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COMMUNIST PARTY OF AUSTRALIA

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October Revolution spirit lives

Since this edition of the *Guardian – the Workers' Weekly* marks both the Party's 105th anniversary and the 1917 October Revolution in Russia, we mark the event by reprinting a feature from Peter Symon, the first Secretary General of the Socialist Party of Australia and the modern form of the Communist Party of Australia.

7 November marks the anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution in Russia. Socialist and revolutionary-minded working people on all continents were enormously enthused by this event. Many sensed that it was something entirely new. Although there had been many revolts in the past, the Russian revolution for the first time in history meant that the exploited and oppressed succeeded in breaking their chains and established their own power and government. And so it was!

Feats in education, science, culture, and industrial development, previously regarded as impossible, flowed from the revolutionary forces and enthusiasm which were released. But it is not the purpose of this commemoration to write about them.

As has happened to many other revolutionary movements in the past, there were not only achievements but also deviations, mistakes, and setbacks. The task of building a new society proved to be much more difficult than the conduct of the original revolution.

Leaders came and went and some eventually came to prominence who proved to be incapable of finding answers to the always arising new problems. Some, perhaps many, started to look backwards rather than forwards. Although they claimed to be guided by the genius of Marx, Engels, and Lenin they did not understand their ideas and lost their way.

PULLED THE HOUSE DOWN

These leaders pulled down the socialist house upon those inside and committed a crime against the working people of the world of immeasurable proportions. The suffering brought upon the people of the former Soviet Union is now plain for all to see.

The peoples of the third world who had been so generously helped by the Soviet Union were left to face the iron heel of big capital wielded by the IMF and the World Bank.

War came to Europe where there had been no war for more than 40 years. Nations became divided and suffered as Yugoslavia suffered.

The doors were opened for a major attack on the achievements of the working class in the developed capitalist countries.

Perhaps the greatest crime was the betrayal of the solidarity extended to the Soviet Union and the hope for the future which millions of people felt as a result of the existence of the Soviet Union even though many took more than they gave.

The obligation of all was to build the socialist movement in their own countries. But many merely criticised without learning. As a result of a sort of dependence they feel disappointed and let down and have retreated into a shell. But is this justified? Some have given way and turned their backs because they were merely fine weather friends and fine weather socialists.

One can only be disappointed or feel hurt if one has a short-sighted view of history which fails to recognise the twists and turns of events and, in this particular case, underestimates the world-wide and continuing significance of the original Russian revolution.

History is not a straight paved road leading to some paradise which someone else will construct.

SETBACKS

Many have picked themselves up and grasped the truth which is the inevitability of socialism. It is no less inevitable now than it was before the recent setbacks. They are only setbacks. Many more will also pick themselves up, the exploited and oppressed will continue to fight back as they have always done throughout history.

This is also true and even now coming to pass among the people of the former Soviet Union.

Socialist aspirations, ideals and principles haven't been killed off as was proclaimed by the capitalist rulers. Deep down they remain and will re-assert themselves in time – they are already to be seen in the strike struggles, demonstrations, protests, election results, and the re-emergence of committed communist parties.

Is it really to be imagined that those who have thieved the property of the people, who have imposed poverty on millions of people, who have sewn crime and imposed a craven dictatorship can ever become popular and supportable political figures? For a time many were misled and confused but that is passing.

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Manifesto to the workers of Australia

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Sanctions: the stick and the carrot

Australia mostly doesn't get sanctioned. There's a few politicians who can't get visas to go to Israel, but that doesn't affect the rest of us. It's not big news here when Australia places sanctions on other countries. More about that later.

The US dishes out a lot of sanctions. It has placed more sanctions on Russia recently, making it harder for two of the largest Russian oil companies to do business. It has had sanctions on other countries for a long time – on Iran for decades. The world record for sanctions must be on Cuba, which has been the subject of a savage US blockade since 1961. That's right, the US has been inflicting suffering on the Cuban people for 64 years and counting.

Sanctions can ban individuals from visiting the sanctioning nation. Other sanctions bar companies from doing business with the sanctioned nation. The US extends this to third parties – it has penalised Australian banks for doing business with Cuba.

The flip side of sanctions is the carrot of lifting them. That was what was held out to Iran until Trump came back to power – if Iran cooperated with a deal on limiting its development of nuclear technology, the EU and the US would lift their sanctions.

Sanctions are mainly a practice of the West – principally the US, but also the EU and Britain, although allies join in. Australia does its usual trick of slavishly following the US. The global south wants trade and good relations, not sanctions and bullying.

As a topic, sanctions are easy to ignore in Australia. We don't suffer from them. If you take a casual interest in the news, sanctions can seem like a painless way for Australia to express disapproval of another country, or to reinforce its relationship with the US.

Ignoring sanctions is a mistake. Australia doesn't suffer, but other nations do. Sanctions cause deaths, starvation and severe suffering. They hit the working class hardest. When Australia cooperates with sanctions on Russia, Cuba, or Iran, we are not hurting the people at the top of those countries. Sanctions always have the greatest impact on working people.

There's a silver lining. When overused, sanctions have the effect of making the sanctioned countries more independent. Iran is reported to have replaced 70% of the economic activity harmed by US and EU actions. Russia is motivated to explore non-US dollar trading and build relations with other nations.

Something that is not discussed when talking about sanctions is the idea that makes any of them possible. Behind all sanctions is the assumption that the West, with the US mostly in charge, gets to tell other countries what to do. Other countries have to fall in line or pay the price. Sanctions have the side effect of letting the world know that they are a weapon the West, especially the US is prepared to use. Sanctions are a bully advertising that they mean business.

The Communist Party of Australia is working for an Australia which is genuinely independent, not just clinging to the US version of "a rules-based order." It's possible for this country to stand on its own feet and be "a friend to all, an enemy to none." Possible, but not easy. In this month of the CPA's 105th anniversary, we could use some help.

October Revolution spirit lives

Continued from page 1

The call for democracy can only be a socialist democracy, not the sham democracy of the West which merely masks the real dictatorship of the transnational corporations and the banks.

The re-establishment of economic well-being is a call that will generate an enormous response. The course that was so ignorantly seized upon has only brought poverty and a rapidly growing mass unemployment.

FIGHTING BACK

The people of a country which was in the front rank in education, culture, science, social welfare systems and much else will not tolerate such achievements being torn from their hands without fighting back. They will not accept being thrust back into the status of an undeveloped country of little consequence in the world. That is impossible, yet that is the aim of the big and rich countries of the West which aspire to rule the world once again.

For a time Britain was the predominant power in the world. It listed as its possessions about one quarter of the earth's surface and controlled much of the rest.

Nazi Germany sought to rule the world as the British Empire slipped into decline. It was above all

the Soviet Union which prevented Hitler realising his dream.

The new aspirant to world domination is the US. That is what the "new world order" of the USA is all about. It must not be allowed to succeed if the people of the world are to avoid a new slavery enforced by the gun, by mind-bending media monopolies, and by various bio-technological and hi-tech surveillance controls.

This task cannot be left to the peoples of a newly emergent Soviet Union or to a socialist China or Cuba. It is the responsibility of all.

Around the world the people are taking up this challenge by fighting for people's democracy and the independence of their countries, by preventing war and insisting on disarmament, saving nature's planet from the criminal stupidity of the big business despoilers of the environment.

People are in the thick of the fight for an economic system which works for the people, not just a rich few, even though this aim may not be clearly seen by many.

7 November is commemorated not only because of its momentous achievements but also because it shows everyone that the people can win liberation, end exploitation and oppression and save our home – Mother Earth – for future generations. ★

Quote of the Week

"We've already contributed a billion dollars to your industrial base; there'll be a billion dollars on its way before Christmas ... we want to uplift your industrial capacity."

Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese, talking to the people he really serves, US President Donald Trump and the US arms industry

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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CPA 105 years

30 October this year marked the 105th anniversary of the foundation of the Communist Party of Australia. It was an historic event and signalled the formation of a party taking Marxism as its guide.

A number of events influenced the formation of communist parties at that time, not only in Australia, but also in a number of other countries as well.

It was shortly after the ending of World War I, caused directly by capitalism and resulted in enormous loss of life and devastation. The experience of this war was a contributing factor in the Russian socialist revolution of 1917 and revolutionary upsurges in many other European countries.

In Australia, the modern working class was beginning to emerge with the foundation of a steel industry in 1912 when BHP was established.

Labor Party governments had sided with the imperialist governments of Europe in the war and attempted to conscript soldiers to fight overseas.

Some utopian socialist organisations existed before the formation of the Communist Party of Australia and they had awakened an understanding of the class nature of society and opposed capitalism. But their solutions to the problems of the working people were inadequate.

However, the first publication of the writings of Marx, Engels, Lenin, and others brought scientific socialist ideas to readers.

On the one hand, the reformist, compromising policies of the Labor Party became apparent. On the other

hand, the one-sided anti-parliamentarianism of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) was seen to represent a blind alley in the struggle for the overthrow of the capitalist system and its replacement by a social system based on the interests and needs of the working people.

The 105 years of the Communist movement in Australia have been marked by ups and downs and by many achievements. The movement has persisted despite the never-ending campaigns of the capitalist class to exorcise it from society and, these days, to declare that socialism has been tried and found to be a failure and is now dead. They only wish it were true!

Communist parties exist in more countries than ever and in a number of countries they have formed governments and are building socialist societies such as China, Cuba, Vietnam, Laos and the DPRK. In other countries Communist parties participate in the present governments – South Africa, Sri Lanka, Italy, and Cambodia, for example, and lead provincial, state, and local governments as in India and Japan.

The working class has grown enormously in the last 105 years and is by far the single largest class in many countries. Workers comprise the overwhelming majority of the populations of all countries.

Millions remain poor, impoverished and unemployed in a period when all human needs could be met by the productive capacity that exists. The necessity to bring an end to the capitalist system has never been more apparent

or necessary. The recently announced obscene profits of Australian banks and resources companies, show what wealth is being ripped out of the sweat and toil of the working people, wealth which could have been used for the overall benefit of the working people.

Marxist and Leninist ideas remain true and are the only reliable guide to a better society. It was socialist ideas and policies that rapidly transformed the once backward economy and lives of the Russian people. It was socialist ideas and policies that enabled the people of Vietnam, China, and Cuba to defeat the efforts of imperialism to strangle those countries. It is socialist ideas and policies that could also redistribute wealth in Australia and reverse the present environmental destruction which is a direct result of capitalist rip, tear, and bust economic practices.

That is why we commemorate the foundation of the Communist Party of Australia and can confidently reaffirm the *Manifesto to the Workers of Australia* which was issued by the CPA shortly after its formation in 1920 (see page 8). It declares “the capitalist system of production and distribution has outlived its usefulness and become reactionary and destructive of humanity ...”

Socialist ideas based on the collective social needs of men and women can eliminate war from the affairs of humanity. Socialism alone can save humanity from catastrophic climate change. At 105 years old and counting, that’s what the Communist Party of Australia is working towards. ✱



Labor Party governments had sided with the imperialist governments of Europe

Support for Palestine is more needed than ever before.

CPA comrades at the State Conference in Adelaide showed up at the rally on 26 October to support Palestine in Adelaide's Peace Park. Key demands were for Australia to boycott Israel, cut diplomatic and military ties with the genocide, and expel Israel's ambassador.



One in eight electrical apprentices shocked at work

- One in eight electrical apprentices receive an electrical shock at work
 - Likelihood of shock doubles for 10% of apprentices whose training is delayed
 - \$200 million taxpayer-funded companies missing in action
- Taxpayer-funded apprentice mentors are missing in action as apprentice electricians are exposed to electric shocks and delayed training, new research has found.**

One in eight Australian electrical apprentices are exposed to potentially deadly electrical shocks during their apprenticeship, with that figure doubling to one in four if apprentices do not commence their classroom training until after their first year on the tools.

These sickening figures come from a survey of more than 400

apprentices conducted by the Electrical Trades Union in April and May this year.

Critical safety modules on CPR, health and safety, and controlling the risk of electric shock are among the first units delivered in the classroom to electrical apprentices. With one in ten apprentices not starting TAFE until their second year, this delay is jeopardising safety.

The research raises questions about the role of taxpayer-funded Apprentice Connect Australian Provider (ACAP) scheme, which funds private companies to mentor and advocate for apprentices to the tune of more than \$200 million a year.

The survey revealed that one in five apprentices were unable to identify their ACAP from a list, and follow-up interviews with apprentices who had been shocked at work revealed many were unable to say

what the mentor was supposed to do. Those who did understand the purpose of the mentor said their mentor did not fulfil that purpose, and that the support they received was perfunctory.

None of the apprentices interviewed by the researchers received any assistance from their mentor regarding delayed access to off-the-job training.

The research found that taxpayer-funded mentors failed to find training places for apprentices, did not advocate for apprentices to their employers, did not ensure that their on-the-job training was suitable or properly supervised, did not provide advice to handle disputes with employers and in some cases sided with employers, seeking to fire apprentices in disputes.

