



RESISTING THE GLOBAL BULLY

Marcus Browning

In its attack on Iran, the US global bully has hit a wall of resistance. Framed as a state that could be isolated, sanctioned, and weakened under a prolonged containment and military aggression, Iran has demonstrated that it possesses both the capacity and the willingness to disrupt the entire regional order if pushed to the brink. Missile capabilities, regional alliances, and maritime leverage give Tehran tools that extend far beyond its borders.

Containment presumes passivity. Iran has proven anything but passive.

This reality carries a fundamental implication: Iranian rights, interests, and security concerns cannot simply be dismissed. A sustainable regional order cannot be built on the permanent marginalisation of one of its central actors.

'PEACE' DEAL

In that context, the following is the full statement – still in play as the *Guardian* went to press – from Pakistan's Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, who announced that a peace agreement between the US and Iran had been reached:

"Following intensive talks, we are pleased to announce that the Peace Deal between the United States of America and Islamic Republic of Iran has been REACHED.

"Both sides have declared the immediate and permanent termination of military operations on all fronts, including in Lebanon.

"The official signing ceremony will be on Friday, 19 June

in Switzerland. We would like to thank the United States of America and the Islamic Republic of Iran for their commitment to finding a diplomatic solution to the conflict.

"We would also like to extend our sincere appreciation to our brothers in this mediation effort, the great leadership of State of Qatar, for their support in reaching this agreement.

"I would also especially thank the visionary leadership of Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Republic of Türkiye for their immense contributions in this regard.

"With the agreement now in place, mediators will facilitate a series of meetings this week. These pre-implementation discussions will lay the foundation for the technical talks and the official signing ceremony."

SHIPPING

Following this latest announcement, Donald Trump declared that "oil will flow on both ends again for the region, and the world." The US partner in aggression, Israel, was not part of the discussions.

Israeli strikes on Lebanon continue, with attacks reported in Beirut on the day the deal was announced. The Israeli military said that it intended to maintain its presence in Lebanon, Gaza, and Syria without any time limits.

Trump announced an end to the US blockade of Iranian ports and said the Strait of Hormuz would reopen when the agreement was formally signed in Switzerland.

International Chamber of Shipping secretary-general Thomas Kazakos said seafarers had been "caught in the middle of this war," while the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) confirmed



Photo: blondinrikard – flickr.com (CC BY 2.0)

preparations were under way to evacuate stranded crews. Around 500 ships are waiting to transit the strait, according to shipping industry estimates.

The IMO said attacks linked to the war had killed at least 14 seafarers and disrupted international trade routes.

GAZA

Israel continues its attacks on Gaza. The number of Palestinians killed in the Israeli genocide has now reached 73,003. Israel has

been calling Gaza residents to warn of fresh attacks, with one Gazan from the Nuseirat refugee camp saying, "It felt as though we had returned to the first days of the war. We rushed into the street with our children and neighbours, and the only thing on our minds was saving our lives. We did not think about clothes, belongings, or anything else."

The onset of the US-Israeli war on Iran demonstrated Australia's subservience to the US: No resistance was forthcoming from PM

Albanese, as he immediately championed the illegal US and Israeli assaults on Iran, which followed over 30 months of Israel's ongoing genocide against the Palestinians of Gaza.

Albanese's real concern is the growing public opposition to the now clear embrace by his government of the genocidal Zionist regime and his government's collaboration in that genocide.

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The US partner in aggression, Israel, was not part of the discussions.

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The drugs (policies) don't work

Guardian

Issue 2195

22 June 2026

Racists don't 'rise' without help

You've probably heard about the rise of Pauline Hanson's party, One Nation. They won a by-election. They're doing well in various polls – including one which allegedly places Hanson as preferred Prime Minister. All this despite policies which would be bad for the nation if ever put into practice (see page 5, this issue).

If you consume any media at all, you'll have seen a lot of breathless speculation as to why PHON is having this supposedly unstoppable rise. Is it because the other parties are uninspiring? The Liberal-National Coalition is a mess and Labor isn't exactly thrilling. Is it because One Nation at least talks about living conditions while the Coalition just complains and Labor does far too little? Is it perhaps because Australians just don't like migrants?

One factor left out of this feast of commentary is the commentators themselves and their media outlets. The media has played a huge, possibly decisive role in Hanson's so-called "rise." Seven in particular spent years supporting Hanson, putting her on *Dancing with the Stars* and giving her a televised response to every question under the sun. Now that PHON has won a single by-election, even the ABC is in on the act, reporting Hanson's reactions to various questions as though she's a leader of the Opposition.

Why do they do this? As our page 5 article notes, it's not because people like her policies – people hardly ever hear about PHON policies. *The Australian Financial Review's* political editor has declared that Hanson voters "don't care about policy details." How can they, when they never hear about those policy details?

There's a famous online skit called 'I think you should leave.' A man in a hot-dog suit drives a hot-dog-shaped car into a shop and then vows to join in the search for "the guy who did this" despite obviously being "the guy." That's the Australian mainstream media in a nutshell, wondering how PHON has had such an unstoppable rise, and occasionally ticking off the Greens they ignore and marginalise for not being more successful.

So why does mainstream media do it? To get points from racists? Despite expelling the occasional obvious hyper-extremist, racism is one consistent feature of Hanson's political career. Does the media just like excitement?

There's some truth there, but there's plenty of excitement and controversy in Greens policies on questions of housing, energy supply and defence. The problem is that it's the wrong sort of controversy for our corporate media. The Greens aren't communists, but their policies are uncomfortable reading for people who want Australia's capital-serving system to stay the way it is.

Hanson, on the other hand, helps out capitalism. She encourages workers to blame migrants for problems that are caused by Hanson's corporate donors – like Gina Rhinehart who has been outspoken about her desire for lower wages for working people, her outright climate change denialism and her refusal to walk back genocidal comments made by her father.

Media in this country does not serve the people well. If it did, we'd know all about Hanson's policies, and wouldn't be deafened by repetitive commentary on the rise of PHON and how people are supposed to feel about that rise. If journalism in this country worked for working people, we'd know a lot more about Greens policies, good and bad, and we'd get a lot less finger-wagging commentary about their failure to 'cut through.'

This paper is proud to hold Hanson's policies up to the light in this issue. If you support how the Communist Party's paper does journalism, consider subscribing or donating to the Press Fund.

RESISTING THE GLOBAL BULLY

Continued from page 1

Albanese tried to distance himself from the war on Iran, claiming that Australia is not involved. Soon after, it came to light that the government had secretly sent a further 90 special forces troops to the region two weeks prior.

SHACKLED

The joint surveillance facility Pine Gap has been operating in the middle of the continent and so has the US naval communications facility at North West Cape. Both these facilities are likely to have been used by the US in its war on Iran.

Since 2011 and the Obama administration's "pivot to Asia," the US military presence in Australia has risen further and is continuing to spike. There are US troops in the top end and they have unrestricted access to dozens of military bases. The Australian air force is increasingly interoperable with the USAF, US B-52 bombers are being stationed in the north, and US submarine bases are being established in the west and the east.

Tying Australia to a super power which has gone to war every 14 months since the end of World War II will bring disaster to Australia's economy and security. It is economic lunacy to become involved in the US military build-up, which is directed primarily at China.

A TURNING POINT

Once again, an Australian government has sold out the interests of the Australian people in favour of

continuing subservience to the leader of the imperialist world.

The war on Iran has exposed the emptiness of the "America First" slogan. Intervention in Iran, continued hostility toward Venezuela, and sustained military entanglements demonstrate that US foreign policy remains anchored in global projection of power.

POWER AND WEAKNESS

The rhetoric of restraint was politically useful. The policy of intervention continues. The war on Iran has shattered myths about US power and Iranian so-called weakness.

Perhaps most strikingly, Iran's political system did not collapse following targeted assassinations of senior leadership figures.

This confirms a critical reality: Iran is a state built on institutions, not solely on personalities. The killing of top leaders did not produce chaos or fragmentation. Instead, state structures adapted.

The expectation of immediate internal disintegration proved misguided.

It has confirmed deeper truths about institutional resilience and regional power dynamics. History does not change overnight. But when long-standing narratives collapse under the weight of events, a turning point emerges.

