Cuban and international law. During

the 2014–2016 normalisation talks under President Obama, US officials raised Shakur’s case, but Cuban negotiators said it was “not on the table.”

This refusal to extradite Assata Shakur has been one excuse for the US to keep Cuba on the list of supporters of international terrorism. Shakur is remembered by Cubans as a link between the US civil rights movement and global anti-imperialist struggles. ✳

## US revokes visa for Colombia’s president

**Tensions have increased between the United States and Colombia after the US State Department announced it was revoking President Gustavo Petro’s visa.**

The announcement on 27 September came after President Petro participated in a New York protest where he called on US soldiers to disobey President Donald Trump’s orders.

The department said on social media that “we will revoke Petro’s visa due to his reckless and incendiary actions.”

President Petro was visiting for the annual United Nations General Assembly.

During a nearby protest over the war in Gaza, he said: “I ask all the soldiers of the US army, don’t point your rifles against humanity” and “disobey the orders of Trump.”

Responding to the ban President Petro said: “International law grants me immunity to go to the UN and that there should be no reprisals for my free opinion, because I am a free person.”

He added “I don’t care” about the punishment because he is also a European citizen. That means he does not need a visa to travel to the US.

*Morning Star* ✳



## Global Briefs

**CHINA:** Three US companies – unmanned vehicle maker Saronic Technologies, satellite technology company Aercomm, and subsea engineering firm Oceaneering International, have been added to China’s “unreliable entity list.” The move effectively ban the companies from trade with China. The Commerce Ministry said the companies have “engaged in so-called military-technical cooperation with Taiwan, severely undermining China’s national sovereignty, security and development interests.”

**CANADA:** Members of the Canadian Union of Postal Workers (CUPW) went on strike after the government’s announcement that door-to-door mail delivery would end for nearly all households within the next decade.

**USA:** Hundreds of generals and admirals have been summoned to a mass meeting in Virginia, including some who had to be pulled out of involvement in ongoing conflicts. US President Donald Trump said that the meeting was about ‘esprit de corps’ but didn’t explain further.

**CUBA:** Cuban Deputy Foreign Minister Carlos Fernández de Cossío has called US attacks on Venezuela “a threat to the whole continent, the whole region,” adding that Cuba would give “it’s full political support” to Venezuela in the event of a war. de Cossío linked the bullying approach of the US to other countries to its treatment of Cuba, saying that the USA is “trying to cut Cuba off from the world economy.”

**MADAGASCAR:** Madagascar’s government imposed a night curfew following massive protests against ongoing water and power cuts. Hundreds of people went out to voice their anger at persistent power cuts which often leave homes and businesses without electricity for over 12 hours. Messages displayed on protesters’ placards read: “Water and electricity are basic human needs,” “Let us speak out” and “Malagasy people, wake up.”

**USA:** The FBI has dismissed a group of agents who were photographed kneeling down during the 2020 Black Lives Matter (BLM) protests in Washington. The FBI Agents Association condemned the dismissal as “unlawful,” saying they violated civil service protections and due process. “Leaders uphold the law – they don’t repeatedly break it,” the group said in a statement, urging Congress to investigate the decision by FBI Director Kash Patel.

**ARGENTINA:** Clashes erupted between thousands of demonstrators, mainly women, and police in Argentina’s capital Buenos Aires. The protesters demanded justice over the live-streamed torture and killing of two young women and a teenage girl on social media. The bodies of the victims were found buried in the yard of a house in the suburbs of then capital, five days after the three victims went missing.

**ECUADOR:** US Secretary of Homeland Security Kristi Noem will be visiting Ecuador shortly to “define the location of Homeland Security bases” in the country. Legal experts reacted with surprise to the plan to host foreign bases because Ecuador’s Constitution explicitly prohibits it. President Noboa has called a referendum on the matter but the fact remains that the plans to host foreign bases without a popular mandate violates the country’s sovereignty and constitutional order. During the Noboa administration Ecuador has become the USA’s main geopolitical ally in Latin America. The right-wing Noboa is a US citizen and the son of Ecuador’s richest billionaire oligarch.



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## الجبهة الديمقراطية لتحرير فلسطين Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine



Dear Comrades,

Revolutionary comradely greetings,

On behalf of the Department of International Relations of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine and on behalf of the steadfast and resisting Palestinian people, we extend to you and to all the militants of the Communist Party of Australia our deepest appreciation and pride on the occasion of the historic and courageous decision taken by Australia to officially recognise the State of Palestine.