Electrical Trades Union National Secretary Michael Wright

said the findings were deeply disturbing.

“Young people learning any trade should be taught how to work safe, get training on the tools and in the classroom, and have someone in the corner to stand up for them. We need an apprenticeship system that works for apprentices, not the other way round,” Wright said.

“We need apprentice electricians to wire Australia into the future economy and build our way out of the housing crisis.

“This research shows that our training system is failing apprentices. We are withholding key safety training until apprentices have been on the tools for more than a year, and this is doubling the rate at which they are experiencing potentially deadly electric shocks.

“It suggests that \$200 million of taxpayer money is given to

supposed mentors who are absent, ineffective, or actively hostile to the interests of the apprentice they have been paid to support.

“This has been reported even when apprentices most need support – when they have had their training withheld, have been exposed to electric shocks, or they’ve fallen out with their boss.

“We know we need more than 40,000 additional electrical workers in the next five years. We also know that nearly half of all electrical apprentices withdraw before they get their licence.

“Addressing the grave failures of policy and empathy that this research lays bare would be a great place to start and now would be the perfect time to do it.”

Electrical Trades Union ✱

Getting ready for Congress: State Conference/AGM updates

If a state has more than one Communist Party Branch, the Branches have a state conference in the lead-up to the National Conference. This year, all Party Branches have the responsibility of preparing for the CPA's National Congress, which will be held in Naarm/Melbourne in February 2026. The Congress is a very democratic exercise, with all Branches contributing to a Political Resolution which will set the direction for the Party's activities for the next four years. The conferences and AGMs also elect office bearers and determine Party activities in their respective areas.

Queensland's state conference was successful. Delegates worked their way through branch amendments to the Political resolution and reached a strong and united position. The conference also pledged to grow the Party in Queensland through recruitment and more outreach to all geographic areas of the

state. The Queensland conference paid attention to the truth telling and treaty struggles of Indigenous peoples. The incoming State committee selected new officers and has pledged to reach out to build left unity and people's unity.

Adelaide's state conference was held at Fidel's, the Party's beloved club house in SA, home of the Workers' Library. Comrade Michael Perth, President of the Port Adelaide Branch, paid tribute to Comrade Beryl Miller who sadly died this year just after her 99th birthday which she was able to celebrate with comrades. Comrade Beryl had served the Party loyally in numerous roles and was outstanding in selling the *Guardian* to many workers and unionists.

The Adelaide conference was attended by CPA National President Comrade Vinnie Molina. He remarked on how the Party now faced difficult conditions. He stressed the importance of united front work where possible with working class power acting as the

key to success. He also stressed the Party's international connections with successful socialist parties in China, Vietnam, Laos, and Cuba and at the same time the need for comrades to carefully analyse the material conditions faced by workers here and be prepared to help struggling comrades, in particular, workers under attack like those in the CFMEU.

Comrade Vinnie also explained how the Party Congress in February-March next year offers an exciting opportunity for comrades across the country to meet together and help take the Party forward.

NSW has just concluded its State Conference, with CPA General Secretary Andrew Irving contributing. General meetings in WA, ACT, and Victoria to be held in December. Comrades in all Branches have been working on the Political Resolution and getting ready for next year's Congress all year.

Wherever you are, it's a good time to join the Party! ✳



South Australia State Conference.



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Something
to say?
Write to
the Editor!



Did you ever write to an MP or a Senator and get an oily answer back very quickly? If so, you'll be aware that these answers aren't written by the individual politician, looking at your email and thinking about what to say. The answer will be sent back from one of their staff, who writes it from 'talking points,' responses that have been produced by the politician's masters further up the chain in their political party.

Thanks to a mistake by an ALP staffer, we don't have to write in to our local members to find out what they're supposed to say in response to questions on Palestine. An article in *Deepcut* news has revealed that all of the government's talking points on Palestine were accidentally sent to the Australia Palestine Advocacy Network. Katie Shammass, APAN's Executive Officer told *Deepcut* that the talking points were significant "for what's not there: a commitment to sanction Israel for their genocide in Gaza." Shammass added that the talking points show that Labor's position is "inconsistent with their legal obligations under the UN Genocide Convention."

The talking points also show that Labor is feeling defensive about the issue of providing parts for F-35 fighter-bombers, while those planes are being used to bomb Gaza. MPs are instructed to say that Australia can't stop making F-35 parts because its part of a global supply chain and to point out that Australia doesn't directly supply the parts to Israel.

PARASITE OF THE WEEK: big tech's AI theft. The Media Entertainment & Arts Alliance (MEAA) has welcomed the announcement by the federal government that Australian law will not be watered down to permit free access to Australian creative works.

MEAA Chief Executive Erin Madeley said this was a major win in the campaign to stop AI theft and force big tech to pay up for the theft of creative work happening every day in Australia.

"The decision backs in the value of our music, screen productions, journalism, books, and scripts, and of Australian culture at large, as well as the workers who produce it and serve Australian audiences," Madeley said.

"While it is an essential first step in dealing with the risks posed by generative AI, which takes us closer to a socially responsible regulatory framework, there is more to do.

"MEAA will continue the campaign to ensure Australian workers receive full compensation for the use of their work, and crucially, to deal with AI job losses and work displacement."

MEAA also welcomes the federal government's commitment to greater transparency and licensing arrangements, noting the need for any regime to guarantee protection for workers.

"The right response to generative AI is to lead with the principle of guaranteed payment for creative and media workers, and we will work with government and industry to ensuring this occurs on behalf of our members."

The impact of AI goes beyond copyright and is being felt by workers right now. A survey of more than 700 media and creative workers showed widespread concern among creative and media professionals and a very high proportion who had already experienced AI theft.

Millions of images, songs, articles, and films have been scraped without consent or compensation to train AI – a practice threatening wages and conditions in already precarious industries.

AI systems also risk misappropriating Indigenous cultural knowledge, art, stories, music, and performance traditions, which is why MEAA has called for legal recognition of Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property (ICIP).

Creators must retain control over how their work is used, with legally enforceable rights to consent and compensation when their content is leveraged to train AI models.

Red October

CPA history is living history

Red October, our Party's celebration of its 105th Anniversary was a great success. The Canberra Branch organised a meeting featuring fraternal guests as well as Party members reflecting on a history that has often been ignored. The Sydney Branch provided a new video which can be viewed on the national YouTube account.

Throughout October, CPA Social Media, from the national Instagram to the national Twitter accounts put forward items from our Party's history. The first and final posts of the month put it like this:

"Today marks the beginning of Red October: the countdown to the 105th Anniversary of the Founding of our Party on 30 October, 1920. Throughout this month we will feature various aspects of our history. Stay tuned for more on the foundations of the Party, where we came from and what made the CPA the growing Party it is today.

Why tell this history? The story of the CPA is one of survival against all odds, standing up for working people, and striving for a more just and peaceful future for humankind. At the core of this history is the idea that building a

socialist future in Australia is possible; that the Party is here to stay. CPA history is living history.

Those who proclaim the death of communism tell our history as a history of failure. For those who are rebuilding our movement, our history is one of both failures and successes, with more successes to come. The tens of thousands of Australians who have called the CPA their home from the 1920s to the 2020s undoubtedly made a contribution to the workers' struggle for a better life. The story of communism in Australia, will continue."

Here are some posts from the CPA_Canberra account that were then featured on the national X account:

BERTHA WALKER

Bertha Walker (1912 – 1975) was a great Party-builder. Walker took charge of the Young Comrades Club in the 1920s and became active in the CPA, the Shop Assistants' Union of Victoria and the Spanish Relief Committee. Walker eventually became Party Chairman of the State Committee's Eastern District. In June 1943 she stood as CPA candidate for the Legislative Assembly

seat of Richmond, winning 32 per cent of the votes. By the 1940s the Communist Party of Australia (CPA) had become a political phenomenon. It was the largest Communist Party in the Anglophone world and one of the strongest political forces in Australia. This was due to the hard work of comrades like Walker, who built the Party and forged real change in people's lives.

PETER SYMON

Peter Symon, General Secretary of the CPA from 1971 to 2008, led the Party through some of the most difficult years for world communism. Symon steered our movement through the collapse of the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia and socialist countries around the world, including Africa, Asia, and the Middle East. Without Symon's foresight and leadership, and all dedicated members who stayed true to the cause, the Communist Party may not have survived the post-Cold-War period. Symon's emphasis on organisation, high standards of service to the local community, and proletarian internationalism were key to the Party's survival through this period. Throughout the 1990s the international Communist movement encountered great difficulty. Many Communist Parties dissolved themselves or abandoned Marxist-Leninist ideas. Symon, General Secretary through

this period, ensured that the Party stuck to the practice of Marxism-Leninism. In 1996 Symon insisted that being a Communist was a badge of honour, requiring high-standards of service to the community. Symon insisted that commitment to working-class liberation was not over, that socialist countries needed our support, and that the CPA would continue into the new century. Today we inherit this Party and invite people from around the country to rejoin the cause of Communism in Australia.

HANNAH MIDDLETON

Hannah Middleton (1942 – 2025) assumed the role of General Secretary of the Party after Peter Symon's death in 2008. Middleton was the first woman General Secretary and her contribution was vast. Following from Sharkey and Symon, Middleton reinforced the Party's emphasis on working-class struggle and added fuel to areas like anti-US-bases and anti-nuclear campaigns, anti-racism, ecology, and First Nations' rights. In 1990 Middleton wrote: "The work of the peace movement must be maintained and intensified. A mass movement for peace and disarmament, embracing all peoples and all countries, is still crucial in our world." ✨



Letter to Whitlam

In 1975, Peter Symon, the General Secretary of the Socialist Party of Australia wrote to Prime Minister Gough Whitlam about Australia's foreign policy. As it's the anniversary of Whitlam's dismissal by an unelected Governor-General, and the issues are still very relevant, we reprint both letters. See next page for Whitlam's reply)

Dear Sir,
Recognising that the end of the war in Indochina was a defeat for the policy of foreign intervention and that this development is the occasion for a substantial review of Australia's foreign policy, I wish to submit the following views to yourself and your Parliamentary colleagues.

We believe Australia's foreign policy should be based on a declaration that our country will seek a peaceful world and will respect the right of all people to political and economic freedom and independence.

In practical terms we propose the following policies be adopted:

1. A declaration that detente is the basis of Australia's foreign policy and that Australia's representatives will promote this policy in all ways possible, seeking to consolidate it and extend it to military disarmament.
2. That the Australian government renew support for a world disarmament conference which will provide for withdrawal of all military bases from Australian soil as part of a disarmament program.
3. Development of a full program of aid to assist in the rebuilding of Indochina with immediate provision of food, medical supplies, clothing and building materials.
4. Australia to initiate proposals for,

and agreement between, all nations of the Pacific-Indian Ocean area to make the whole area a nuclear-free peace zone.

5. Withdrawal from the SEATO and ANZUS* Pacts and their replacement by non-aggression or collective security pacts between all countries (excluding none) in the Asian region.

6. The further extension of contacts (political, trade, cultural) with the socialist nations and the countries of the Third World.

7. The Australian government to make a call for the early reconvening of the Geneva Conference on the Middle East and that a settlement be sought on the basis of the full implementation of the UNO decisions of 1967 and 1973 which call for an Israeli withdrawal from all lands occupied in the 1967 war, respect for the right to existence of all States in the Middle East and restoration of the rights of the Palestinian people.

8. A declaration of support for a meeting

of the Heads of State of Europe to conclude the proposed European Collective Security Conference.

9. A call for all nations to join the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, ban all nuclear weapons and destroy all existing nuclear weapons stocks.

We believe that the adoption of these policies would open a new era of peace and progress for Australia, whereas, a policy based upon the preparation of a new war of intervention in Asia can only fail and lead to even greater disaster for all the peoples in our region.

Yours sincerely,

Peter Symon
General Secretary,
Socialist Party of Australia

*Editor's note: SEATO, the South East Asian Treaty Organisation was dissolved in 1977. ANZUS is still with us

Whitlam replies

(Editor's note: in his reply to Peter Symon's letter (see page 5), Whitlam talks about foreign military bases on Australian soil, the rights of the Palestinian people, and international peace. Whitlam was dismissed as Prime Minister on 11 November 1975.)

Dear Mr Symon,

I refer to your letter of 12 May 1975, concerning Australia's foreign policy. I have given close attention to your Party's policy proposals and you may be, interested in my comments below on each of them.

1. Detente

The Australian government welcomes and is firmly committed to the concept of detente and actively seeks to encourage the Great Powers to work to achieve this. It would, however, be short-sighted to base foreign policy on one single tenet. Foreign policy must embrace a number of ideals, expectations and hopes, including of course, support for detente.

The government is also firmly committed to the objective of a reduction of armaments, both conventional and nuclear, and has sought to promote this in a number of ways. It has welcomed the talks on the limitation of strategic armaments between the United States and the Soviet Union, and has impressed upon the two superpowers the need to strive for more rapid progress towards nuclear disarmament.