This is that moment. ✪



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CPA congratulatory message on the 114th anniversary of the PCCh

Bárbara Figueroa
General Secretary
Communist Party of Chile

Dear comrade,

The Communist Party of Australia (CPA) warmly congratulates the Communist Party of Chile on your 114th anniversary. We also extend our thoughts to your Party as you commemorate the 50th anniversary of the detainment, torture, execution and forced disappearance of your leadership in the Caso Calle Conferencia, Pinochet's covert

operations to undermine the Communist Party in 1976.

We remember the lives of comrades Elisa Escobar, Mario Zamorano, Eliana Espinoza, Jorge Muñoz, Lenin Diaz, Uldarico Donaire, Víctor Díaz, and Jaime Donato.

The contribution of the Communist Party of Chile to the class struggle is immense, from the period of fascism under Pinochet to the current struggle to rebuild democracy, justice and socialism in the homeland of Pablo Neruda amid a brutal imperialist offensive.

The struggle to achieve socialism and a classless society is long, sometimes violent, never easy, but the future and destiny of socialism is bright.

Long live the Communist Party of Chile!

Long live proletarian internationalism!

International Department
Communist Party of Australia

14th June 2026



Close Pine Gap convergence to be 'massive'

Paul Gregoire

The Close Pine Gap - Sacred Lands Back Convergence 2026 is taking place in Mparntwe-Alice Springs over 18 to 20 July 2026, and by all reports, it's set to be a massive event that involves a coming together of antimilitarist, anti-war and pro-Palestine activists

from across the continent to discuss and workshop ideas about nonviolent direct action that can stop rising militarism across the planet.

Pine Gap is the mid-1960s established US surveillance base that operates in the Red Centre of the continent, about 25 kilometres southwest of Mparntwe. The facility has four satellites that cover half

the Earth's surface. Intel that is sourced there is used by the US to strike targets across the planet, and it's understood that Israel has been utilising this data to conduct its mass murder in Gaza.

The last three years since the Gaza genocide began have seen rising awareness about and activism against the military machine across this continent, with grassroots groups conducting protest actions in an effort to cease the policies and local operations that contribute to the mass slaughter in the Gaza Strip, and also to counter the significant surge in militarism globally over that same time.

The organisers of the Pine Gap Convergence are seeking to bring divergent individuals and groups together to coordinate, share ideas and to plan how to more effectively counter these developments in collaborative ways. The three-day event that includes two days of workshops will feature key figures from the local antiwar movement strategising on how to best move forward together.

ON THE SHOULDERS OF GIANTS

The 2026 Close Pine Gap Convergence has precedent. There have

been a number of large gatherings to protest the US base in the middle of the continent over the decades, with one of the most significant being the 1987 convergence that involved the Alice Springs Peace Group and the Australian Anti-Bases Campaign Coalition, which brought a sizeable number of groups together.

In the mid-1980s, the fears regarding the prospect of a full-scale planetary nuclear war were significant. One of the issues with Pine Gap is that it makes this country a target if such a war breaks out. This was a grave concern in the eighties, and it is of rising concern once again, as a new nuclear arms race is growing exponentially at present.

Right now, there are two key US military installations established on this continent, Pine Gap on Arrente land and the naval intelligence base North West Cape on Yinigurdira land, which is understood to have played a role in recent US operations in the Middle East. In the 1980s there was a third base, the now defunct US air force base of Nurrungar on the land of the Kokatha people.

Activist groups were coming together back then to warn the broader Australian public about what was actually going on at these

secretive US bases and why they were problematic for the population. The 1980s' call to close Pine Gap saw such a development as a first step towards closing all foreign military bases across the Asia-Pacific and as a move towards decolonisation of the region.

THE NEXT MOVE

Organisers are encouraging all to converge on Mparntwe in July, so they can hear from speakers such as Greens Senator David Shoebridge, Googatha elder Aunty Sue Haseldine, Professor Richard Tanter, Palestinian activist Remah Naji, human rights lawyer Rita Jabri Markwell and Yankunytjajara-Anangu woman Karina Lester and many more.

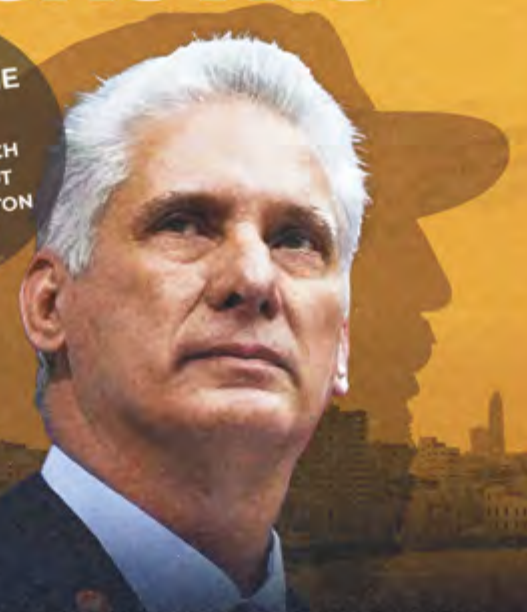
Bringing together activist groups from across the continent is important in terms of future action, but also, to raise awareness about the massive US military buildup that is now occurring in northern Australia due to the prospect of war with China.

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AN EXCLUSIVE CONVERSATION WITH PRESIDENT DÍAZ-CANEL


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NSW: Union stands up for roadside assistance workers

Peter Farmer

Australian Miscellaneous Workers Union (AMWU) members who work as roadside assist patrol officers work around the clock in all sorts of conditions to keep NSW motorists safe and get them back on the road.

They've stopped work for 48 hours and marched from Sydney Town Hall to the NRMA (National Roads and Motorists' Association) Headquarters to deliver a log of claims to incoming CEO Mike Baird, a former Liberal premier, seen recently congratulating himself for bipartisan work with ex-Queensland CEO Anna Bligh at a tax summit the two are chairing.

It's the first time in 23 years NRMA Patrol Officers

have taken industrial action. Around 139 patrol officers marched.

One officer put it bluntly, saying that NRMA "don't want to come to the party with a pay rise." The union is requesting 5% in the first year, and 4% in the subsequent years.

The NRMA has said that it can't afford the pay rises, but as another officer said, the union has seen the 2024-2025 financial report and "the NRMA is making a lot of money."

The AMWU says that patrol officers are some of the lowest paid mechanics in the state, but work across a gruelling 24/7 schedule, rail, hail or shine helping NSW motorists. The union has vowed that it won't back away from the fight. ✖

South Australia: CAUSE and effect

D2

Early this year, the formation of the Coalition Against the United States Empire (CAUSE) was announced in Tarndanya (Adelaide), a coalition of groups and individuals in South Australia dedicated to denouncing and actively working against United States Imperialism at home and abroad in every form it takes.

This new coalition was formed initially from a nucleus of members from the CPA, CPA-ML and PACOA (Port Adelaide Community Opposing AUKUS) who came together to plan and implement a rally denouncing the invasion of Venezuela and the kidnapping of Nicolas Maduro and his wife, Cilia Flores.

The rally was a great success, drawing a crowd of up to 200 people. The organisation was then expanded to include other like-minded individuals from different groups including those working in solidarity with Cuba, Chilean and Iranian diaspora, trade unionists, and Socialist Alliance.

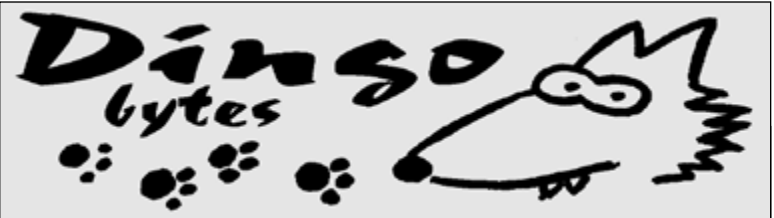
Since the initial meeting, CAUSE has also organised another successful rally denouncing the ongoing Imperialist war and attacks on Iran and Lebanon.

A minimum program was drafted and accepted at a meeting of all CAUSE members and the organisation was solidified and grounded in a united front targeting US imperialism and its attack on humanity and the working class.

The CAUSE minimum program is as follows:

- Opposition to US imperialism and the defeat of the empire.
- Support for all victims of US imperialist interference, subversion and aggression.
- Opposition to Australia's involvement in US preparations for war with China.
- An end to the participation of Australia in the US imperialist agenda including an end to the US-Australia military, economic and political alliances an end to the AUKUS pact and the force posture agreement, withdrawal from the QUAD and the closing of all military and spy bases on Australian soil.
- The independence of the political line of individual parties (including individuals and organisations) is respected so long as it does not contradict the minimum program.