This decision would not have come to light without the prominent militant role you, together with the Australian Left in general, have played across the popular, political, and parliamentary arenas – continuously pressing the government until it was compelled to comply with the will of the Australian people and their long-standing values of solidarity, justice, and resistance to colonialism and imperialist domination. This achievement reflects your profound loyalty to your revolutionary history and represents a true victory for the values of justice and liberation for which your generations and your masses have struggled over long decades.

Dear Comrades,

The recognition of the State of Palestine by Australia is more than just a political stance; it is a triumph of the will of the peoples and their progressive forces, and an added value to the path of joint internationalist struggle against colonialism, racism, and imperialism. It sends a clear message to the world that when progressive and leftist forces unite, they are capable of imposing truth upon an international system biased toward aggression, and of transforming solidarity into a material, pressing, and effective force.

We in the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine affirm that this recognition, though an advanced step, is but a milestone along the long road toward complete national liberation. Our struggle has not yet ended, and it will continue until the actual establishment of the independent State of Palestine, with full sovereignty, with Jerusalem as its capital on the borders of June 4, 1967, and with the return of the refugees to their homes and properties from which they were displaced, in accordance with Resolution 194.

We view this achievement as further proof that internationalist struggle is not a mere slogan,

but a real practice capable of breaking the siege, defeating the dominance of imperialist hegemony, and accumulating partial victories until the final victory is achieved. Here in Palestine, we consider ourselves an inseparable part of the camp of struggling peoples fighting for national and social liberation, convinced that our battle against Zionist settler colonialism is an integral part of the broader internationalist struggle against capitalist exploitation, imperialist domination, and for a world of justice, equality, and socialism.

All greetings to you, our dear comrades in the Communist Party of Australia. Glory to the struggling peoples ... and victory to our common causes, first and foremost the just cause of Palestine.

**Department of foreign affairs  
Democratic Front  
for the Liberation of Palestine**

September 23, 2025

Dflp.org

# 274 journalists killed in Gaza

Graham Holton

***Al Jazeera* has estimated that as of 4 September 2025, 274 journalists and media workers, of which 269 were Palestinian, have been killed in Gaza since the war began on 7 October 2023. Such a number is unprecedented. Many victims clearly wore their PRESS identification and were away from combat zones.**

While deaths occurred while covering the aftermath of strikes, hospital damage, or food distribution, a number were killed at their homes, with families. Reporters Without Borders (RSF: *Reporters sans frontières*) claims that the Israeli army has deliberately targeted these journalists.

The Israeli government and

military have given various dubious explanations for why so many journalists have been killed. They claim that journalists were not “deliberately targeted,” but killed as part of broader strikes on Hamas targets. There’s a line that journalists often place themselves “close to military activity,” making their deaths unavoidable. IDF spokespeople have said Gaza reporters sometimes move with armed groups, or that these deaths were an “unintended consequence of operating in a dense urban combat environment.”

Israel has also accused Palestinian journalists of working on behalf of Hamas or Islamic Jihad. In some cases, Israel has suggested that explosions killing journalists may have been caused by misfiring Palestinian rockets, not Israeli strikes. Israel often

says it issues evacuation orders or warnings before bombing certain areas, implying that journalists should have left. Critics point out that in Gaza, nowhere is safe, and that journalists are expected to remain to document events.

When pressed by groups like RSF and the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), Israeli officials reiterate that the IDF only targets “terrorist infrastructure” and “those aiding Hamas.” Amnesty and Human Rights Watch, strongly dispute these claims.

The RSF has reported that the Israeli army intentionally targeted Palestinian journalists. It has been reported that contrary to international law, Israel has targeted Hamas-affiliated Palestinian journalists even when those journalists were not involved in conflict in

combat, disputing Israel’s denial of targeting journalists. The international press has condemned Israel’s actions.

In August the UN’s human rights office condemned a targeted Israeli attack that killed six journalists in Gaza, calling it a grave breach of international law. Israel’s military said it targeted *Al Jazeera* journalist Anas al-Sharif, alleging he had “served as the head of a terrorist cell in Hamas,” something Sharif had denied. Israel provided little evidence for its accusation.

According to the CPJ, Israel is the second worst country in the world for allowing the murderers of journalists to go unpunished. UNESCO awarded its 2024 World Press Freedom Prize to the Palestinian journalists of Gaza. In 2024 the head of the CPJ said that “Israel’s

war on Gaza is more deadly to journalists than any previous war.” This is supported by the Watson Institute for International and Public Affairs, calculating that the war in Gaza has led to the deaths of more journalists than the combined total killed during the US Civil War, World War I, World War II, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, the Yugoslav Wars and the post-9/11 war in Afghanistan.