2. World Disarmament Conference

The Australian government supports in principle the concept of a World Disarmament Conference. As you are no doubt aware, in accordance with (a General Assembly Resolution) supported by Australia, a preparatory committee has been established to consider the question. So far the work of this committee has been rather disappointing, particularly as two of the nuclear powers have declined to participate.

In view of the protracted debates and discussions on disarmament which have gone on in various bodies of the United Nations over the years, it is essential that a great deal of preliminary work be done before a World Disarmament Conference is held. The active participation of all the nuclear powers in such a conference is also an essential prerequisite to its success.

On the question of the withdrawal of military bases from Australian soil as part of the disarmament program, I have stated the government's position a number of times. On 3 April 1974, in answer to a question in the House of Representatives, I said:

"The Australian government takes the attitude that there should not be foreign military bases, stations, installations in Australia. We honour agreements covering existing stations. We do not favour the extension or prolongation of any of those existing ones".

3. Aid to Indo-China

The Australian government has pledged itself to give generous aid to Indo-China, and is in the process of consultations which would enable it to draw up a program. In the financial year 1974-75, as an initial response to immediate needs, government aid to international organisations for humanitarian aid in Indo-China totalled \$3,400,000.

4. Nuclear Free

In my address to the United Nations General Assembly last year I expressed the government's view that the concept of nuclear-free zones was one that deserved the most serious exploration. As you will be aware, Australia has supported the concept of a Zone of Peace in the Indian Ocean as a long-term objective, and is an active participant in the 18-nation United Nations ad hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean. At the recent meeting of the South Pacific Forum, Australia joined its South Pacific neighbours in commending the idea of establishing a nuclear-free zone in the South Pacific.

So that all concerned may have a greater understanding of the problems associated with such zones, and to see how they might effectively supplement efforts to stem the proliferation of nuclear weapons, a 21-nation study group, of which Australia is a member, has been established under the auspices of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament (CCD) to examine the concept of nuclear-free zones in all its aspects. This group's deliberations will be relevant to the further consideration of nuclear-free zone proposals for the Indian Ocean and the South Pacific.

5. SEATO and ANZUS

The present government has always been conscious of the deficiencies of the South East Asia Treaty Organisation, and soon after coming to office played a leading part in having its structure modified. The government is continuing to examine the need for further changes. On the other hand, it is not contemplating withdrawal from the ANZUS Treaty.

The government is naturally prepared at any time to examine any proposal for any form of international co-operation between countries in the Asian region which might serve a practical purpose in promoting peace and progress in the region. The government has itself taken initiatives designed to assist fulfilling this purpose.

6. Socialist Countries and Third World

The government believes in the universality of international relationships, regardless of ideological differences, and has actively pursued this course by, for example, establishing diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China, the German Democratic Republic, and the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam. It was also among the first countries to recognise the new government in Cambodia.

The government is already actively pursuing a course of developing and expanding links in the political, trade, scientific and cultural fields with all countries. For example, during my visit to the Soviet Union in January this year, the first by an Australian Prime Minister, I signed two new agreements, one on Science and Technology, and one on Cultural Exchanges. I also discussed with President Tito and Prime Minister Bjedjic of Yugoslavia, and Mrs Bandaranaike of Sri Lanka, Australia's interest in the Third World, and expressed the government's desire to attend future meetings of the nonaligned group of countries, either as a guest or as an observer.

7. The Middle East

The Australian government supports all peaceful moves, whether through a reconvened Geneva Conference, further bilateral



Edward Gough Whitlam. Photo: Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House

negotiations, or other avenues, to bring about the earliest possible solution to the Middle East dispute. It supports implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 242 of 1967 which, among other things, calls for an Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territories. It also supports the realisation of the national rights and aspirations of the Palestinian people, including their right to establish a State alongside Israel if they so choose.

8. European Security Conference

The Australian government welcomes detente and any moves such as the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE), which support international negotiation, conciliation, co-operation and peaceful development.

9. Nuclear Non-Proliferation

Australia has taken and continues to take a strong stand against the testing of nuclear weapons in all environments, and in this regard you will recall the action that the government took against the government of France in the International Court of Justice over the atmospheric testing of

nuclear devices. At the 28th and 29th session of the United Nations General Assembly the Australian delegations played an active role in drafting resolutions condemning nuclear weapons testing and stressing the dangers associated with the proliferation of all nuclear explosive devices. The government has firmly and consistently supported the achievement of a comprehensive test ban.

One of the first acts of the present government on coming to power was to ratify the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). This is the most important international instrument in existence to control nuclear proliferation and the government believes that support for the principles of the Treaty should be the cornerstone of all international endeavour towards this objective.

Australia's contribution to the successful outcome of the recent NPT Review Conference was recognised by all depositary powers and other participants as significant, responsible and constructive.

Yours sincerely,

EG Whitlam

there should not be foreign
military bases, stations,
installations in Australia

What’s happening with rare earths?

Rob Harris

Western imperialism, aka the ‘rules-based order,’ is supply chain dependent on its strategic rival China. This is the context for the recently announced increase in state-sponsorship of rare earth element (REE) extraction and processing between USA and Australia.

The two states announced they are to invest US\$1 billion by the end of April 2026 with a concomitant mining promotion meeting. Already there is significant state investment in REE and critical minerals activity in Australia. The private companies who conduct this activity are addicted to public handouts while they post profits in the billions. Nystar cries poor at its Hobart, Tasmania and Port Pirie, South Australia smelters, while its parent company Trafigura (Singapore) made US\$2.8 billion (AU\$4.25 billion) net profit last year.

Reserve Bank Australia (RBA) notes in their Bulletin of October 2025 that lithium projects in Australia suffered delays due to a fall in prices last year. The stated intent of the REE announcement is to increase production of REE, decrease prices and flood the market. This is known as “oversupply.” The announcement states that the USA and Australia will protect their domestic markets from “non-market policies and unfair trade practices.” They will do this through dumping. This is a large contradiction in the announcement. For the ‘rules-based order,’ unfair trade practices are something other people do.

This announcement by the US and Australia is an aspirational market signal to increase investment in REE extraction, processing and sale. However, there will firstly need to be a large amount of expensive research conducted. During this time, activity at existing plants like WA-based, US-owned Alcoa will expand.

REEs are generally produced as by-products of other mining activity. Gallium is a byproduct at Alcoa’s bauxite and alumina mines which threaten Perth’s water supply. There is currently not a technique available to Alcoa to derive more gallium byproduct from bauxite-alumina mining, so to increase gallium production the primary mining activity must be increased.

The investment announced will be spent at this juncture in an attempt to increase the proportion of gallium to primary extraction. According to the announcement, this will be conducted in a framework to “accelerate, streamline, or deregulate permitting timelines and processes.” To recap: research is required to create more efficient extraction and then research to scale. All of which requires investment. The major content of this announcement is research and development.

Australia remains a quarry economy. “Our” resource giants are majority-owned by foreign entities – see the Liquid Natural Gas boom. PM Albanese’s announcements that we won’t just be “digging things up” but also will mean in practice a green river of radioactive chemicals next to the existing mines. All of which is desecration of stolen land, otherwise known as the common good of Australia.

All for what? Lockheed Martin will be able to keep making Precision Strike Missiles. The US will be able to give those missiles to ‘allies’ like Israel. We know how Israel uses missiles.

Like many announcements from the West, this one is heavy on bluster and light on substance. REEs are abundant in their unmined and unprocessed form. Extracting REEs at scale requires not only large and ongoing investment but technical expertise and capabilities. Offshoring jobs for higher corporate profits (capitalist productivity) has led to a shortage of workers with the know-how needed. Money supplied to the private sector today will increase share prices and share buybacks. It will not put any new shovels in the dirt.

China is restricting the supply of REEs as leverage over strategic rivals. Gallium is an REE used in advanced warfighting and surveillance systems. China will not grant Lockheed Martin and other US arms companies any licences for this REE due to self-interest. Unlike the founder of the Liberal Party, Robert Menzies, who supplied the pre-World War 2 Japanese empire with iron for arms until stopped by the Waterside Workers’ Federation, China is sensibly looking ahead. 🇺🇸



US mine waste contains enough critical minerals and rare earths to easily end imports, but tapping into these resources is anything but easy. Photo: Reinhard Jahn / En Academic – Creative Commons (CC BY-SA 2.0 DE)

PEACE NOTES

Nobel Peace Prize

The Nobel Peace Prize for 2025 has been awarded amidst overwhelming criticism to María Corina Machado, who among other things has called on the US to bomb her country of Venezuela. The Nobel Peace Prize for 2026 might go to US President Trump whose list of peace-making deals keeps growing, at least in his head. Trump’s claims that he sorted the recent India-Pakistan conflict haven’t gone down well.

The reality is very different. Trump’s administration is continuing to supply weapons and intelligence to various war-fighting countries in contravention of many international laws. The whole fiasco has seriously devalued the Nobel Peace Prize, which only last year was awarded to the Hibakusha of Japan, survivors of the nuclear attacks on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, for their years of anti-nuclear weapons activism. These worthy recipients are now degraded thanks to Trump’s ego and Machado’s award.

US – Australia Alliance

With the Prime Minister set to be in Washington shortly the enthusiastic media of Australia is printing breathlessly subservient articles from the Deputy Prime Minister Richard Marles. Headlines such as ‘Marles calls US link Australia’s closest’ or ‘Marles hails US defence alliance’ abound. It’s been pointed out that Marles is making this boast while Donald Trump is blowing people to smithereens in international waters and has helped fund a two-year slaughter in Gaza to the tune of US \$31 billion.

INDO PACIFIC EXPO

Preparations are now being made for massive demonstrations outside the arms bazaar called the Indo Pacific Expo. The CPA and many other civil society groups have been calling for this display to be cancelled due to the raw emotions left by the genocide in Gaza. Of course, we have been ignored while the profiteers of genocide, namely the massive arms corporations, have their exhibitions, free lunches and social outings at the expense of the taxpayers of Australia with an extra top-up from the NSW government who are the ‘principal sponsor.’

NATO

Praise is being heaped on the RAAF by NATO who it has been revealed has been flying secret missions around the border of Russia with a surveillance plane. The RAAF plane is a E-7a Wedgetail commonly called an AWACs plane. The plane, worth \$1.3 billion, flew 45 missions most lasting 15 hours. It costs around \$10,000 per hour to fly the thing. That, plus wages make the whole exercise a donation of \$10 million towards keeping the Ukraine war with Russia going. Add this to the \$1.5 billion military aid already given to Ukraine, and you can see how our resources are diverted from housing, health, and education to please our allies.

JORDAN SPELLS IT OUT

The King of Jordan has told BBC interviewers that no countries will want to enforce any kind of peace in Gaza, as envisaged in Trump’s plan for a ‘stabilisation force.’ King Abdullah asked what the mandate of security forces in Gaza would be, and explained that “if we’re running around Gaza on patrol with weapons, that’s not a situation that any country would like to get involved in.”

Help us cancel the Indo Pacific Expo
Rally 4 November 8am Chinese Garden Darling Harbour
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

Manifesto to the workers of Australia

The Communist Party of Australia was formed on 30 October 1920 – just 105 years ago. On 24 December 1920, the new Party published this Manifesto to the Workers of Australia in the first issue of its newspaper *The Australian Communist*.

To the working class of Australia, the Communist Party at the moment of its formation, issues this preliminary statement of principles and policy.

We hold it as a fundamental principle that it is only by the mass movement of the working class as a whole that our emancipation can be won and, therefore, urge the workers to the careful study of this appeal to prepare for their part in the coming international communist revolution.

The Communist Party of Australia, together with the Communist International, accepts the scientific theory that the Capitalist System of production and distribution has outlived its usefulness and become reactionary and destructive of humanity.

We realise that this system has in its development and maturity done great service to humanity by bringing about extensive and efficient social production and distribution of necessities, and by introducing wonderful labour-saving devices.

But the capitalist system itself presents the fundamental contradiction of social production and individual or private ownership both of the means of production and the products.

From this fact arise the two classes of modern society – the bourgeoisie and the proletariat.

The bourgeoisie, by virtue of its possession of the State power, established and maintains itself today as the dominant class and is thereby, enabled to shelter behind the empty phrases of popular democracy.

By monopolising and holding by any and every means of cunning, deceit, and terrorism, all the means of subsistence, the dominant class perpetuates the existing form of society, while the proletariat, deprived of everything, sometimes even of bare existence, is subjected to degradation and the most humiliating slavery.

Thus does modern society present itself as a system wherein one class produces all things and owns nothing, while the other class owns everything and produces nothing.

The Communist Party, recognising this contradiction, sets itself to abolish the system, to overthrow this class monopoly, and to abolish the private ownership of the means of production.

Its aim is to establish a system of social ownership of the means of production, thereby making the ownership coincide with the social process of production.