In unity and with a common goal, CAUSE will continue denouncing and working against the US imperial war machine in its attacks on the democratic and free peoples of the world. ✳



In response to Environment Minister Chris Bowen's opening address at the Bonn Climate Change Conference, also called SB64, Shiva Gounden, Head of Pacific at Greenpeace Australia Pacific cut to the chase:

"While Australia's speech was strongly focused on the limitations of fossil fuels and supply chains amid the current energy shock, what's still lacking is the vision and agenda for COP31 that will truly deliver the transition away from fossil fuels. Until then, it remains rhetoric without any results. Minister Bowen emphasised the electrification agenda and renewable energies, but in a challenging geopolitical environment more clearly needs to be done to ensure COP31 is a moment of true implementation.

"Every successful COP has depended on a strong Presidency and Bonn is a key moment for the incoming Presidency to start shaping the vision. What Australia must also do is support Pacific climate leadership and get squarely behind the longstanding Pacific priorities of limiting warming to 1.5°C – and that requires rapidly phasing out fossil fuels, building resilience to the escalating impacts of climate change, addressing loss and damage, and ensuring communities can access the funding and support they need."

Greenpeace International has produced a policy briefing outlining the core elements of a just transition from fossil fuels and the urgent, priority actions needed from national governments and through global co-operation to make it a reality.

In WA, the United Workers Union has welcomed the Public Sector Commission's decision that from 1 July visa holders in the WA public sector will be able to hold permanent employment. More than a thousand staff members can now live with job certainty.

The decision aligns the WA Public Sector rules with private sector standards which cover most WA workers. It comes after sustained advocacy from members to call for reform in public sector employment practices.

Previously in WA, visa holders weren't allowed to hold permanent jobs in the public sector, even if they'd worked there for years doing the same work as their permanent colleagues.

Permanency means access to the entitlements their colleagues already have, like paid leave and guaranteed hours, and protection from having a contract simply not renewed.

PARASITE OF THE WEEK: Queensland's Crisafulli government. Queensland Mine safety experts from across the state's coal industry gathered in Rockhampton last week for the 2026 Site Safety and Health Representative (SSHR) Conference. The annual conference brings together worker representatives, industry inspectors and safety professionals to develop their skills and collaborate on stronger safety standards across the Queensland mining industry.

Hosted by the Mining and Energy Union Queensland District, the conference provides practical training and discussions on key safety issues including mine inspections, serious incident investigations, fatigue management and worker health monitoring.

The conference also discussed growing concerns about Queensland's resources safety framework under the Crisafulli government, with an eye to resisting any watering down of mine safety legislation.

Mining and Energy Union Queensland District President Mitch Hughes said the conference plays a vital role protecting Queensland mineworkers at a time when the state government has surrendered the issue:

"Our SSHRs are the front line of Queensland's strong mine safety standards. By bringing them together to share knowledge, discuss emerging challenges and explore ways to improve safety outcomes for workers, we're empowering them to stand up and speak out on site.

"Queensland miners are increasingly concerned about the future independence of mine safety oversight under the Crisafulli government. This conference is a reminder that mine safety cannot be taken for granted.

"Every protection, every safety law has been a lesson inked in blood, through injuries and the loss of life across our industry.

"If we don't stand firm now to uphold our standards, we will have to re-learn these lessons in the future."

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One Nation under Genocide Gina

M Santos

Pauline Hanson's Make Australia Great Again mirrors many of Donald Trump's MAGA policies: pro-big business, anti-worker, small government, climate denial, anti-immigrant, and racism. She, like her idol Trump, does not hesitate in dispensing with truth when it suits.

The basis of her rapid rise in popularity is similar to that of Trump's – claiming to be the anti-establishment voice representing the ordinary (white) working person. Where governments have not only failed to solve but worsened the housing and cost-of-living crises that are causing so much distress and suffering, she claims to have the answers.

At the same time as presenting as the champion of the ordinary person Hanson takes policy advice from billionaire Gina Rinehart. Her One Nation party does not support the interests of working people. Quite the opposite despite the rhetoric.

Some in the media have tended to brush Hanson off as though she has no policies. "Many apparently don't care that One Nation's policies are mostly policy-light vibe statements," Tom McIlroy writes. He should take a look at One Nation's policies, there is nothing light about them. (see editorial this issue)

ANTI-WORKER

Hanson boasts mining billionaire Gina Rinehart as a "friend" and policy adviser. Rinehart has gifted Hanson a million dollar plus plane. Other billionaires have donated millions of dollars.

Rinehart's father, mining magnate Lang Hancock, from who she inherited her billions, also played the role of policy advisor when

approached by a Coalition government to formulate Indigenous policy, proposing a sterilisation program in Aboriginal communities so that, in his words, "they die out." He proposed genocide.

Hanson and her One Nation party are anti-worker through and through.

"Businesses can't afford the cost of wage increases ... and all the other benefits that are going with it every year." Domestic violence leave is singled out as an example of the benefits that need "to be reined in if we want to see productivity increase."

One Nation's policy pages are silent on industrial relations but their voting pattern in the Senate says it all. Too numerous to mention all, the following are a few examples of One Nation's votes in the Senate:

- NO to rights for gig workers
- No to a path for casuals to become permanent
- No to Same Job Same Pay legislation
- NO to more rights for workplace delegates
- NO to making industrial manslaughter a criminal offence
- NO to preventing employers terminating enterprise agreements during negotiations
- NO to better right-of-entry laws to stop wage theft
- NO to including silica under Asbestos Safety and Eradication's functions.

In addition, Hanson has voted against cheaper childcare, against improvements in Medicare, and in favour of freezing pensions.

On the question of the unemployed, Hanson spits out the dole bludger myth: "You can't keep taxing people that are paying their rightful taxes ... and giving out handouts for those people who

don't want to work and sit around doing nothing as if it is their right to get a welfare payment for their life because they want ... their own way of life without contributing to society."

The "welfare state" is firmly on the hit list.

CLIMATE-CHANGE DENIER

"Net zero" is destroying Australia.

"One Nation believes Australia should withdraw from the United Nations Paris Agreement signed in 2016." They describe Australia's transition to renewables as "economic suicide," disputing the scientific evidence of the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and CSIRO.

"We are the only political party to question climate science."

If you were to believe One Nation, one of the "real impacts" of "net zero" is "a massive increase in the cost of Australian electricity," "a cost to taxpayers of an estimated \$1.5 trillion." The claim is that our electricity has the highest average price in the world. Not true. We are ranked 13 in the OECD.

One Nation falsely claims coal- and gas-fired electricity is cheaper than renewables.

The party "embraces" coal, gas, and nuclear energy. Net zero is "a vehicle for creating a socialist Australia in which citizens are forced under comprehensive government control." It would be laughable if One Nation's alternative policies were not so deadly and costly. However, it is not surprising considering her financial backers and mining magnate policy adviser.

In the name of timber self-sufficiency One Nation opposes "any moves to lock away more areas of native forest that is available for commercial harvesting."

- Energy policies include:
- Abolishing the Department of Climate Change and all related agencies, regulations and programs
 - Banning offshore wind installations
 - Banning renewable energy installations and transmission lines on Australian agricultural land (The revenue from these is a lifesaver during droughts and floods.)
 - Removing existing provisions so that electricity prices reflect true market value (a reference to peaks and troughs as demand fluctuates).

SMALL GOVERNMENT

One Nation wants up to \$90 billion per year spending cuts at the expense of thousands of public service jobs and critical services.

- These savage cuts include:
- Abolish the National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA)
 - Cut the functions and costs of the Federal Departments of Education and Housing
 - Remove "costly" building code regulations (read deregulation of construction industry)
 - Reform (cut) the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)
 - Introduce means-testing to NDIS and cut specialist and non-specialist pay rates



Comic by Graham Drew

- Withdraw from international agreements and organisations such as the United Nations, the World Health Organisation, and the Paris Climate Agreement
- Reduce foreign aid spending
- Reduce funding for arts and multicultural programs
- Abolish the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) and roll its "essential functions" into the Department of Health.
- Review (cut) \$3 billion worth of medications approved for the PBS during the pandemic.

Their policy claims "excessive government charges ... make up to 44% of the cost of new homes and labour costs." This is pure fiction.

Labour costs are attacked as contributing to the collapse of construction companies. They make up around one third of construction costs and building materials more than a half. The plan is to introduce a five-year moratorium on charging GST on building materials to cut developers' costs.