UNESCO’s Director General, Audrey Azoulay, said that targeting journalists reporting on conflicts is unacceptable and violates international law. Israel must respect UN Security Council Resolution 2222, which was unanimously adopted in 2015 to protect journalists, media professionals and associated personnel in conflict situations. ★

## UK: London Mayor hits back at Trump

**London Mayor Sadiq Khan slammed Donald Trump as “racist, sexist, misogynistic and Islamophobic” after the US president’s extraordinary claim that London was under sharia law.**

London Labour MPs called out Trump’s “sinister agenda” and rallied to Khan’s side following an abusive attack on him at the United Nations general assembly.

The Starmer government was, however, far more muted in its response, desperate to avoid offending the leader of the far right globally.

Trump has long feuded with the London mayor, and as recently as last week claimed that he had insisted that Khan not be invited to any events during his state visit.

But he took it to a further level when he told doubtless bemused world leaders

gathered in New York at the United Nations that in London “you have a terrible mayor, terrible, terrible mayor, and it’s been changed, it’s been so changed.”

“Now they want to go to sharia law. But you are in a different country, you can’t do that.”

Responding from a London bus, Sadiq Khan said: “I think people are wondering what it is about this Muslim mayor who leads a liberal, multicultural, progressive, successful city that means I appear to be living rent-free in Donald Trump’s head.”

He then added that the president is “racist, sexist, misogynistic and he’s Islamophobic” and implied that the British government should be more forthright in condemning him.

The “special relationship,” he argued,

“should also mean you’ve got the confidence to call them when they’re wrong. I think President Trump is wrong in many, many ways.”

Twisting the knife, Khan added that he was grateful that record numbers of US citizens were coming to London, adding that “there’s never been a period when more Americans have come to London. There must be a reason for that.”

Ministers were much more circumspect and tried to make light of the latest outrage from a president that Starmer had spent months fawning over and placating.

Work and Pensions Secretary Pat McFadden called the remarks a “misreading of our great capital.”

Commons foreign affairs committee chairwoman Emily Thornberry slammed Trump’s remarks on social media: “I’ve

known Sadiq Khan for over 30 years. He’s a feminist, a socialist and an LGBTQ+ ally.

“I’m so proud he’s our London mayor. For the record, he’s as interested in introducing sharia law to London as I am – that is, zero per cent. Those who suggest otherwise are deluded, or have a very sinister agenda.”

By contrast, Nigel Farage – who also backed the US president over his scare-mongering about pregnant women using paracetamol and alleged that foreigners were eating swans stolen from royal parks – backed Trump’s lies.

*Morning Star* ★



# Putin proposes one-year extension of New START treaty

**Russian President Vladimir Putin has proposed that the United States extend the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) for one year. The pact, the last remaining nuclear arms reduction agreement between the two powers, is set to expire 5 February 2026.**

“After 5 February 2026, Russia is prepared to continue for one year adhering to the limitations set by New START ... That measure will only be viable on the condition that the US acts in the same way and does not take steps that undermine or destroy the current equivalence of deterrence potentials,” he said during a meeting of the Russian Security Council.

He called a potential US withdrawal from the treaty “mistaken” and “shortsighted” from “many points of view.” The agreement was signed in April 2010 by then-presidents Barack Obama and Dmitry Medvedev.

“In particular, it would negatively affect, from our point of view, the ability to ensure the objectives of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty,” he said, accusing the West of causing the “degradation” of strategic stability.

Putin emphasised that Moscow considers it “justified” to maintain the status quo to avoid a new arms race. In his view, Russia’s proposal could help create a favorable atmosphere for resuming strategic dialogue with Washington, which has been stalled for years.

However, Putin instructed relevant agencies to

“scrupulously” analyse US activities related to strategic arsenals, missile defense systems and the deployment of weapons in space.

Destabilising steps by the US “could destroy our efforts to maintain the status quo in the framework of New START. We will react appropriately,” he warned.

“No one should have any doubt. Russia is ready to respond to any threat ... respond not with words, but with the adoption of military-technical measures,” Putin stressed.

He recalled that a few months ago the Kremlin abandoned its moratorium on deploying short- and medium-range missiles in response to the deployment in Europe and the Asia-Pacific region of similar US and Western systems that directly threaten Russia’s security.

In recent months, Russia has repeatedly said time was running out to renew New START. Putin suspended the treaty’s implementation, though without formally withdrawing from it, on 21 February 2023. Since then, Western experts have been unable to inspect Russian facilities.

The New START treaty limits the number of strategic nuclear weapons to 1,550 warheads and 700 ballistic systems for each side, whether land-based, sea-based or airborne.