This contradiction, fundamental in the capitalist system, is most apparent during a crisis caused by over-production. Then there is no shortage of necessities but an oversupply, that is to say, the producers have produced more for the monopolist class for their profits than that class can dispose of.

When this point is reached the wheels of production are stopped and the producers, in addition to being deprived of their own production, are deprived of even their ordinary miserable means of subsistence; and are thrown into a state of absolute starvation.

In such a case the producing classes unconsciously feel that they are unjustly deprived of access to the amassed products of their own labour. Sometimes they are driven by starvation and this sense of injustice is driven into spontaneous revolt, such as local and general strikes.

But, because of their lack of organisation and their ignorance of the real cause of their degradation and starvation and because the monopolist classes are solidly organised into the State, with weapons to hand for oppression and coercion, they are invariably suppressed and beaten, fooled or trapped.

They are finally brought back again into the same slavery when the monopolists are ready to set the wheels of production going again.

Since the possessing class, in spite of its insignificant numbers compared with the workers is, through its organisation, able to keep the great masses in subjection, we Communists contend that if the workers are well organised for the express purpose of the overthrow of the capitalist system, they can do so during one of these periodical crises.

They can then establish a system of production of necessities, not for profit, but for social use. Then would they turn the over-supply or plenty of products to the happiness of all, and not to the starvation of those who have produced that plenty.

The Communist Party is essentially a fighting organisation, and not a debating club. While it is strengthening itself more and more by further and further educating its own members and by educating and recruiting new members and branches, it takes an active part in the everyday struggle of the working class.

In this way, it demonstrates the futility of fighting for an improved capitalist system and ever directs them to the same one purpose of overthrowing the system by organised mass action.

We Communists assert the futility of waiting for the achievement of our ideal by legislation through existing legislative institutions, as these institutions are expressly a part and parcel of the capitalist system.

The overthrow of the system means equally the overthrow of all the political machinery of the system.

The new machine which will be established by the organised force of the workers in mass action, for the protection of the new order in the establishment of its new economic and social system, will be the Dictatorship of the Proletariat.

This is only a temporary phase in the new order, and will only exist for the complete annihilation of the bourgeoisie as a class and the economic basis of class antagonism. The State having ceased to exist then, in the words of Engels, State interference in social relations becomes, in one domain after another, superfluous and dies out of itself.

The government of persons is replaced by the administering of things, and by the conduct of processes of production. Then will Communist society inscribe upon its banner, "From each according to his abilities, to each according to his needs."

COMMUNIST PROGRAM

For that purpose the Communist Party is:

(1) Arranging communist study classes under its own auspices or under those of labour organisations.

(2) Holding wherever possible public meetings for necessary propaganda as its aim



is to spread the communist idea as widely among the masses as possible, recognising that social revolution will be only possible with an intelligent following of the Communist Party by the masses at large.

(3) For the same reason and for the education and recruiting of new members, distributing communist revolutionary literature.

(4) Forming groups of its members in every mill, factory, workshop and field so that it is always in a position to direct and control through its members every industrial dispute and disturbance of the workers, keeping always in mind the same end – social revolution – and trying to utilise every spontaneous action of the workers for that one end.

(5) Directing its members to take an active and, wherever possible, a leading part in every craft or industrial union, and endeavouring to have its members elected into the executive bodies of these organisations so that these organisations also are directed in their activities towards the same one end of complete social revolution.

(6) Endeavouring and actively working to replace the existing craft unions by more up-to-date efficient industrial unions, which would be more advantageous for social revolutionary mass action, as well as an important factor in the communist reconstruction of society.

(7) So controlling its members, that each and every one of them acts strictly according to Communist principles.

(8) Taking an active part in the election for the existing legislative bodies, wherever it may be for the advantage of the social

revolution, to demonstrate inside those institutions that such institutions are expressly for the buttressing of the existing capitalist system, that they are working absolutely and always in opposition to the interests of the toiling masses, and to demonstrate that whenever these institutions legislate in the interests of the workers, they are doing so, not because they sincerely desire to do so, but always because of a danger of revolt from those whom they are exploiting and always with the purpose of preserving the existing capitalist system.

(8a) While the Communist Party accepts parliamentarism for revolutionary purposes, it does not exclude from its membership, non-parliamentary communists, providing party discipline is maintained [Together] with the 3rd International [the Party] declares that it considers as a crime against the Labour Movement any split or attempt at a split within the Communist Party on this point.

(9) Issuing, from time to time, necessary and timely manifestos and calls to the masses for a particular action at a particular time.

(10) Inviting all the intelligent workers, men and women, to study communist ideas, to understand them properly and to try to establish communist groups wherever possible, strictly on the principles outlined in this program, be it in a friendly circle, a factory, a workshop, a craft union or an industrial union.

THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF AUSTRALIA AWAITS YOUR SUPPORT

Issued by the Executive Committee of the Communist Party of Australia. ✱

The Communist Party is a fighting organisation, and not a debating club.

The genocide will not end unless Palestinian leaders are free

Vijay Prashad

Slowly, a full picture of the devastation of Gaza by Israel is becoming clear. The Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) released a report around the time of the ceasefire that began to lay out the numbers: Israel's bombardment of Gaza resulted in the total destruction of 190,115 buildings and the almost total destruction of another 330,500 housing units. The constant artillery and aerial fire over the 734 days of the genocide resulted in the wrecking of eighty-five per cent of Gaza's water and sewage system. Only one medical facility remained open in Gaza City at the time of the ceasefire, with ninety-four per cent of hospitals and clinics destroyed or badly damaged. In fact, according to the PCBS, Gaza is currently unlivable.

It is impossible to know the full extent of the physical and mental damage inflicted upon the Palestinian people of Gaza. The Ministry of Health has inadequate numbers for the dead and injured, and the trauma will only be known over the course of the years. The United Nations reports that its entire child protection apparatus in Gaza has 'almost collapsed.' One in five babies in Gaza is born preterm or underweight. In June 2025, 11,000 pregnant women faced famine conditions while 17,000 more struggled with acute malnutrition without much relief.

THE COST OF REBUILDING

To rebuild the lives of the survivors of the genocide is a task that has not yet been fully understood. Gaza has been pummelled by Israel since at least the time when Hamas prevailed in the 2006 parliamentary elections. These punctual attacks by Israel on Gaza's Palestinian population and infrastructure – including near genocides in 2009 and 2014 – resulted in major rebuilding efforts largely financed by the Gulf Arabs (led by the Qataris) and by the European Union (in 2014, at the Cairo Conference on Gaza Reconstruction, the donors pledged \$5.4 billion but only spent \$2.6 billion, partly due to Israeli intransigence regarding the Gaza Reconstruction Mechanism).

In February 2025, the UN, the European Union, and the World Bank estimated that \$53.2 billion would be needed for recovery and reconstruction over a decade and that \$20 billion would be needed over the next three years to rebuild infrastructure, restore essential services, and restart the destroyed economy. An Egyptian plan came up with the same estimate to be spent over five years. All eyes are on the Gulf states to foot the bill, but this is not something that the Palestinians can rely on. There is no voice in the debate that says that Israel must pay for the reconstruction, since it was Israel that destroyed Gaza.

POLITICIDE

One reason why there is no such clear voice that demands reparations from Israel is that Palestinian politics itself has been wounded by the long-term occupation, going back decades, and by Israel's policy

of targeted assassination and incarceration of popular Palestinian leaders. The most popular leaders of the five major factions have suffered in prison for over two decades.

Marwan Barghouti, by far the most popular Palestinian leader and one of the key figures in Fatah and the Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO), has been a political prisoner for twenty-three years and six months, while Ahmad Sa'adat, the leader of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), has been a political prisoner for twenty-three years and eight months. Hamas and Islamic Jihad leaders have either been in exile or killed regularly in Gaza. For example, the Hamas founder Sheikh Ahmed Yassin was killed by an Israeli strike in Gaza in March 2004, followed by Abdel Aziz al-Rantisi in April 2004. There has been a wave of assassinations in the past few years.

Between the prison and the bomb, almost the entire leadership structure of the major Palestinian political parties has been decimated. The fourteen Palestinian leaders who came to Beijing in 2024 to sign a joint agreement certainly represented their organisations, but they were not the most widely known or popular figures (such as Fatah's Mahmoud al-Aloul, who is often spoken of as a successor to Mahmoud Abbas; Musa Abu Marzouk, often thought of as the Hamas foreign minister; and Jamil Mazhar, who is a leader of the PFLP). The seriousness of the fourteen-party talks would have been amplified had Marwan Barghouti and Ahmad Sa'adat been at the table. Israel will not permit them to leave the prisons, even as the Palestinians continue to put them high up on their prisoner exchange lists.

Israel knows that if it can continue to decapitate the Palestinian political leadership, it will make Palestine rely more on the compromised presidency of Abbas, on the Gulf Arabs, and on spineless Arab neighbours such as Egypt and Jordan. No one will speak directly for the Palestinians or for the need to end the occupation; they will only talk of rebuilding in the mildest way for the refugees and of security guarantees for the Israelis to continue their occupation.

WHO WILL SPEAK FOR THE PALESTINIANS?

One cannot judge Yasser Arafat, the leader of the PLO, merely for his surrender of the Palestinian position at the Oslo Accords in 1994. That will not allow one to properly understand his role, which was cemented when he led the founding of the PLO thirty years previously in Kuwait. From that date until the late 1980s, Arafat was highly respected as the visible face of the Palestinian cause. Whatever differences existed among the factions, Arafat spoke for the Palestinian people as their undisputed spokesperson. Since Oslo, since the delegitimation of Arafat, no such political figure has been permitted to articulate the Palestinian position in any negotiation or dialogue.

The Israeli policy of incarceration and assassination of Palestinian leaders and its policy of demonisation of Palestinian political organisations (designating them all as terrorists, for instance) has meant that no



Photo: M Santos

figure has been able to emerge in Arafat's place as the voice of the Palestinian people.

What this has meant is that others speak for Palestine, and often misrepresent the Palestinian position because that position cannot be democratically arrived at without regular meetings of the factions and without their main political leaders being at the table. Israel knows this very well, which is why it has either held the political prisoners for decades (unlawfully) without allowing them access to any media or to their colleagues, or has assassinated any leader, even mid-level leaders, who shows any promise of being an articulate spokesperson for the Palestinian cause (such as the PFLP's Abu Ali Mustafa in 2001 and Hamas' Salah Shehade in 2002).

For decades now, the Israelis have complained that there is no "partner to peace" from the Palestinian side. How can there be a "partner to peace" if the Israelis routinely murder Palestinian political leaders or hold them in terrible conditions inside Israeli jails on administrative – or non-criminal – grounds? To say that every one of the Palestinian factions is a terrorist organisation, which the Israelis have done with full US backing, is to delegitimise all Palestinian politics. This is why the Israelis and the United States, as well as the Gulf Arabs, are quite happy to talk about the rebuilding of Gaza without any Palestinian representation at the table.

Indeed, even the Egyptian plan, which suggests the need to have Palestinian involvement, is content to speak of the need for "Palestinian professionals" to be at the table and not the actual political organisations that represent the Palestinian people's interests. The systematic attempt to destroy Palestinian politics results in a situation where Israel can determine when it bombs Palestinians and how it rebuilds their homes with the money

of the Gulf Arabs; it is to Israel's advantage to prevent any Palestinian representation from being built and from being at the table.

RELEASE BARGHOUTI AND SA'ADAT

But the continued resilience of the Palestinian factions frustrates Israel's ambitions. The political organisations remain alive and well, and they will demand a role in the reconstruction of Gaza as well as in any talks that take place regarding Palestine. It is easy for the US government to unilaterally designate whoever it wants as a terrorist organisation, just as it is easy for Israel to do so (and for the European Union). The United Nations has never placed any Palestinian group on its sanctions list, and it has not designated any of these groups as a terrorist organisation.

Despite the parochial nature of the Western idea that Hamas or the PFLP are terrorist organisations, this is not the view of most of the world. They see them as political groups, indeed as national liberation groups that are fighting for Palestinian emancipation from apartheid, occupation, and now genocide. Because of the overwhelming role of the US and the European Union on the side of Israel, the Palestinian organisations are often absent from the discussions about the future of Palestine. Palestine is absent from the conversations about its own future.

One way to change this equation is to release the political leaders (such as Marwan Barghouti and Ahmad Sa'adat), allow their organisations to openly liberate the future of Palestine, and then allow them to represent those views at the rebuilding and negotiation table. Anything other than that is merely the continuation of the genocide by other means.

Globetrotter ★

Between prison and the bomb, the leadership of the major Palestinian political parties has been decimated.

Worth Reading Classic:

The Fascist Offensive

And the Tasks of the Communist International in the Struggle of the Working Class against Fascism

by Georgi Dimitrov

Reviewers: HF, Maximus M.