ANTI-IMMIGRANT

In the policy section on immigration, the economic crises affecting (white) Australians are due to immigrants. Migrants are to blame for stagnating wages in direct contradiction to "the unaffordable wage increases."

- The "solution" -
- Deport 75,000 "illegal migrants"
 - Cut immigration by over 570,000 people from current levels. That figure is larger than the number of immigrants (563,000) last year! In addition 263,000 people left the country.
 - Introduce an eight-year waiting period for citizenship and welfare
 - Withdraw from the UN Refugee Convention "because Australia will not be dictated to by foreign organisations."
 - Reintroduce Temporary Protection Visas.

PRO-SHOOTERS

"One Nation opposes firearm reclassification, ownership caps, and government-funded buyback schemes imposed by federal and state governments."

"One Nation will **repeal rushed, unfair gun laws** ... which punish compliant shooters

instead of fixing security and policing failures."

Apparently One Nation will also "enforce the tough laws that already exist and stop targeting licence, law-abiding firearm owners."

UNITE

Labor's criticisms of One Nation and Hanson are mainly attacks such as disputing the amount of money they claim to have raised. All this does is garner more support for the 'under-dog' who presents as not just another politician.

Labor's repeatedly telling the electorate how much it has done to assist with rising inflation and the cost-of-living crisis does little to convince the suffering and struggling public.

The corporate media join the fray, mainstreaming Hanson, focusing on One Nation's rise in popularity, and speculating on Hanson becoming the next Prime Minister: another day, another expose and promotion of Hanson.

Turn on the television, open the newspaper. Listen to the radio, scroll through the socials, and there she is, an orange smear with a sneer. With the amount of oxygen she's been given in the mass media, it's no wonder One Nation's poll numbers are up.

The battle to oppose and defeat One Nation cannot be won in the Senate circus or House of Representatives.

It requires the broadest anti-fascist, progressive movement possible. That includes trade unions, left and progressive political parties, the environment and peace movements, small farmers and others concerned about workers' rights, democratic rights, the environment, immigrants, and First Nations people.

One of the key tasks of this movement is to expose One Nation's policies as far and wide as possible and convince the majority of Australians that One Nation is not in their interests. As bad as Labor and the Coalition before it have been, One Nation would be far worse. Just look at what Trump has done to the US and globally.

Australia is staring down the barrel of emergent fascism.

An analysis of Hanson's National Press Club speech next week 🇺🇸

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50 AÑOS DE CALLE CONFERENCIA

Victorian Schools dispute – a union member speaks

Since early May, the Australian Education Union's Victorian branch executive has been travelling around to the regions trying to sell the proposed Victorian Government Schools Agreement 2026 to us as a good deal.

It has been clear at these briefings that the rank-and-file members around the state are more convinced than ever that we should vote NO.

Our log of claims clearly specified what it would take to make teaching and working in public schools sustainable. This included a wage claim of 35% across three years that would address the real loss of wages – 15% in real terms – we suffered during the life.

The proposed in-principle agreement does not offer enough to end the crisis in our schools and does not address the profound inequality between teachers and education support staff.

SALARIES

The proposed increases are unequal for teachers across different classifications.

In particular, it has a massively lower wage offer for Education support staff and the proposed offer spans four years not three.

The percentages that are discussed in the media are misleading as they are cumulative amounts. If you look at the actual numbers, no Victorian teacher will be on par or better off than a NSW teacher with equivalent years of experience.

We need a meaningful pay rise, beginning with 15% in the first year to address the significant real wage loss since 2021, followed by the two further 10% increases that ensure our salaries keep pace with and exceed inflation over the life of the agreement.

TEACHER WORKLOAD AND STUDENT LEARNING CONDITIONS

School staff need real, practical workload relief, including additional education support in every classroom, smaller class sizes, and a reduction in face-to-face teaching hours to 17 hours per week across both primary and secondary settings.

This agreement offers no face to face teaching hour reductions and no reductions to class size. This is despite Monash University research on class sizes which highlights that smaller classes, particularly in the first four years of school and for disadvantaged or vulnerable students, significantly improve academic achievement, behaviour, and teacher well-being. The benefits of small classes are particularly profound for culturally, linguistically, and economically disadvantaged children, as well as those with learning and behavioural difficulties. Public schools teach over 80% of all disadvantaged students.

It was clear during the briefings that our elected leadership are out of touch with the reality of teaching in public schools.

In one inner-west meeting, a teacher who

explained how many extra hours they were putting in each week to correct work, was told that the agreement covered these kinds of work load issues and that basically he needed to understand. The room erupted in disbelief.

EDUCATION SUPPORT STAFF – STUDENT LEARNING CONDITIONS

Education Support (ES) are only being offered a 25.8% pay rise while teachers are offered 28%.

This wage offer leaves education support staff a long way behind teachers. This is divisive. ES staff are already the lowest paid.

We need an agreement which includes fair and equitable conditions for all Education Support staff, including matching 35% pay increases to teaching staff, paid lunch breaks, and clear, enforceable job descriptions. The vague and easily exploitable “dimensions of work” remain key to determining education support classification.

At the briefings we were told that education support staff are over the moon with the wages offer despite many ES explaining that if the deal gets voted up it will lead to four more years of ES pay getting even further behind and workloads growing past unsustainable levels.

This inequity is the main reason we need to go back on strike. It is absolutely unacceptable that the union leadership consider an offer that divides members and offers our ES colleagues less of a wage rise.

We are being asked to approve a deal that falls far short of what we could win if we used our collective strength to go out on strike.

To end the crisis in our schools we need real enforceable workload relief, real enforceable funding to each school for the full cost of the agreement, and better conditions for ES – as well as wages that pull ahead of inflation, rather than barely catch up.

Our strike in March forced the government to change its position earlier in the year from no offer to a leaked sub-par offer, but we cannot afford to accept a mediocre agreement.

The question has to be asked, why the union leadership are asking members to agree to this substandard deal. The objective of a union is to enable workers to harness their collective strength in the workplace so that they can act in defence of their pay and working conditions.

We had over 40,000 members at our rally in March and while we don't want strike action to cause unnecessary hardship to members, we have only had one day of action so far. There are many sub branches that are calling on the union to at least organise two more stop work meetings and to reject any offer that does not meet our core demands for fair pay, manageable workloads and properly resourced schools.

This is a moment for standing together with clarity and purpose, to act as lions rather than lambs, and to bargain, not beg. ✨



Victorian teachers' strike in March. Photo: AEU facebook

**this is a moment
to act as lions
rather than
lambs, and to
bargain, not beg**

Canberra teachers take action

A Canberra teacher

ACT teachers, school leaders, school psychologists, and school assistants have walked off the job after months of no progress on bargaining claims.

On Thursday 11 June Australian Education Union members participated in a whole day stop-work action, following a two hour stop-work in May. Industrial action has included a refusal to write report comments, engaging with parents, visible union material in ACT public schools, and a refusal to host members of the ACT Legislative Assembly on school sites.

The stop-work actions have come after negotiations between the AEU and the employer have not made progress since the agreement expired in March.

At a rally outside the Legislative Assembly more than 3,000 AEU members and supporters gathered to call for better resourcing for ACT Public Schools. Supporters in the crowd included CPSU, UWU, and NTEU comrades, as well as a school student contingent, and many families of ACT Public School students. This included a contingent from the Jervis Bay sub-branch, from over 200km away.

Importantly, this was the first time that school assistants (learning support assistants, or LSAs) have taken industrial action. The crowd heard from LSA members about the lack of recognition and adequate remuneration for complex and essential work. LSAs are some of the lowest paid staff across the ACT government, with those at the lowest end of the scale earning just

\$26/hour. LSAs are not given time allowance to complete mandatory or specialist training, instead having to complete this in their own time, and paying for it out of their own pockets.

Speakers highlighted that due to the government not planning for its own workforce, ACT public schools are understaffed and under resourced, leading to teacher burn-out. Schools often need to collapse or split classes, leading to a loss of learning time. Four schools across the ACT had moved to 4.5 day timetables because of understaffing. The cumulative effect of this is that hundreds of learning hours are lost, students are not given the opportunity they deserve to learn, and teachers are trying to squeeze more learning into less time.

One of the primary claims that

teachers have put forward is for the ACT government to ensure a minimum staffing structure. A further is that class sizes are reviewed and that class complexity is taken into account.