Telesur

# Italy deploys navy ships to protect Gaza aid flotilla

**Italian Defence Minister Guido Crosetto has said that his country has dispatched navy ships in the southern Mediterranean to assist civilians travelling with an international aid flotilla headed for Gaza.**

Addressing the Senate, Crosetto said the frigate *Fasan* was sent after drones dropped stun grenades on several vessels of the Global Sumud Flotilla (GSF) off the coast of Crete, Greece. A second, larger ship is also en route to replace the *Fasan* once it reaches the flotilla.

“The Italian government strongly condemns what has happened. Attacks on civilian vessels

in open waters are completely unacceptable,” Crosetto said. He stressed, however, that the warships’ mission was limited to protecting Italians and other civilians on board.

No group has claimed responsibility for the drone attacks. The flotilla blamed Israel for the attacks, but Israel has yet to comment.

The GSF, comprising about 52 small vessels and more than 500 volunteers from over 40 countries, aims to challenge Israel’s naval blockade imposed since 2007 and deliver food and medical aid to Palestinians.

Speaking at the United Nations General Assembly in New York

hours earlier, Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni said Israel had “crossed a line” in its military campaign in Gaza.

While acknowledging Israel’s right to respond to Hamas’ attack in October 2023, she said the scale of its retaliation was disproportionate and had caused severe civilian casualties.

The latest round of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has dragged on for nearly two years, claiming more than 65,000 lives in Gaza, nearly half of them women and children, and leaving two million people mired in a humanitarian catastrophe.

Telesur



## Women in construction

The construction industry is Australia’s second biggest employer with an estimated workforce of 1.24 million which is predominantly male. Women make up 13.6 per cent of the total construction workforce. However, there is further gender segregation within that workforce, with women work in up to 30 per cent of professional roles but only 3.5 per cent of trade and technician jobs.

The industry has proven difficult for women to enter, with numerous barriers such as long hours, inflexible working conditions, casualisation, difficulties with parental leave, lack of female toilets and often racism particularly for Indigenous and non-English speaking background women.

The National Association of Women in Construction (NAWIC) has joined with the University of Sydney to conduct a study focused on improving the retention of women with a particular focus on parental leave. Their research found that the transitional periods in and out of parental leave are pivotal in a woman’s decision to remain in or return to work. Their report, *Boosting Retention of Women in Construction*, based on first-hand accounts from women in the industry, found that many women are the first in their workplace to take parental leave. “We have to change the way we operate – and changing the industry’s approach to parental leave is a good place to start,” the report said.

Support is inconsistent in the industry depending on the manager’s knowledge, empathy, and influence. Policies that support flexibility, if they exist, are inconsistent. “Without strong workplace policies, even limited flexibility is seen as a favour rather than a right – leading to feelings of obligation and pressure,” the report said. Inflexible work hours and site-based demands make it especially hard to balance work and family responsibilities.

“Some workplaces are responding with positive reforms; others resist, reinforcing outdated norms.” Without proper planning, many women are returning to lower-skilled roles or leaving the construction industry altogether. “If women are to remain in construction while having children, industry practices must change. Trade unions, employer groups and government need to work together to strengthen support for pregnancy and parental leave.” Construction has the highest gender pay gap of any Australian industry at 28.3 per cent,” says NAWIC co-president, Atika Anwar.

The report’s recommendations include extended paid parental leave (26 weeks at full pay) with superannuation, strong return-to-work policies, and a reduction in work hours for better work-life balance, and action through working groups between industry associations, employers and trade unions to embed pregnancy and parental leave provisions into enterprise agreements. NAWIC has developed a toolkit for employers.

The Victorian government has launched its *Building Equitable Futures Strategy 2024-32*, its second women in construction strategy. The first ran from 2019-2022. The aim is to achieve a gender balance on government-funded projects of 40 per cent women, 40 per cent men and 20 percent any gender. “No matter what your age, gender, ethnicity or previous experience – there is a suitable job for you in construction,” the Victorian government says.

In Western Australia’s tier one construction sector, union women have achieved some demands but there is still a lot more to do to overcome patriarchy in the industry. The CFMEU has won secure, lockable women’s toilets, sanitary bins and bags for tampons and pads in enterprise agreements. In relation to maternity leave, they have sought and won the right to wage parity with employers paying the gap between the government’s paid leave and their normal wage. They have also won domestic violence leave. The union has a very active women’s committee.

For women to advance their interests in the workplace, they need to join their respective unions. Unions need to welcome women in their ranks at all levels of their organisations.

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Ph: 02 9699 8844 Fax: 02 9699 9833

Email: guardian@cpa.org.au

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