This book, also published as *'Against Fascism and War,'* is a series of speeches from August 1935 delivered at the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International on the class nature of fascism and how fascism came to rise during that time period.

How exactly did Dimitrov define fascism? At the core, beneath all the imagery, fear-mongering, and violence, fascism is simply "the open terrorist dictatorship of the most reactionary, most chauvinistic and most imperialist elements of finance capital."

This points out the true nature of fascism and how it operates, and underpins all of the national characteristics of fascism, then and now. Dimitrov correctly points out that liberal democracy is inadequate in preventing the rise of fascism, as proven in his time in Germany, Austria, and Italy. Dimitrov spells out how it works.

At times of crisis, 'liberal' capitalist governments in a desperate

attempt to hold on to power, adopt reactionary laws and measures which make it easier for fascism to rise. When contradictions in capitalism reach a heightened stage, fascist demagoguery emerges as a tool to manipulate workers.

The rich and powerful class will use fascism to undermine the popular perception of class antagonism in favour of a national chauvinism that actively supports existing power structures and digs further into capitalist contradictions.

Workers have class interests but fascism depicts an external 'other' as the source of people's material problems, and pretends to be on the workers' side.

Instead of addressing actual problems faced by working people, fascism uses state violence to sustain the capitalist order and perpetuate war and inequality. So what is to be done?

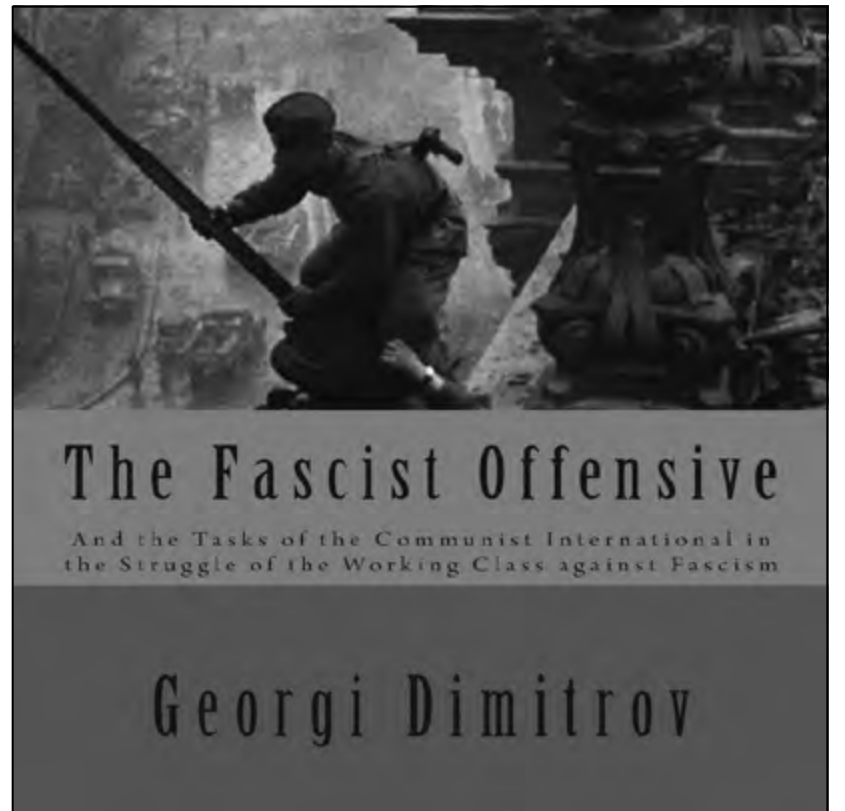
As Dimitrov writes at length, the working class has strength in unity, and as such, there must be a united front against fascism. The united front is

a tool of working class power, and must unite all who can be united against the fascist threat. Trade union power and the united force of different communist and progressive parties are both needed.

Dimitrov analyses the situation and ways of addressing it in detail. 1935 is a long way behind us, but his analysis often feels as though it could have been written yesterday. Dimitrov's analysis of the threat and actions that must be taken to combat it deserve serious attention now.

Dimitrov wrote in the era of rising German, Japanese, and Italian fascism. At the moment, we are confronted with American imperialism and Israeli colonialism as the primary threat to peace. Dimitrov provides an excellent foundation for understanding modern fascism, and how to fight it. Essential reading for any progressive, communist or anti-fascist.

Against Fascism and War is available from the CPA bookshop at cpa.org.au ★



Worth Streaming:

How are you?

It's Alan (Partridge)

Reviewer: Peter Farmer

"There is more mental health than there used to be" says Alan Partridge at the beginning of his latest outing. There's more Partridge than there used to be too. Steve Coogan's clueless and grating minor broadcaster has been around since 1991. For a lot of viewers *How are you? It's Alan (Partridge)* will be the comedy equivalent of yet another Rolling Stones tour. Like Rolling Stones tours (if you're a fan) it's worthwhile. Coogan has still got it.

For those who came in late, Alan Partridge is a Steve Coogan character. He's a small-time media personality, sometimes on radio, sometimes on TV. Usually, he's on the verge of becoming even more small-time, mainly because he's an awful, tactless person. Awkwardness or anger is the main emotion of anyone who meets him. If you haven't heard of the character, but he sounds familiar, there's a reason for that. Partridge made his first appearance a decade before *The Office* was invented, and was at the forefront of the sort of nails-down-the-blackboard humour that made *The Office* such a hit. 'Accidental Partridge' is the online title for people who act like the character without knowing it.

The other reason for Partridge's near-immortality is that the thing he's making fun of never stops. TV and radio are still full of talking heads who think they're thinkers, and produce metres of cringe while they're doing it. For the high-end version, read Stan Grant trying to be profound. For the more day-to-day version, just turn on talkback radio, it's everywhere. Our media misleads us and insults our intelligence in the service of capitalism. At least Partridge is funny about it.

This time around, Partridge is aiming for



Photo:BBC

profundity by doing a documentary on mental health, a combination of inane solo feats and interviews with members of the public who inevitably let him down by arguing back or not cooperating. He runs a focus group for a mate and tries to introduce the topic of mental health to a roomful of people who'd rather talk about takeaway food and keep returning to the topic while Alan tries to introduce his banal mental health observations. Later on, he courts disaster by taking an anxious person on a driving lesson and making things worse by talking about trauma with her. For long-term Partridge fans, there's the fun of seeing some of his old disasters return – the young Eastern European wife he was bragging about several series ago reappears, sometime after their inevitable divorce. Of course the encounter makes him look bad, but most things do. ★

Solutions to Crossword

Guardian 27 October 2025 #2168

Across

- 3 TREATY – Victoria has one
- 7 INTERVISION – Soviet alternative to Eurovision, recently revived
- 8 TARGET – Albanese's is not high enough
- 9 SOVEREIGNTY – PNG celebrates it, Australia ignores it
- 12 ROYALTIES – Queensland doesn't charge coal companies enough

Down

- 1 GOVERNANCE – Big problem at Australian unis
- 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
- 11 HUMANITIES – Duterte charged with crimes against

Something to say?

Write to the Editor!

editor@cpa.org.au

'Did I scare ya?' A look at Australian horror movies

Graham Holton

The history of Australian horror movies is a fascinating journey, mirroring the nation's cultural evolution, from colonial anxieties to a unique brand of modern terror. It is a history with a distinct identity forged in the harsh, isolating Australian landscape and from our unique history. Australian horror cinema is vibrant, often characterised by forbidding landscapes, colonial history, and a distinct brand of bleak, nihilistic, and folkloric terror.

Australians have always liked a good scare and older readers will remember the weekly horror TV show introduced by a dodgy character called Deadly Earnest, who used to sit up in a coffin to introduce that night's horror film. Australian horror often shows a fear of the outback and small towns. The landscape is the monster in a lot of Aussie horror. Since colonial times the outback is portrayed as terrifying and hostile. This fear of the land as supernatural and to be feared can be seen in films such as *Picnic and Hanging Rock* (1975), *Wolf Creek* (2005) and many others.

Nature striking back is a popular theme in 1970s cinema. The iconic film *Wake in Fright* (1971) is a psychological horror about a schoolteacher's descent into barbarism in a brutal outback town. The film's toxic masculinity and cultural decay is terrifying. *The Cars That Ate Paris* (1974) is Peter Weir's satire of a country town that profits from car accidents. It blends horror with social commentary. *Picnic at Hanging Rock* is a foundational text of Australian Gothic. Its eerie, unexplained disappearance of schoolgirls at an ancient geological formation outside Naarm (Melbourne) taps into a deep-seated fear of the land's unknowable power. *The Last Wave* (1977) is a supernatural thriller about a man haunted by apocalyptic visions connected to the dreamtime.

There's often a touch of humour mixed in with the horror and fear of the "wide brown land," as seen in the grotesque but respectable town in *The Cars That Ate Paris* and in the 1980s monster movie *Razorback*.

In the 1980s Australian horror

turned to slasher films and body counts with a unique feel. Our horror films produced an iconic and original voice which became internationally accepted and commercially successful. Unique gems include 1981's *Roadgames* a brilliant Hitchcockian thriller with Stacy Keach and Jamie Lee Curtis as a truck driver and a hitchhiker hunting a serial killer in the outback. *Next of Kin* (1982) is a superb psychological horror film about a woman inheriting a nursing home.

The 1990s were a fallow period for Australian horror, with a shift in cultural focus leading to a dearth of output. One exception is *Dark City* (1998, directed by Alex Proyas), a brilliant sci-fi/horror/noir filmed in South Australia. Another is *The Well* (1997), a psychological thriller with horror elements.

The 2000s represent something of a renaissance, spurred by the international success of key films. Australian horror experienced a massive resurgence, its films characterised by extreme violence, gritty realism, and a return to the "wilderness horror" theme of the 1970s. They are noted for their outback brutality using an intense, visceral, and brutal approach. The *Saw* (2004) and *Hostel* (2005) series, were internationally successful with a distinctly Australian setting. Supernatural and folk horror films show a renewed interest in Aboriginal mythology and colonial-era ghosts.

The most notable films include *Wolf Creek*, with Greg McLean's film becoming a game-changer earning much international interest. Based loosely on real backpacker murders, its depiction of the outback as a slaughterhouse and Mick Taylor as a quintessential Aussie psychopath revived the horror industry and created a new icon. *Lake Mungo* (2008) is a masterclass in the found-footage subgenre, creating an atmosphere of profound dread and sadness through a family's ghost story. *The Loved Ones* (2009) is a vicious high-school torture film that became an instant cult classic.

Talk to Me (2022, directed by Danny & Michael Philippou) is a slick, terrifying film about a haunted handshake ritual. It produced a vitality and international appeal for Australian horror. Jennifer Kent's masterpiece *The Babadook*



The Babadook (2014)

Australian Indigenous horror cinema has emerged as a distinct innovative and political movement

(2014) was a global critical smash hit. It brilliantly used a monster as a metaphor for grief and postpartum depression, proving Australian horror could be deeply artistic and psychological.

This artistic and critical breakthrough is shown in the awards Australian films received. *The Babadook* premiered at the Sundance film festival and instantly received international critical acclaim. New York Film Critics and Empire Best Horror Film put it on their top-10 lists. *The Nightingale* (2018, directed by Jennifer Kent) won the Special Jury Prize at Venice Film Festival. *Talk to Me* premiered at Sundance to standing ovations and is now one of the highest-grossing Australian films worldwide. *The Loved Ones* is a TIFF Midnight Madness Winner.

Australian Indigenous horror cinema has emerged as a distinct innovative and political movement.

These films merge Aboriginal storytelling traditions, spiritual cosmology, and colonial trauma with the conventions of horror to create a uniquely powerful genre that both unsettles and heals. Indigenous horror often fuses Dreaming (*Tjukurpa*) narratives with Gothic or supernatural tropes. Colonial violence and displacement are a source of haunting. The landscape is sacred and menacing, a living entity tied to ancestral spirits. Social realism and allegory explore systemic racism, identity, and spiritual imbalance through the lens of horror.

The Darkside (2013, directed by Warwick Thornton) is an anthology of ghost stories drawn from Aboriginal oral history. *We Are Still Here* is a landmark anthology film made by ten Indigenous filmmakers from Australia, Aotearoa (New Zealand), and the Pacific Islands. The film combines historical revenge tales, dystopian sci-fi, and supernatural

horror. It premiered at Sydney Film Festival and Toronto International Film Festival, where it was praised as "a monumental cinematic act of survival and resistance." *The Moogai* (2023, directed by Jon Bell) is based on Bell's acclaimed short of 2020, expanded into a full-length feature that premiered at Sundance 2024. The Moogai spirit is from Aboriginal lore, as a metaphor for historical trauma and intergenerational fear. It was described by *Variety* magazine as "a chilling, urgent horror about motherhood, loss, and colonisation."