Following the strike, ACT Education Minister, Yvette Berry, wrote a letter to branch secretary and branch president, outlining a response to some claims. The Minister has directed the employer to get a proposal to members by the end of the term. She has also directed the employer to review class size policy. If implemented, class complexity recognition methodology would be the first of its kind in Australia. The Minister will also meet weekly with the AEU.

Two important claims have been denied outright. The first is leave loading allowance for school

leaders, who often face extreme stress and work well outside of typical hours, including during stand-down. Supports for relief teachers, including the assurance that all relief staff will have access to the ICT that they need to carry out their work are also denied.

There has been no movement on pay. Members have raised their concern over this, highlighting that while we need significant change on conditions, without the pay to attract and retain teachers and school assistants, the ACT government will not be able to meaningfully implement any changes to staffing structures. ACT educators should not be asked to accept a sub-par pay offer. ✨

Sunshine Coast branch report

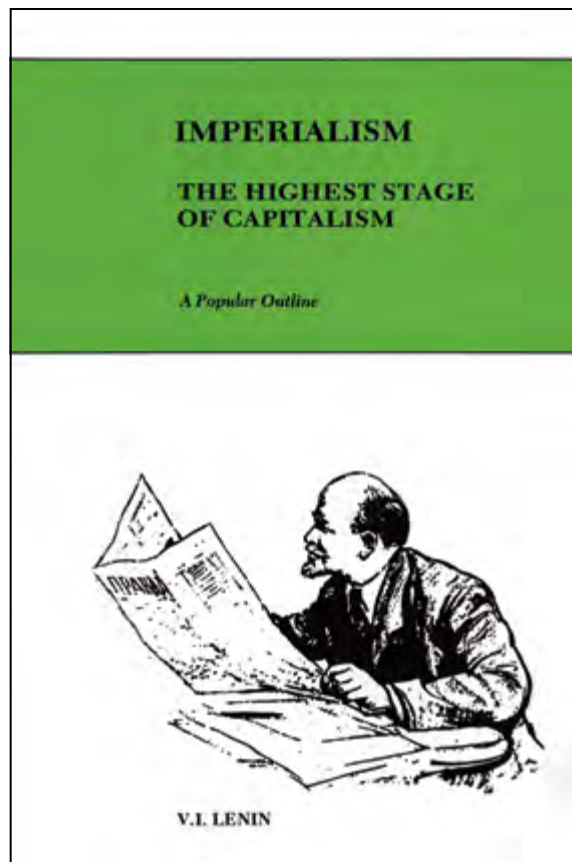
Graham Holton

The Sunshine Coast Qld branch of the CPA recently held its education session on Vladimir Ilyich Lenin's *Imperialism: The Highest Stage of Capitalism* (1917). This is an important study on Colonialism and Imperialism as two parts of the same system. Imperialism is a stage of capitalism, and Colonialism is one of its main expressions. Colonialism is how that system is organised territorially and politically. Imperialism is monopoly capitalism on a global scale, generating 'super-profits' that strengthen capitalist powers.

The class studied the book and then examined several analyses. We looked carefully at Lenin's theory and applied it to Australia as a settler-colonial society. Australia was built upon dispossession and the integration into global capitalism. The colonies were founded through British colonisation, the dispossession of Indigenous peoples, and the creation of a capitalist economy tied to the British Empire.

In the session on Lenin and the Iran War, US imperialism involves domination and division, with the US attempting to destroy Iran's military capacity, weakening its regional influence, and encouraging regime change. The control of energy routes is of core imperial interest, tied to global oil supply through the Straits of Hormuz. Finance capital and monopolies shaped US policy in the Iran War, utilising advanced weaponry and increased military expenditure.

The session on modern Marxist Critiques of Lenin's theory sees Marxists as not rejecting Lenin's theory as it explains global inequality and exploitation. Dependency Theory by Andre Gunder Frank, and Samir Amin became a dominant theory in Latin America after World War II. In this theory the world is divided into core or metropole (rich) and periphery (poor) nations, where the periphery is systematically underdeveloped by the core. Its emphasis is on historical structures, not only monopoly capital. Other



theories include World-Systems Theory by Immanuel Wallerstein, Neo-Colonialism Theory by Kwame Nkrumah, and 'Empire' Theory by Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri.

The school had great contributions by attendees and all up was a worthwhile occasion to build the branch through education and discussion. ★

PEACE NOTES

Denis Doherty

US Navy Establishes NSA Stirling near PERTH

This announcement should send a chill down the spine of all Australians. It is time to redouble our efforts to get the AUKUS agreement torn up.

"As of 30 May, the US Navy has established a new naval support activity in Perth, Western Australia as part of AUKUS, the enhanced trilateral security partnership between Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States. This move follows the trilateral Joint Statement on 30 May confirming that key milestones continue to be met for Submarine Rotational Force – West (SRF-West). "Establishment of NSA Stirling with our AUKUS partners demonstrates our command mission to support the Fleet, warfighter, and family," said Vice Adm. Scott Gray, Commander, Navy Installations Command. "By providing essential services to US personnel and their families, NSA Stirling will enhance rotational submarine force readiness."

Pine Gap and Anti-Bases Campaign

In July Pine Gap, just outside of Alice Springs NT, will be the focus of protests just as the world has come to appreciate that the presence of US Bases on your soil paints a target on your back. Iran has rightly decided that any use of US Bases on the soil of countries around the Gulf to attack Iran means that these countries are combatants. This is exactly what has happened to the Gulf States in the present conflict.

Pine Gap has had a long history of protests and campaigns. In the 1970s a Maoist group staged protests there, and in 1983 a women's camp at the gates of the base was quite a spectacular event. These actions were great efforts and made a mark, but in 1987 the Australian Anti-Bases Campaign Coalition (AABCC) was established for a year-in-year-out actions against bases. This campaign continued until around 2020.

The AABCC were at the forefront of US Bases in SA, NT, WA and NSW. Whenever Australia staged the Ausmin talks in Australia the AABCC was there and attempted through countless actions to oppose all aspects of the US/Australia military alliance whether it was the bases, the military exercises, participation in US wars, and in the opposing Australia's support of US and Israeli aggression in International forums. It was a very comprehensive campaign of many years standing and on many fronts and this organisation deserves to be remembered.

Iran vs Israel/USA war

A note to be remembered – the US army hunted down members of the Apache tribe in the Arizona almost to extinction. They have since named their most vicious helicopter 'the Apache.' This dubious distinction hardly compensates for the loss of Apache culture, people, and land.

There is some discussion whether Iran shot down an Apache helicopter over the Straits of Hormuz. Most reports confirm that a drone lodged in the cockpit of the helicopter causing it to make flying impossible, and forcing the crew to ditch the Apache. An unarmed drone rescued the pilots, and they are safe and unharmed. This was seen as an extraordinary moment in world history. Also significant is that the US Navy was too scared to approach in a ship as it would have been an easy target for Iranian drones and missiles.

The US retaliated by attacking Iran who responded with heavy barrages against US bases in Bahrain and Jordan. In Bahrain, Iranian missiles destroyed a priceless US radar system and other assets of the US Fifth Fleet base. In Jordan the US airfield hosting the US refuelling planes was hit by missiles again causing massive damage to the planes and fuel equipment.

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End times for Capitalism?

E Whitehead

Yanis Varoufakis believes that capitalism as we know it is on its last legs and we're now in a stage called 'techno-feudalism' where big technology companies are like feudal lords controlling digital platforms, data, and online markets, which exploit the people and smaller businesses that rely on these platforms. Multinational companies like Google, Amazon, Facebook, and Apple do not simply compete in markets – they own and control them, just as feudal lords once controlled land in medieval times.

These companies wield significant influence over global governance, surpassing the power of nation-states. What are the implications of this shift in power for human rights and social justice, particularly in developing countries? We need stronger

international regulatory frameworks to hold them accountable and ensure they operate in a way that benefits society and upholds democratic principles.

Digital platforms extract wealth from users, workers and businesses without true competition. Today's economy is no longer based on traditional capitalism, where businesses compete, but on a system where a few tech giants rule over digital space.

Jodi Dean, calls this the rise of "platform capitalism," where workers and users do not own the means of production but rely on tech companies to access work, social connections, and even basic services. Rather than creating a free and open internet, digital platforms have built a system where power is concentrated in the hands of a few.

Simultaneously, corporations are ruling the world, their interests seemingly taking precedence over states and their citizens. It's the end of capitalism's neoliberal phase.

The political power these corporations now wield threatens old free market policies and neoliberal ideology. Global corporations are the embodiment of economic power and differing national and regional contexts institutionally inform the political power these corporations possess. These differing institutional contexts are not just contained within state borders but are now projected and compete on the world stage between states via their global corporations.

What we are experiencing now are powerful states allowing global corporations to act in their own interests, which in turn shapes international relations. Their economic interests affect foreign policy and often cause armed conflicts. Their influence can be analysed through several historical and structural frameworks:

- **Resource Control and Protection:** Multinational corporations, particularly in extractive industries like oil, minerals,

and agriculture, have historically pressured governments to intervene militarily to protect their assets, supply chains, and concessions.

- **The Military-Industrial Complex:** The close relationship between government defence departments and private defence contractors creates powerful lobbying forces, often influencing foreign policy decisions, sometimes favouring interventionist strategies that increase demand for military hardware and services.
- **Economic Sanctions and Statecraft:** Modern corporate power operates through economic statecraft. Global tech, finance, and energy companies often comply with or drive state sanctions, effectively acting as geopolitical instruments that can escalate or manage international tensions.
- **Lobbying and Policy Influence:** Corporate lobbying groups, think tanks, and industry associations exert direct pressure on policymakers. Their goal is often to secure favourable trade agreements, deregulation, or geopolitical alignment, which heightens interstate competition and conflict.

Varoufakis may be right about capitalism as we've known it, but it won't be replaced by anything better without a lot of work. ✖

digital platforms have built a system where power is concentrated in the hands of a few

Op-Ed: The first Pride was a riot

In the early morning of 28 June 1969, the Stonewall Inn in Greenwich Village became one of those hallowed grounds in the history of popular struggle. It's where New York's queer community finally had enough and fought back.

Decades of harassment, abuse, assault, and arrest by the NYPD laid the kindling, and that night at Stonewall struck the match that became the Pride movement. That night was not the first response to State-sanctioned persecution of the LGBTQ+ communities, but it was the one that turned the tide and ushered in a new beginning for the gay rights movement.

Throughout the 1950s and '60s, the FBI and several police departments kept lists of known homosexuals and their friends, and even places they frequented. The US Post Office kept a list of addresses of people who received mail of a suspected homosexual nature. In some cities, merely existing in public while dressing or acting in a way that conflicted with your gender assigned at birth was enough to get you arrested.

Some people never learned how to deal with being uncomfortable, and because of this, they do everything they can to remove whatever makes them uncomfortable – even if that discomfort comes from another person just trying to live their life. Pride is for the LGBTQ+ community, for celebrating living their truth and being authentic in a hostile world. If that makes you uncomfortable, that's a you problem, and you should deal with it on your own time. Or, you can show up at Pride events with your Bible quotes – as some inevitably do every year – and let everyone know that you hate joy.

The first Pride was a riot against the police in Greenwich Village, with bricks and fists thrown by people like Marsha P Johnson, a Black trans woman, Stormé DeLarverie, a Black butch lesbian,

and Sylvia Rivera, a trans woman of Puerto Rican and Venezuelan descent.

Homophobes and transphobes are wrong to see equality as a threat to their very existence. Using maths that only they can understand, they equate more rights for queer people as fewer rights for themselves. Far-right Christian Nationalists are experts at cherry-picking the Bible to suit their needs, and certain parts of the Old Testament are particular favourites of theirs.

We can explain to them that there is no straight pride month because straight people are not discriminated against, harassed, assaulted, or killed because they are straight. None of this matters to them, for they don't want to be corrected or educated; they just want to be mad, because they think Jesus told them to. (And because right-wing politicians definitely did tell them to.)

There is a notion among some right-wing Christians that homosexuality is what destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah. However, the Book of Ezekiel tells us that the sins of Sodom were more aligned with current conservative policies. "This was the sin of Sodom: arrogance, excess of food, and prosperous ease, but did not aid the poor and needy." Every time the Republican Party pushes its supposedly pro-Christian agenda, we are reminded that Jesus was a communist.

June is for Pride (and for corporations to pretend to support the LGBTQ+ community, at least until July). Rainbow capitalism is a big money maker, but Pride itself doesn't have corporate sponsors. The parades and festivals sometimes sport corporate logos, of course, but even that is vanishing as big business increasingly stands lockstep with the administration's "anti-DEI" edicts.

Despite the corporate sponsorships that slap logos on parades and festivals, at its heart, Pride is still a political struggle for existence and rights.



Photo: Bhavishya Goel – flickr.com (CC BY 2.0)

The real Pride is drag queens and trans women beating up cops who try to arrest them for existing. Pride is lesbians taking care of gay men dying of AIDS in the face of intentional government neglect.

For much of the history of oppressed people, progress was not made by asking politely, but by taking to the streets and demanding

equal rights and justice. This is true for the LGBTQ+ community, as well. Arundhati Roy summed it like this: "Can the hungry go on a hunger strike? Non-violence is a piece of theatre. You need an audience. What can you do when you have no audience? People have the right to resist annihilation."

The Pride flag has many colours

to symbolise the large community it represents. If you are not a member of the LGBTQ+ community and not represented by the Pride flag, then be the straight pole and support the flag. Be an ally, for there is still much work to do.

People's World ✖

Building the Asia of our dreams

Vijay Prashad

Can the nations of the Global South act together with sovereignty and dignity? Can they build institutions that serve their peoples rather than global capital? Can they create forms of cooperation beyond military alliances and market dependency? These are not historical questions.

To stand again in Bandung, site of the 1955 conference of that name is to feel the weight of that unfinished history. The hall carries the mood of the nations that came there in 1955, scarred by colonialism, exhausted by war, but filled with immense hope and anti-colonial confidence. Sukarno's view was that what united the people was not their ideologies but their "common detestation of colonialism in whatever form it appears." Bandung was not merely a conference but an assertion that history had to be remade by those who had long been denied the right to shape it.

A new mood in the Global South has emerged, a new confidence that has been provoked by the desire for economic independence from Global North-dominated institutions and credit markets. But this new mood has not been able to overpower the continued fear of the Global North's punishments (sanctions and war) as well as its opportunities (access to credit and markets).

On the one hand, the Global North's moral authority is declining and a political consciousness that favours sovereignty and strategic autonomy is rising in the Global South. On the other hand, the Southern countries retain an anxiety about the danger posed by the United States, especially as it lashes out in the process of decline.

There is strong evidence for the recognition and dislike of US power in the 2026 Democracy Perception Index, where only four out of 97 countries and territories said that they would favour hosting a US military base (Israel, Poland, South Korea, and the US territory of Puerto Rico). No one wants entanglement with the United States, but everyone is aware of the absolute danger and decadence of US power – and has been reminded of this through recent US actions in Cuba, Iran, Palestine, and Venezuela.

The Bandung Spirit was institutionalised through several platforms, the most important being the Non-Aligned Movement, formed in 1961. This global formation was built alongside regional institutions to combat the crisis of postcolonial fragmentation. Understanding that political sovereignty was insufficient as a barrier to a world economy dominated by the North Atlantic states and multinational corporations, the Non-Aligned Movement proposed regional institutions as mechanisms to protect sovereignty, coordinate development, and increase the bargaining power of the Third World. Alongside these global institutions emerged a set of projects to develop regional or continental solidarity and to build a collective shield against imperialism.

These institutions included the Arab League (1945), Organisation of African Unity or OAU (1963), Organisation of Islamic Cooperation or OIC (1969), and Caribbean Community or CARICOM (1973).

Under the initiative of Ghana's first president, Kwame Nkrumah, the OAU emerged to build a continental political federation against the ravages of foreign capital. The OAU became mainly a diplomatic body committed to anti-colonial solidarity, support for liberation movements, and the defence



Government delegations from 29 Asian and African countries attending the Asian-African Conference in Bandung, Indonesia, 1955.

Photo: Xinhua

of territorial integrity. Its successor, the African Union (AU), was born in the neo-liberal swamp and promoted continental integration through pro-capital policies such as Agenda 2063.

In 2008, as the AU succumbed to the lure of pro-capital policies, the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR) was formed to create political coordination independent of Washington. Unlike other trade-centered blocs, UNASUR emphasised infrastructure integration, regional health cooperation, defence coordination, and diplomatic mediation. The emergence of the far right 'Angry Tide' in recent years has weakened UNASUR in the same way that debt has weakened governments in Africa and whittled the potential of the AU.