The history of Australian horror is one of resilience with a unique identity. We produce films that use the country's specific fears to tell universally terrifying stories. Cinema scholars see "Ozploitation horror" as a unique contribution to World Cinema, blending grindhouse energy with Gothic landscapes. ✨

Cuba celebrates Culture Day

Since 1980, Cuban Culture Day has served not only to remember history but also to defend cultural sovereignty. Despite economic hardships and decades of US sanctions, Cuba maintains strong cultural education programs and free access to arts training through institutions like the House of the Americas and national art schools. For Cubans, culture is not a luxury – it is a right and a way of resistance.

Daily Cuban culture is also expressed through traditions, language, and food. Cuban cuisine is a reflection of its history, featuring dishes like ropa vieja, moros y cristianos, yuca con mojo, and ajiao, a traditional stew. Social life often revolves around communal spaces – domino games, street conversations, baseball games, and neighbourhood

celebrations are fundamental aspects of life on the island.

Music is perhaps Cuba's most recognisable cultural expression. Genres such as son cubano, danzón, bolero, rumba, mambo, cha-cha-cha, and later salsa were either born in Cuba or heavily influenced by it. Rumba, declared Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity by UNESCO in 2016, traces its origins to Afro-Cuban communities. Son cubano emerged as the foundation of many other Cuban rhythms, combining Spanish melodies with African percussion. During the 1960s and 70s, the Nueva Trova movement, led by artists like Silvio Rodríguez and Pablo Milanés, added poetic social commentary in the post-revolutionary era.

Dance is inseparable from Cuban life. The Cuban National Ballet, founded by the legendary ballerina Alicia Alonso, has gained

global recognition for its artistry and discipline. Traditional dances like casino (a style linked to salsa), rumba, and danza continue to thrive among the people. Dance in Cuba is not just performance – it is a social language and an expression of identity.

Literature has also played a central role in shaping Cuban identity. José Martí, Cuba's national hero, used journalism and poetry to call for Latin American unity and Cuban independence. His writings continue to influence Cuban thought and education. In the 20th century, writers like Nicolás Guillén, the national poet of Cuba, gave voice to Afro-Cuban culture through rhythmic poetry, while Alejo Carpentier introduced the concept of lo real maravilloso (the marvelous real), a precursor to magical realism in Latin American literature.

While Catholicism remains widespread,

African religions endured through Santería, also known as Regla de Ocha, brought by enslaved Yoruba people. This belief system blends African deities known as orishas with Catholic symbols. Music, dance, and drumming are central to Santería and have influenced Cuban music and culture far beyond religious contexts.

Ultimately, Cuban Culture Day is a tribute to the enduring spirit of the Cuban people. Through poetry, drums, dance, and song, Cubans have protected their identity and history despite facing constant imperialist aggressions. As José Martí once wrote, "Ser culto es el único modo de ser libre" – to be cultured is the only way to be free.

Telesur (edited for space) ✨

China's 15th Five-Year Plan: a path for high-quality, shared development

Hannes Fellner

As China makes progress toward its long-term development goals, the 15th Five-Year Plan (2026-30) will mark a decisive stage in transforming the world's second-largest economy into a global leader of high-quality, innovation-driven, and people-centred development.

Far from being a mere technical document, the new plan represents the continuity of China's unique governance capacity – its ability to combine long-term vision with pragmatic adaptation in a rapidly changing global environment, uniting top-down strategic coordination with bottom-up dynamism and local experimentation to ensure that national priorities evolve through concrete social realities.

Over the past four decades, China's rise has been characterised by industrial expansion, infrastructure investment, and integration into global trade networks. The next phase will emphasise new quality productive forces – an idea that has gained wide attention in Chinese policy discourse. This concept goes beyond technological progress alone. It envisions an economy powered by innovation, green transformation, and intelligent manufacturing, where productivity gains come from science and technology rather than labour-intensive inputs.

The 15th Five-Year Plan (2026-30) will

prioritise emerging strategic sectors such as artificial intelligence (AI), advanced semiconductors, new materials, and clean energy. By deepening research and development spending and supporting innovative enterprises, China aims to create entire ecosystems of technological capability that are both globally competitive and domestically resilient.

The guiding economic framework of the coming years is expected to remain the “dual circulation” strategy – a dynamic balance between internal and external economic flows. The next five years will likely see China expanding the role of the domestic market as the principal driver of growth. With rising urban incomes, improved social security, and better access to quality education, healthcare, and elder care, domestic consumption is poised to become the main pillar of sustainable growth.

A second major part of the plan is expected to be technological self-reliance, ensuring that China's development is not constrained by external disruptions. The drive for scientific independence in critical areas – especially advanced manufacturing, green energy, and digital infrastructure – will not mean closing doors to the world. Rather, China seeks open innovation and mutually beneficial cooperation.

Under the 15th Five-Year Plan (2026-30), foreign enterprises operating in China will find new opportunities in renewable energy, logistics, financial technology, and

health services. China continues to promote a high-level opening-up policy, expanding access for foreign investment and streamlining regulations in pilot free trade zones. The message is clear: China's modernisation will remain inclusive and globally connected, as it fortifies its technological backbone.

China's commitment to ecological civilisation will also be a defining feature of 15th Five-Year Plan (2026-30). Building on the achievements of the past decade – when China became the world's largest investor in renewable energy – the next phase will deepen green industrial transformation. Expanding solar and wind power, advancing hydrogen technology, modernising the national grid, and promoting electric mobility are all expected priorities.

The plan aligns with the nation's carbon-peaking and neutrality targets while ensuring energy security through innovation and diversification. This ecological turn is not only environmental policy – it is an economic strategy to make China a world leader in sustainable industries, setting a global benchmark for green modernisation.

China's planning philosophy rests on the conviction that development must serve the people. The 15th Five-Year Plan (2026-30) is expected to extend the social security system, improve rural revitalisation, and enhance regional coordination. From better public healthcare to affordable housing and education reform, the focus will be on enabling

all citizens to participate in and benefit from modernisation.

This people-centred orientation has deep roots in Chinese governance. It reflects not only economic rationality but also moral purpose – that prosperity without inclusivity cannot be called true modernisation. In this sense, the plan continues the long arc of socialist modernisation – combining material progress with social equity and cultural renewal.

In a world marked by uncertainty and fragmentation, China's five-year planning framework remains a rare source of stability and strategic continuity. It allows long-term coordination of policies, ensures institutional accountability, and channels resources to national priorities. The 15th Five-Year Plan (2026-30) will likely maintain financial prudence and further strengthen the domestic industrial base.

China's economic transformation is no longer about catching up – it is about leading responsibly. The 15th Five-Year Plan (2026-30) will symbolise not only China's confidence in its development path, but also its readiness to share the dividends of modernisation with the whole world, especially the Global South countries. For both Chinese citizens and international partners, it offers a vision of progress grounded in balance, innovation, and mutual prosperity.

Global Times 🇨🇳

South Africa: building the socialist future from the ground up

Statement from the South African Communist Party

In June, with allied organisations and progressive local structures, we launched the People's Red Caravan (PRC) in Motlhabhe Village, North West Province. This initiative marks a bold and practical step toward building the socialist future from the ground – through collective ownership, self-reliance, and the organised power of working-class communities. It will not be an exaggeration to say that indeed in this country going forth, we cannot talk about building socialism without the mention of Motlhabhe Village – otherwise it will be an injustice to the real construction of organic people's socialism.

Since its launch, the Red Caravan has helped to lay the foundations of a new people's economy. From the building of community-owned stores through consumer cooperatives, to the expansion of Village Agricultural Co-operatives (VACs) focused on food production and agro-processing, the initiative is aimed at reclaiming rural and township economies from corporate and elite domination. These are not isolated projects – they are building blocks of a new social order anchored in community development, self-reliance, collective community ownership and co-operative system. Beyond locally based economic transformation, the Red Caravan has also mobilised communities to repair and rebuild social infrastructure – including schools, clinics, ECD centres, roads, and access bridges.

These efforts, supported by traditional councils and grassroots leadership, are reconnecting development to democratic participation and local initiative. Arts and culture, community heritage, and youth involvement have been key pillars of this renewal, although not sufficiently mobilised. At the same time, the PRC is advancing a campaign to establish a co-operative banking network, ensuring that people's savings and credit facilities serve local development, not the profit motives of commercial banks. These efforts are directly linked to increasing household based incomes, creating household based food production, household based employment, and strengthening self-reliance – through street – and

section-based buying clubs, worker and producer co-operatives, and community asset ownership

As we commemorate 104 years of unbroken struggle, the PRC shows that the socialist future is not an abstraction – it is being built, step by step, in our villages and towns. It is being shaped through struggle, solidarity, and the conscious organisation of the working class. The Party remains committed to advancing this transformative programme, anchored in grassroots power and collective ownership, as the pathway to a just and equal South Africa.

REAL CO-OPS – NOT PSEUDO CO-OPS

We must emphasise that the co-operatives we support are not pseudo ones. We have consistently opposed the abuse of the co-op model to undermine worker rights and bypass labour laws. We supported amendments to the Co-operatives Act to stop this practice. Our vision is clear: worker-owned, democratically governed co-operatives, serving their members and communities – not ‘tenderpreneurs’ or private profiteers. These co-ops are not a substitute for unions. They are an extension of worker power into the economy itself.

CO-OPERATIVE BANKING – TAKING ON CAPITAL IN THE FINANCIAL SECTOR

We cannot build socialism while remaining trapped in capitalist debt and financial dependency. Our vision includes worker-owned co-operative banking institutions, as part of a national network of co-operative banks, owned by workers, trade unions and co-ops and a financial system built around access, fairness, and democratic control – not the private greed of capitalist banks.

Ode Solly Mapaila is the SACP General Secretary and a former MK combatant (editor's note: MK refers to uMkhonto weSizwe, the paramilitary wing of the African National Congress during the struggle against Apartheid) 🇨🇳



SACP General Secretary Solly Mapaila with YCLSA and Party members outside the US Consulate General, 31 August. Photo: SACP



Matibi community members and SACP activists pave the forecourt of the Bareki Consumer Co-op Store in Matibi. Photo: Barry Mitchell/SACP

Far-right anti-immigration riots in Dublin condemned

Graham Holton

Following allegations of a sexual assault of a 10-year-old girl by a 26-year-old Arabic speaking man, large crowds gathered outside the International Protection Accommodation Services (IPAS) centre at the Citywest Hotel, Dublin, which houses asylum-seekers. The 2,000 protesters grew increasingly violent, throwing bricks, glass bottles and fireworks at the Irish police (Garda Síochána). A police van was set on fire and arrests made.

The Garda Public Order Unit was deployed with the Mounted Unit, the Dog Unit, Air Support and water cannon. Protesters chanted “get them out,” waving Irish flags and placards attacking immigration. The government called the violence unacceptable, emphasising protests become violent when “a crime is weaponised by people who wish to sow dissent.”

The riot has elements of community anger and external agitators. The far-right Irish Freedom Party (IFP) has been officially confirmed as the organiser behind this week's riots in Dublin. According to the Global Project Against Hate & Extremism, IFP's ideology includes anti-immigration, anti-EU, anti-LGBTQ+ rights, with nationalist and cultural-traditionalist themes. Other far-right activists associated with the riots include Derek Blighe, an anti-migrant activist who organises online campaigns. Keith Woods is a nationalist anti-migrant activist with links to the far-right in

the United Kingdom. Mark Collett's far-right organisation Patriotic Alternative has livestreams and cross-border ties into Ireland.

Online commentators from Canada, the UK, and Spain, their messages spread on X and TikTok platforms, posted they were heading to Dublin. International influencers such as Canada's Ezra Levant, have arrived in Dublin. Levant is the founder and former publisher of the conservative magazine, the *Western Standard* and co-founder of the far-right website *Rebel News*.

Far-right activists have been strongly condemned by the Left. The Socialist Party (Ireland) in their “Statement on the racist riot in Citywest” expressed “heartfelt solidarity” with the victim of the sexual assault and with asylum-seekers, migrants and people of colour living in the centre. The Party condemned the rioters, explicitly labelling them “racist,” as the violence is directed at innocent asylum-seeker families housed at the centre. They accused far-right agitators of exploiting the incident to stir up racism and division, rather than genuine concern for the victim. The Party argues that tackling men's violence against women and children must be done alongside fighting racism, scapegoating, and the capitalist system.

Aodhán Ó Ríordáin (Labour's Spokesperson for Dublin & MEP) issued a statement: “We cannot descend into the types of violence we saw last night. It is not what we are or what we want to be as Dubliners and as Irish people.”

ROSA Socialist Feminist Movement issued a statement saying that the demonstration outside the IPAS

centre “will further traumatise these victims ... and will do nothing to make our communities safer.” The Outhouse LGBTQ+ Centre said they “stand in solidarity with all those targeted and terrorised by these events, especially people seeking international protection, refugees and migrants.” People Before Profit's Ruth Coppinger wrote on Instagram “Violence against women and children is a huge problem in society. It is male violence, not confined to any nationality.”