Asia, meanwhile, failed to build even the skeleton of a regional project.

In Asia, the dream of continental unity had been poisoned by Japanese militarism, which marched across the continent under the banner of Pan-Asianism and the slogan of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere.

Tokyo spoke the language of Asian liberation from Western colonialism, but its army delivered brutality. After the World Anti-Fascist War (widely known as the Second World War), the idea of continental unity appeared dangerous to many newly independent states, which feared that regionalism might simply mask dominant power ambitions.

Yet, the aspiration of Asian unity did not disappear. In March 1947, as the British Empire staggered towards its exit from India, Indian leader Jawaharlal Nehru convened the Asian Relations Conference in New Delhi. Delegates from across Asia trembled with the energy of anti-colonialism, focused as they were on their solidarity with Indonesia against the re-imposition of Dutch imperialism.

In 1952, the Asia-Pacific Peace Conference in Beijing, China, brought 470 delegates from nearly 50 countries – not heads of state but trade unionists, writers, women's organisations – to oppose the war on Korea, nuclear proliferation, and the remilitarisation of Japan. The aspiration for Asian unity was always more than a diplomatic manoeuvre: it was a living anti-imperialist peoples' tradition.

History intruded. Conflicts between states and the dense architecture of US military alliances fractured the continent. Asian regionalism emerged cautiously and unevenly. Early platforms did not bode well for the process.

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) – founded in 1967 by Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand – was born in the shadow of the US war on Vietnam and carried an anti-communist orientation. It is now largely a trade body. The same could be said of the Asian Development Bank, which emerged from demands for development finance within the United Nations Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East but soon became another instrument for neoliberal policy under the domination of the US treasury.

The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) – founded in 2001 by China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan – reflected another historical current: the slow construction of an order no longer organised around the North Atlantic but around Asia, the emerging centre of gravity of the world economy. The SCO, began as a security organisation, had limited success in regionalising security and pushing foreign bases out of the region, but is now evolving into a platform to construct an alternative trade and financial system.

From the high-quality manufacturing belts of China and Vietnam to the technological corridors of India and South Korea, the continent has become the principal engine of global growth. This economic transformation remains politically fragmented. Interstate rivalries, border disputes, competitive nationalism, military alliances, and the continued presence of extraregional powers fracture the continent at precisely the moment when history demands greater coordination.

An Asian Union could revive the moral horizon that Bandung represented. Today's world suffers from fragmentation and cynicism.

Palestine remains under brutal occupation. Wars, sanctions, and militarisation continue to devastate societies across the world. Climate change threatens billions, particularly the rural poor. Meanwhile, wealth accumulates in extraordinary concentration while workers face precarious conditions. These are not isolated national

or regional problems. They are structural problems produced by a global system that privileges profit over humanity. The Bandung generation believed that another world could be built through solidarity among peoples struggling against domination. That spirit remains essential.

An Asian Union is not a utopian slogan but a material necessity. Asia's economies are already deeply intertwined through trade, supply chains, migration, finance, energy flows, and infrastructure corridors, yet there exists no continental political mechanism capable of managing these interconnections.

Without institutions for regional coordination, economic integration risks producing only sharper inequalities, intensified competition, and militarised conflict. The continent requires common institutions able to reduce interstate tensions through diplomacy, coordinate industrial and technological planning, secure food and energy systems, manage water and climate crises, and prevent external powers from turning Asian rivalries into permanent zones of instability. Above all, Asia requires a collective political voice equal to its economic weight. Without greater regional unity, Asia's rise will remain vulnerable to fragmentation, tariffs, sanctions, militarisation, and external manipulation.

Many of the dreams of the leaders who gathered at Bandung in 1955 were interrupted, but they were not extinguished. The aspirations of Bandung survive because the conditions that produced them survive. Colonialism formally ended, but hierarchy persists in new forms. Economic dependency remains. Military power still shapes international relations. Yet resistance also continues. The peoples of the Global South demand sovereignty, equality, and peace.

I still believe that the invitation to envision a new progressive Pan-Asianism could provoke a conversation that the region desperately needs. Perhaps we could gather in Indonesia in 2030 to celebrate the 75th anniversary of Bandung and launch an Asian Union. Such a gathering will only be possible if the peoples of Asia continue to resist the militarisation of their region. From Okinawa to the Philippines, movements are already demanding the removal of US military bases – the precondition for any meaningful regional cooperation.

At the Asian Relations Conference in 1947, Nehru ended his speech with a powerful call to action and an acknowledgement of a people on the move:

There is a new vitality and powerful creative impulse in all the peoples of Asia. The masses are awake and demand their heritage. Strong winds are blowing all over Asia. Let us not be afraid of them but rather welcome them for only with their help can we build the new Asia of our dreams.

Tricontinental Institute (edited for space) ✪

the aspirations of Bandung survive because the conditions that produced them survive

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

email: editor@cpa.org.au



Swazi communists reach Chinese readers

Chinese Translation Group

The recent visit by “Taiwanese leader” Lai Ching-te to Swaziland once again drew attention to the country’s political situation and the continuing friendship between the Chinese and Swazi peoples.

While official exchanges between the Taiwan authorities and the Swazi monarchy do not represent the interests of the Swazi

working people, a more meaningful form of international connection is now developing from below. The Communist Party of Swaziland (CPS) has recently opened Chinese-language social media channels, allowing Chinese readers to learn more directly about the struggles, views, and activities of Swazi communists.

This initiative has received a warm response from many Chinese comrades and progressive readers. It has helped introduce the situation in Swaziland to a wider Chinese-speaking audience and has created new possibilities for communication

between Chinese supporters and the Swazi liberation movement.

At a time when international solidarity remains essential, the CPS’s Chinese-language work is a welcome development. It shows that the friendship between the Chinese and Swazi peoples can be built not only through formal diplomacy but also through people-to-people understanding, mutual support, and shared commitment to justice.

The Chinese Translation Group looks forward to further cooperation with the CPS’s Chinese-language channels in the future.

Gaming: History games and Benin

Graham Holton

It’s fun to speculate about counterfactuals – who hasn’t wondered how the world would have turned out if things had been different?

For those who don’t know, there’s a world of historical simulation games out there. Players can fight old battles, or control whole nations, often in counter-factual settings.

What if the British Empire never ended? What if it never got started? There’s a huge range of scenarios that can be explored – one game even has a ‘mod,’ an add-on in which leading figures from the Communist Party play a role.

The history of the Kingdom of Benin, with its famous looted bronze artworks, urban planning, diplomacy, and encounters with European traders, is rich material for historical games. Yet it remains underrepresented compared with non-African histories. There are surprisingly few major commercial video games focused specifically on the history of French Dahomey, modern Benin.

Most representations of Benin occur within broader African historical simulations rather than dedicated narratives. *Europa Universalis IV* is one of the best games, in which players can control the historical state of Benin beginning in 1444. It includes diplomacy, warfare, trade, and interactions with Portuguese and later European powers. Although

simplified, it introduces major events such as Atlantic trade and colonial expansion.

The Age of Empires II: Definitive Edition also takes in the Kingdom of Benin. It helps players understand the political and military environment of West Africa between the 8th and 16th centuries. It is useful for learning about trans-Saharan trade, regional empires, and the spread of Islam.

Victoria 3 covers the 19th century, including the period when European powers expanded into West Africa. Players can govern African states and experience somewhat abstracted pressures from imperialism, trade, and modernisation. It’s useful for understanding the broader context that eventually led to French colonial rule of Benin.

Sid Meier’s *Colonisation* focuses on European colonisation of the Americas and requires historical reading as the game over-simplifies a highly complex and tragic history. West Africa appears in the Atlantic slave trade system linking European colonies to African kingdoms, including modern Benin.

From a Marxist perspective, these games focus on states, rulers, diplomacy, and warfare rather than class relations, labour systems, and ordinary people’s lives. They portray colonialism as a strategic challenge rather than a system of exploitation.

The level of realism and detail in historical games is such that questions

of class and production often arise even if the game is not meant to be ‘political.’ As such, the most useful title for examining capitalism and imperialism is *Victoria 3* because it explicitly models industrial production, global markets, and colonial economic relationships.

There is another view. While it’s easy for people in the western left to complain that such games show support for colonialism and imperialism, some argue that the games show history as it actually happened and are a way to examine the dialectic of history.