The president of Sinn Féin (a socialist party), Mary Louise McDonald, criticised the Garda response for losing control of Dublin's city centre, and Garda Commissioner, Drew Harris, for saying the rioting could not have been anticipated. “The idea that this violence was unforeseeable is frankly nonsense.” In 2023 Dublin was rocked by anti-immigration riots. McDonald called on Harris and Justice Minister Helen McEntee to resign. Sinn Féin has to carefully balance any further response with community grievances over housing, asylum-accommodation, and crime perceptions, against being seen to condone anti-immigrant sentiment.

In a statement to *The University Times*, James Ryan, Chair of Trinity College Dublin People Before Profit, said: “The riots tonight demonstrate that the divisions the right has sown among working class communities target the most vulnerable, and our party wholeheartedly condemns it.”



Global Briefs

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO: US troops arrived in Trinidad and Tobago to conduct military exercises over several days. The first troops arrived aboard the destroyer USS Gravelly and were later followed by the US Marine Corps 22nd Expeditionary Unit. Trinidad and Tobago is a small Caribbean nation that lies very close to Venezuela, with the island of Trinidad located just 11 kilometres from the Venezuelan coast. Venezuela's President Maduro pointed out that the US military build-up in the Caribbean is aimed at Venezuela's gas, oil, and gold reserves, the largest in the world. In recent months Maduro has accused the US administration of seeking to promote political destabilisation operations against Venezuela. In addition, the US has dispatched the Gerald F Ford Carrier Strike Group to the region. According to the Pentagon's spokesperson, the strike group will “bolster US capacity to detect, monitor, and disrupt illicit actions and activities that compromise the safety and prosperity of the United States homeland.” The announcement came one day after US President Trump said that the US is preparing for a ground operation against drug cartels in Venezuela. The US has issued a warning for US citizens in Trinidad and Tobago telling them to “avoid and refrain” from visiting US government facilities due to a “heightened state of alert.”

HUNGARY: Tens of thousands of people took to the streets of the Hungarian capital in support of Prime Minister Viktor Orbán on 23 October. The demonstrators clearly expressed their opposition to the EU's deepening involvement in the Ukrainian conflict. The slogans read: “We don't want to die for Ukraine!”, “Hungary says NO to war!”, “We will not send our children to the slaughterhouse at Brussels's command”. Orbán's Fidesz party faces a potentially tight race against the pro-EU Tisza party led by Peter Magyar in April 2026.

NORTHERN IRELAND: A former British paratrooper the only soldier ever charged in the 1972 Bloody Sunday massacre in Northern Ireland has been cleared of murder. The verdict was a blow to families of victims who have spent more than half a century seeking justice. Judge Patrick Lynch ruled at Belfast Crown Court that prosecutors failed to prove that the veteran identified only as “Soldier F” had opened fire on unarmed civilians. On 30 January 1972, British paratroopers opened fire on unarmed civil rights protesters as more than 10,000 people marched in Derry. British soldiers shot at least 20 unarmed civilians. Thirteen people were killed and one man died from his wounds later.

AOTEAROA: Over 100,000 public sector workers across NZ were on strike on 23 October – the largest strike in 40 years. Teachers, firefighters, doctors, nurses, social workers and their supporters expressed their opposition to the National party-led government's attempts to impose historic cuts to their real wages amid the cost-of-living crisis. The strikers expressed anger at having to put up with run-down facilities and poor conditions when the government is diverting billions of dollars to the military to prepare for war.

MEXICO: Mexican Foreign Ministry is demanding the US investigate the deaths of ten Mexican nationals who died either in the custody of US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) or during immigration enforcement operations. Mexico expressed its concern to Washington and continues to follow each case closely under the direct instruction of President Claudia Sheinbaum. Human rights groups and international observers have condemned the Trump administration's renewed crackdown on migrants, including the detention of minors and widespread deportations.

CHINA: China will be focusing on speeding up self-reliance in science and technology. The issue has become more urgent as the US has imposed increasingly tight controls on access to semiconductors and other high-tech items. The announcement by the state media came in a communiqué after a four-day meeting that approved a draft of the Communist Party's next five-year development plan.



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India's American dream in tatters

Srujana Bodapati

The last couple of months have exposed the humiliating realities of the subordinate alliance that India has been gradually sliding into with the US over the last three decades.

The imposition of 50 per cent tariffs on Indian exports to the US calls on the European Union to impose 100 per cent tariffs on India, the revocation of the US sanctions waiver for the operation of Iran's Chabahar Port – of great interest to the Indian government – the sanctions on Indian firms and individuals trading in Russian oil, and, as a final nail in the coffin, the decision to set a \$1,000 fee for applying for an H-1B visa: India has been dealt blow after blow by the US and the Trump administration within the past couple of months.

Calling India, the "tariff king," Trump imposed a 25 per cent tariff on India goods, essentially because India refused to subject its peasantry – whose average farm size is 2.5 acres – to competition from highly subsidised large US farmers, whose average farm size is 466 acres. He further imposed an additional 25 per cent tariff while bizarrely accusing India of financing Russian persecution of Ukraine. One might be forgiven for mistakenly attributing the devastation in Ukraine to India and China rather than the US-led NATO proxy war with Russia.

India's textiles, leather goods, gems, and jewellery industries, which are largely small- and medium-scale and labour-intensive, have been hit hard by the tariffs. While electronics have so far been exempted, last week's announcement of 100 per cent tariffs on certain pharmaceutical products sent jitters through India's pharmaceutical industry, which supplies 40 per cent of the generic drugs imported by the US. The full impact of these tariffs is not yet known.

The tariff blow had barely subsided when India was challenged again by sanctions on Iran's Chabahar Port, a facility that India developed and operates.

Chabahar Port perhaps, is the most important project that India has undertaken abroad, a critical part of India's strategic

connectivity. It provides India access to Afghanistan and Central Asia while bypassing Pakistan, with which India has long had hostile relations. The port is also central to India's trade strategy of linking with Europe and Eurasia through the International North-South Transport Corridor in partnership with Iran and Russia, which will greatly reduce the cost of transporting goods from India to northern Europe through multimodal transport. When US sanctions on Iran threatened this project, India, during Trump's first term, obtained a waiver for Chabahar Port. Now that waiver has been nullified, as the Trump administration has reinstated sanctions on Chabahar Port, whose operator is an Indian state-owned corporation.

The Trump administration has turned the screws further, deliberately or not, on India with the steep hike of H-1B visa fees for migrant workers to \$1,000. In recent years, an estimated 70 per cent of H-1B visa recipients have been Indians. The US has become an increasingly important source of foreign remittances to India, with nearly 28 per cent of remittances from Indian migrant workers coming from the United States. These high visa fees, which most migrant workers cannot afford, also make hiring Indian workers expensive for US firms, and are likely to sharply reduce Indian remittances. Foreign remittances are critical for India's balance of payments, which runs a large trade deficit.

The shock of these series of actions to the Indian establishment has been huge. Trump single-handedly upset India's long-held assessment of its own relationship with Washington. Since Obama's 'pivot to Asia' to contain China, successive Indian governments have embraced US claims that ties with India would be among its most consequential relationships of the 21st century. On this basis, India increasingly staked its economic strategy and foreign policy on a trajectory of ever-closer geopolitical alignment with the US.

As a result, the Indian government and establishment seem at a loss on how to react to Trump's various announcements, which are not only going to produce an immediate economic fallout for



Most Indian workers cannot afford the \$1,000 visa fee for entering the US.

the Indian elite realised the costs of linking itself with the US

India, but also hurt its long-term economic and geostrategic plans.

The government's reactions to the tariffs have been subdued so far. Unlike Brazil or China – where the presidents of both countries reacted strongly and openly to Trump's threats, refusing to be threatened – the Indian prime minister chose to maintain silence while studiously refraining from talking about tariffs or the other issues.

Even though international media made much of Modi's meeting with Putin and Xi Jinping at the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) summit in Tianjin, there is little evidence that this represents any geopolitical reorientation on the part of the Indian government. Immediately after the summit, during the visit of Germany's

foreign minister, Modi declared in a joint press conference India and Germany's commitment to a 'rules-based world order' and the 'freedom of maritime trade routes in the Indo-Pacific,' and went so far as to claim that China's increasingly aggressive behaviour in the region is a cause for concern for both countries, while India's External Affairs Minister watched in silent agreement. Apparently, the Indian government is still betting India's future on a closer alignment with the West.

Convinced of its vital role in helping the US contain China, the Indian establishment believed it could maintain strategic autonomy. This autonomy – a necessity for India's economic and strategic needs – meant keeping good

relations with US adversaries like Iran and Russia, a position it assumed the US would tolerate.

With Trump's second term, the Indian elite clearly realised the costs of linking itself with the US – India can only be a subordinate ally. This means its national interests and sovereignty must be secondary to American priorities and the maintenance of US hegemony. Though the Indian state resists this acknowledgment – hoping this difficult phase is merely temporary and attributable to Trump's personality – it is facing a serious erosion of its capacity to direct its own economy and polity, safeguard its citizens' welfare, and maintain sovereignty.

Globetrotter ✶

US: lavish shutdown parties

Mark Gruenberg

Washington: As two million federal workers went payless for the third – or in some cases, fourth – straight week, radical right pro-business GOP President Donald Trump hosted two dinners for corporate moguls on the same weekend as No Kings Day.

The admission price? Big money.

First came an 17 October US\$1-million-a-plate fundraising dinner at his Mar-a-Lago estate to benefit his superPAC campaign finance committee, MAGA Inc. The second was a gala thanking donors to his planned US\$200 million glitzy glass 1,000-person ballroom next to the White House East Wing. Demolition of a big part of the White House East Wing began the next day.

That demolition, like lavish parties while the public suffers from presidential policies, is widely considered another assault on the people of the United States. The White House has never been considered the personal property of the president who inhabits it at any given time.

The structure, built centuries ago by enslaved construction workers, has always been considered the property of the people who extend to the person they elect as president the privilege of taking care of a public trust. Cementing over the Rose Garden, installing gaudy gold sculptures everywhere on the property, and tearing down much of the White House itself, is very Trump.

Meanwhile, the government shutdown, engineered by the obstinacy of Trump and Republican House Speaker Mike Johnson stretched a one-week recess into a one-month-and-counting absence. The two GOPers refuse to bargain with Senate Democrats, whose votes they need, for money to reopen the full government.

As a result, people are hurting: Two million federal workers, one-third of them, "essential," still toiling, and the other two-thirds wondering if and when they'll be fired without cause. All go without pay.

The shutdown has caused pain for the rest of the country: Some 22 million people could face a doubling of health insurance premiums as a tax credit that helps them

pay expires on 31 December. Another 14 million will be cut off from Medicaid over the next decade, thanks to GOP congressional obstinacy and Trump's refusal to break the deadlock. Insurance premiums will then go up for everyone else in the country.

AFL-CIO President Liz Shuler and the federation's Department of People Who Work For A Living is really pissed off.

"It's time for President Trump and Speaker Johnson to get back to work: Fund the government, fix the health care crisis, and put working people first," Shuler declares.

"Thanks to these illegal firings, there is no one to investigate housing discrimination, students with disabilities will be left in the lurch with only a skeleton crew left to oversee special education across the country, and essential workers who keep us safe from diseases like Ebola were kicked out of their jobs," the federation analysis adds.

The federation says it's clear that the Trump administration is squeezing working people until they abandon demands to address the mounting health care crisis.

Trump hasn't listened. As the federation

released its analysis, and as seven million people hit the streets nationwide in No Kings Day protests, he feted the corporate titans who shovelled money into the MAGA committee and into the ballroom project – which Trump, of course, will remember when handing out grants and contracts. MAGA has raised \$177 million since Trump retook the Oval Office on 20 January, campaign finance reports show.

Among the D.C. diners at the ballroom fete: Honchos from Microsoft, Google, Palantir, and influential Wall Street investor Steve Schwarzman, CEO of Blackstone. In his 37-minute speech to the ballroom-financing moguls, Trump identified another big giver, "sugar baron Pepe."

That's José Francisco "Pepe" Fanjul, a right-wing anti-Castro Cuban and son of a Cuban immigrant. Fanjul and his brother own the nation's largest sugar company. It's benefited from government tax breaks and farm subsidies for years. The Mar-a-Lago guest list was not disclosed.

People's World (edited for space) ✶

Haiti: UN Urges Action

Haiti is facing an escalating humanitarian and security catastrophe, according to a new report by the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti (BINUH), which recorded 2,123 homicides, 334 kidnappings, and 582 cases of sexual violence between June and August 2025 alone.

Despite a slight 10% drop in murders from the previous quarter, the UN warned that violence remains at crisis levels, with gangs expanding their reach beyond the capital and into rural regions.

The report underscores that the ongoing instability has left thousands dead, entire communities displaced, and state institutions on the brink of collapse.

The organisation also pressed for decisive action ahead of the

February 7, 2026 deadline for reestablishing democratic institutions, urging Haitian leaders to avoid further instability. “Haiti cannot afford a political vacuum,” the UN warned, emphasising that a credible national dialogue “led and controlled by Haitians themselves” is the only path toward restoring democratic governance.

The report outlined severe weaknesses within the Haitian National Police (PNH). As of 31 August, the force counted 13,501 officers, including 1,776 women – but lost 27 members in just three months, 13 of them shot dead. Equipment shortages and operational breakdowns are worsening the crisis: 25 of 116 armoured vehicles are out of service, 23 destroyed in combat, and two reportedly captured by gangs. Out

of 413 police stations, 79 remain non-operational.

Finally, the UN drew attention to Haiti’s collapsed prison system, describing conditions as “catastrophic.” Overcrowding, malnutrition, poor ventilation, and lack of medical care have led to widespread deaths behind bars, underscoring the broader humanitarian disaster gripping the nation.

In sum, while official data show minor improvements in certain areas, the overall situation remains dire. The UN warned that unless urgent reforms and security reinforcements are implemented, Haiti risks sliding even deeper into lawlessness and institutional breakdown.

Telesur 🇵🇪



Crowd surges to check point where food vouchers were offered, Carrefour, Haiti. Photo: rawpixel

US sanctions Russian oil companies

The United States is imposing sanctions on Russia’s major oil companies, Lukoil and Rosneft, as well as their subsidiaries, over the country’s alleged lack of commitment to ending the Ukraine conflict, the US Department of the Treasury said.

“Today, the US Department of the Treasury’s Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) is imposing further sanctions as a result of Russia’s lack of serious commitment to a peace process to end the war in Ukraine ... Today’s action targets Russia’s two largest oil companies, Open Joint Stock Company Rosneft Oil Company (Rosneft) and Lukoil OAO (Lukoil), which are now designated,” the department said in a statement, adding that a number of their Russia-based subsidiaries are also being designated.

Earlier US Secretary of the Treasury Scott Bessent said that the new Russia sanctions will be among the largest so far.

US President Donald Trump said that he does not know if the new sanctions on Russia would push Russian President Vladimir Putin to the negotiating table but hopes that both the Russian leader and Ukraine’s Volodymyr Zelensky will “become reasonable.”

“I do not know that they will. I think that they will certainly have an impact. They are massive sanctions on oil ... Hopefully he [Putin] will become reasonable, and hopefully Zelensky will be reasonable too. You know, it takes two to tango, as they say,” Trump said during a meeting with NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte.

Sputnik 🇷🇺



Wouldn’t read about it

Clare Marino

It is often said that history is written by the victors. It should more accurately be said that history is written by male politicians and the Murdoch press. There have been several notable achievements for women in recent times that received far less attention and celebration than they deserved.

In Ireland, Catherine Connolly has been elected the country’s 10th president after a landslide victory. The independent left-wing politician has been a member of parliament since 2016 for the Galway West constituency and also served as the Dail (Irish parliament) deputy speaker.

Connolly won with the support of Ireland’s major left-wing opposition parties, including Sinn Féin, the Irish Labour Party and the Social Democrats. She is an outspoken supporter of Palestine and has spoken out about the genocide in Gaza and atrocities committed by Israel.

Seen very much as an anti-establishment candidate, in recent weeks the 68-year-old began describing her campaign as a “movement”. The grey haired, forcefully spoken woman does not fit the despicable mould of talking Barbie dolls so favoured in the US just now and is receiving relatively little media focus, despite her resounding win.

Another movement that did not gain the attention it deserves is the inspiring story of the women who campaigned against Thatcher’s mine closures in the 80s. A new documentary, *Iron Ladies*, celebrates the heroic achievements of these strong women, and exposes the prejudice and lack of recognition for their work.

As one of the women featured in the documentary noted, “working-class women’s history isn’t reported. It’s not important.” During the miners strikes of 1984-1985, many local groups of women came together under the banner, Women Against Pit Closures (WAPC).

The women picketed, raised money and organised rallies. One group chained themselves to then defence secretary Michael Heseltine’s offices in London. Yet the media reporting at the time was dominated by images of burly mining men. Women interviewed for the documentary, now aged in their 80s, recall being judged harshly for their activism.

For many of these women it was an entry into activism that changed the course of their lives. The women describe how their work in the WAPC made them political. Many became local councillors and took on other political roles. The strength of their opposition to that other Iron Lady, then-Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, has not dimmed.

In other achievements by women that you may not have read about, Kathy Klugman has become the first woman to be appointed Director-General of National Intelligence, Australia’s top intelligence job. Klugman was Prime Minister Anthony Albanese’s chief foreign affairs advisor, a position she’s held since 2022 and has had a distinguished career in the Australian Public Service, holding senior positions in the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet.

Across the ditch, Dr Anna Breman has been appointed Governor of the Reserve Bank of New Zealand, the first woman in the role in the institution’s 91-year history. Dr Klugman joins Michele Bullock currently governor of the Reserve Bank of Australia, who is also the first woman to hold such a role. These women will actually influence policies and practices in the public setting and have a direct impact on people’s lives. Their perspectives and actions ought be examined and scrutinised. However their achievements and views, like many women making history, are largely ignored by the mainstream press. At time of writing, Barnaby Joyce’s political career is getting more attention than any of the women I’ve written about here.

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Israel 'already fascist'

Ben Chacko

"Israel is already under a fascist regime." The term fascist is bandied about a lot but when that assessment comes from a Jewish member of Israel's own Knesset – the Communist Party of Israel's Ofer Cassif, one of three MPs from the Hadash coalition – we ought to listen.

Cassif recently hit the headlines when he, together with Hadash leader Ayman Odeh, was expelled from the parliament chamber for a silent protest during US President Donald Trump's address. They held up signs reading "Recognise Palestine."

He's suspended from the Knesset for the next two months. Because of that protest? "No, no. There are other complaints calling for me to be suspended again because of that protest, and because of some things I said in the last couple of days about the new head of [Israeli security agency] Shin Bet.

"I've been suspended three times, altogether for 10 months in the last two years ... solely because of our activities against the genocide. The first time was because I used the word 'genocide.' The majority of complaints against me are because of my vocabulary ... and then I was suspended because I joined the petition supporting South Africa [when it brought a charge of genocide against Israel before the International Court of Justice] and now I'm suspended again because I used the term 'genocide' again, and also because I sent a letter to The Hague demanding they investigate Netanyahu.

"That's the democracy, the freedom of speech we're talking about in Israel!"

There are Bills going through Israel's parliament that could ban Hadash, as well as parties representing the fifth of Israel's citizens who are Palestinians, from standing at the next election: but as Cassif says, "we are already half banned" given the lengthy suspensions handed to its MPs for challenging Israel's illegal occupation of Palestine and its war crimes in Gaza.

The three Hadash MPs account for 92 per cent of all suspensions from the 120-seat Knesset since the start of the parliamentary term.

The dismantling of democratic rights is part of the descent into fascism he describes. Whether Hadash is banned or not "it's very clear, there was even a big article in *Ha'aretz* two about it, that the coalition has plans to bias the elections, turn them into a total sham. For instance, using the police and armed fascist mobs or militias to terrorise Palestinian and leftist voters, to stop them getting to the polling booths."

Police violence against protests has become routine: the force has been "conquered by the government and turned into a private militia in the hands of [Itamar] Ben-Gvir," the far-right National Security Minister.

Police do little or nothing to rein in violence by fascist mobs. "Ayman Odeh and myself were almost lynched at a demonstration against the genocide two or three months ago. The police were there and didn't do anything.

"None of us can leave the house alone or walk freely in the streets.

"There has been a tent right by the Knesset for the last two years, put up by the father

of a man who was killed on 7 October. There are always people at the protest there, from the left of the political spectrum, like the father of the deceased, who is a friend of mine.

"They were attacked viciously by a fascist mob a few weeks ago. The police didn't come for 90 minutes.

"A synagogue was attacked! It was screening a memorial ceremony for Palestinian and Israeli victims of the conflict. Every year the Families Forum [representing relatives of slain Palestinians and Israelis] puts on an alternative ceremony remembering all the dead at the same time as the official one that commemorates only Israelis, mainly soldiers.

"This year there were so many participants that there was no room for everybody, so they put huge screens in different places in the country. One was in a synagogue in the city of Ra'anana. It was attacked by a fascist, Jewish mob who broke the synagogue windows. The irony! The police didn't arrest anyone."

Intensified political violence within Israel is inseparable from the occupation, he says.

"It's a by-product of overlooking the crimes [in occupied Palestine]. It's like a disease: if you don't stop it, it spreads.

"In the West Bank, the pogroms and terrorist attacks on Palestinians are a daily issue. I sent a letter to the minister of defence and the attorney-general back in March 2023 after a fire ignited by settlers in a Palestinian West Bank village.

"There is an official group on WhatsApp, called News from the Hilltops. It's a terrorist WhatsApp group. They co-ordinate terrorist attacks, including murders of Palestinians.

"Two, three days ago settlers broke the skull of a 53-year-old woman while she was harvesting olives on her own land. All fully videoed. It's harvest season: a very volatile time of year.

"I had written to the attorney-general saying this group encourages and co-ordinates attacks and celebrates afterwards. Close the group and investigate and charge the activists – who are all known. Nothing was done; they continue because they know they can do whatever they like.

"It's backed by the apparatus of the state. The killers are protected by the occupation forces. A Palestinian friend of mine was murdered a few months ago by a settler; it was videoed too. He was shot dead for no reason; everything is filmed.

"After a few hours of interrogation the killer was released, given his weapon back. He continues harassing the people of the village.

"The victim's family were arrested. The funeral was prevented for two weeks, then they allowed it but the army blocked the whole village off to prevent other Palestinians, Israelis or international visitors from attending."

The attorney-general hasn't done anything, so Cassif has taken the issue up at the Supreme Court. "We'll see where it goes." The day after I spoke to him he was due to visit other victims – this time Israeli citizens of Palestinian ethnicity, whose homes have been demolished.

"Israel wages war against the Palestinian people wherever they are. I'm going to the Negev, in the south, to visit some Arab citizens whose houses have been demolished by the government as part of the ethnic cleansing that goes on within Israel, against



Rally for Palestine in Adelaide, Sunday 26 October.

its own citizens, and not just to the Palestinian subjects who live in the apartheid occupation zone."

As in East Jerusalem, consistent refusal by authorities to licence any building to house Palestinian families leads to severe overcrowding. When younger generations build unauthorised structures to house themselves, "the bulldozers come with the police." Far-right mobs show up too, to celebrate.

Despite all the repression, Cassif says the peace movement has grown stronger in the last two years.

"About a year-and-a-half ago we, Hadash, the Communist Party together with about 70 other groups – civil society organisations, anti-occupation and anti-genocide campaigns, feminist groups – formed an umbrella movement called the Peace Partnership.

"We are still very active. We've held our own demonstrations, and sometimes we demonstrate as a block within the general demonstrations" (against Netanyahu).

Enormous protests against Netanyahu, demanding a ceasefire and the return of the hostages, represented a huge swathe of Israeli opinion – quite possibly a majority.

Most participants protested "because they cared about the hostages and the Israeli soldiers. Less so because of what was happening to the Palestinians, but we as a block within the protest got stronger. We are not any longer a tiny, marginalised minority. Our voice against the genocide is heard and accepted much more widely than it was."

"The wind at our backs," he says, "was the international solidarity movement." The huge demonstrations across the world helped raise awareness in Israel of how isolated it was becoming: something Cassif is sure prompted Trump to order Netanyahu to agree to the ceasefire.

Will the protests continue? "As far as the

activists are concerned. A rally on Saturday addressed by hostages' families said 'we are not going to stop, our task now is to get rid of the government and form a committee of inquiry that will focus on Netanyahu's role in the massacre of 7 October.'

"But I'd guess there will be less people on them. I hope I'm wrong."

Opposition to what Israel has become is essential for both Jews and Palestinians, he stresses. The recent invitation to British far-right activist "Tommy Robinson" by Israel's Diaspora Minister Amichai Chikli is an indication of Tel Aviv's political orientation, a front-line state in the international far-right bid to usher in an age of violence, domination of the weak by the strong and resurgent racism.

"Chikli goes all over the world to meet the most vicious racists – including anti-semites – making links with the scum of the Earth. These are now the heroes of the Israeli government. It's disgusting. My ancestors who were killed by the Nazis are turning in their graves."

Cassif welcomes the respite the ceasefire means for the people of Gaza, but stands by his decision to protest during Trump's speech. "He has not brought peace. You cannot speak about peace and ignore the two-state solution – the right of the Palestinian people to statehood in their own homeland.

"Justice necessitates Palestine's liberation from murderous occupation and colonisation.

"We need the international community – we are doomed without you. Fight with courage – do not bow before the smears and lies that solidarity with Palestine is anti-semitism.

"Continue the struggle for justice in Israel and Palestine, to end the occupation. That's not against Jews – exactly the opposite."

Morning Star (edited for space) ★



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