One Marxist gamer argues that games like *Victoria 3* or *Europa Universalis 4* (commonly called grand strategy games) actually often show a historical period that needs to be moved beyond. If you actually see the nature of what the games are trying to get you to do, you can see that there’s a Marxist dialectic of history. The only way to progress in a lot of these games is to follow it. They see the common criticism as somewhat utopian.

These games, they argue, put the player in the driver’s seat to understand the pressures that caused nations and states to operate in the way they did.

Certainly Benin and other African nations whose history did not begin with colonisation still await a grand strategy game that takes their viewpoint. African history continues to be neglected and/or seen through European eyes. neglected and/or seen through European eyes. ❖



World Cup in the USA

Denis Doherty

Russia is officially banned from competing in the 2026 FIFA World Cup because of the Ukraine. The USA not being banned because of the Iran War. The war on Iran is a war of choice by the US, started during negotiations.

This is the first time in World Cup history when the host country is at war with one of the participating countries hence, the hostility towards Iran by the US Trump regime. Iran cannot train in the US. They have to travel to Mexico by train because of the enmity towards the team. The United States has restricted Iran’s World Cup squad by mandating that players and staff enter and exit US soil on the same day as their matches. In response to these travel restrictions and visa denials for several team officials, Iran relocated its World Cup base from Arizona to Tijuana, Mexico.

Although the US is not banned, a lot of other people have banned themselves from going to the US. Hotel bookings for July are down 80% and flights to the US are down by 8%. There are so many missing tourists that locals can now get tickets to many matches at much cheaper prices. The message is clear that the US is an unwelcoming state to foreign visitors.

Omar Artan, Africa’s referee of the year in 2025, was set to be the first Somali to referee at a World Cup final but was denied entry at Miami International Airport despite holding a diplomatic passport and a single entry US visa.

Footage of the Senegalese national soccer team undergoing security checks on an airport tarmac in the United States ahead of the World Cup recently circulated online. This video has gone viral across Africa.

Here is some commentary on this incident: “US authorities pulling them off the plane for aggressive bag searches, invasive checks, and public degradation

right on the tarmac. Top African football giants disrespected like suspects. The World Cup belongs to the world, not to US ego and discrimination.”

New York Mayor Zohran Mamdani has put out a response to an attack on migrants and the World Cup. “Soccer would not exist without immigrants. Immigrants play and coach the game, work in the stadiums, fill the stands and make celebrations like the World Cup possible. Six of the players on the US Men’s National Team are immigrants.”

On top of all those problems the head of Trump’s Homeland Security, has promised that ICE agents will be patrolling the grounds to look for “illegals.” The unions that cover workers at grounds, in hotels and all those who make the games happen have promised to call strikes should ICE agents appear at games. The problems of the World Cup for the USA just keep getting more complicated.

Soccer may be the beautiful game but the USA under Trump can soil it. FIFA the world federation for football has long been seen as a tainted organisation. FIFA president Gianni Infantino has ingratiated himself with Trump by awarding him the bogus and now somewhat ironically named FIFA Peace Prize – Football Unites the World. There’s not much unity around the USA’s hosting of the World Cup.

How will the Socceroos go?

Most commentators are saying that we can get through the pool round. At other World Cups Australia has ended up in the ‘pools of death’ when they have had to face prominent European or South American teams. Australia’s pool is Türkiye, USA, and Paraguay. The Socceroos have won their first game against Türkiye 2-0. A very good game by the Socceroos from a defensive angle, they got few chances, but used them well. ❖

Solutions to Crossword

Guardian 15 June 2026, #2194

Across

- 2 Country that has travel-banned two Israeli racists **IRELAND**
- 4 Kind of musician cancelled by the MSO for opposing killing of journalists **PIANIST**
- 7 *Family Guy* character, also what Trump is in re Iran **QUAGMIRE**
- 9 What P-word can get you sacked in US universities **PALESTINIAN**
- 11 Zelensky wants one, Putin doesn’t **MEETING**
- 12 Disease making a comeback **EBOLA**
- 14 US Congress voted to stop Trump’s **WARPOWERS**
- 16 Guess who won’t be allowed into a US quarantine centre in Kenya? **AFRICANS**

Down

- 1 Trump calls it “clean and beautiful” **COAL**
- 3 ‘Disease of poverty’ cropping up in the north **DIPHTHERIA**
- 5 Unionist right to do this has been internationally approved **STRIKE**
- 6 Not human, will decide who gets at-home aged care **ALGORITHM**
- 8 Agreed without asking Hezbollah **CEASEFIRE**
- 10 ALP pretending to love second-hand **SUBMARINES**
- 13 Nickname of mining baron, recently sued **TWIGGY**
- 15 KPMG has been oversharing this **DATA**

Film Review:

Strictly Ballroom (re-release)

Reviewer: Peter Farmer

Strictly Ballroom is back, in a fresh high quality 4k re-release, although for many Australians the movie was so popular, it might feel like 'Strictly' never went away.

A UK reviewer summed it up as “narcissistic white rebel finds love in the ghetto, and his defiance gets everyone dancing.” As an Australian who loved the film when it first came out 30 years ago, and has had to watch it many times since (*Strictly Ballroom* always goes down well with language classes), I balk at this blunt dismissal, but see their point.

For all those who missed *Strictly Ballroom* because they were busy doing other things like not being born yet, here's a summary. In an Aussie country town seemingly inhabited only by ballroom dancing fanatics, Scott (Paul Mercurio) is the golden boy, about to become the supreme champion and delight his mother who runs dance classes and possibly his father, who tidies up the studio and looks after a guilty secret we don't find out about until the end.

Scott just lives for the dance itself, is bored with being the best at the same old dance moves and craves new ones. He finds them in the lovable migrant community of Fran (Tara Morice), whose family teaches him to dance the 'pasa doble' Spanish-style while Fran completes her ugly-duckling-removes-glasses-and-reveals-true-beauty transformation at lightning speed. Wikipedia tells us that Fran's family is Spanish, but watching the movie when it came out, all that came across was that they were non-Anglo migrants. Everyone else in this regional ballroom-obsessed town is Anglo-Australian. Scott discovers Fran's ethnic identity when

she berates him in Spanish while still in her ugly-duckling phase. Fran's family are the only non-anglos in the movie, so it's not really a case of Scott finding love in the ghetto so much as him finding real dancing in a backyard.

At one level, the movie is a celebration of the kitschy world of competitive ballroom dancing – bright colours, foofy dresses, old songs we haven't heard for ages (the movie finishes by bringing back the 70's hit *Love is in the Air*), and people dancing with numbers on their backs, treating dancing as a competitive sport. At another it's the old story of the art-for-art's sake loner shocking the establishment by following his dream. It's not spoiling the movie to say that Scott wins the contest and gets the (now glasses-free) girl. Art for art's sake triumphs and there's a big dance at the end.

There's a lot of small town dagginess that probably escaped the British reviewer, but is absolute catnip for Australian audiences – as with 'the Castle' and 'Kath and Kim.' Nobody goes broke giving middle-class Australians a chance to mock those less privileged. The satire is sometimes affectionate – there's a moving scene in which Scott's father does a furtive but happy dance around a Hills Hoist clothesline.

Luhrman went on to make the 1990s *Romeo and Juliet* and *Moulin Rouge*, so big kitsch musical sequences are obviously his thing. The music, kitsch and dance scenes age well, but Mercurio's acting doesn't – at the time everyone was overwhelmed by his good looks along with the colours and music.

If you've never seen *Strictly Ballroom*, and you like a bit of colour and music with an Australian accent, check it out, it's fun. ❄️

a celebration of the kitschy world of competitive ballroom dancing – bright colours, foofy dresses, old songs we haven't heard for ages



The Belfast pogrom was predictable

Elia J Ayoub

Recently, I picked up a copy of the UK tabloid *The Mirror* which someone had left on the bus. I immediately noticed their small 'In Brief' update at the bottom of one of the pages, which read: "asylum seeker tore up war memorial wreaths."

The framing of this story reveals the everyday decision making that goes into the editorial room of British newspapers. More specifically, it speaks to an obsession with painting everything in racial terms, even when, or especially when, race is irrelevant.

This is what that story is really about. The way *The Mirror* covers it would lead anyone to think that this man's asylum seeking status was relevant to his decision to tear up war memorial wreaths, and yet the very first paragraph starts with 'A DRUNK asylum seeker sparked outrage.' A drunken man did property damage. That's the story. Nothing about his origins is relevant in the story itself.

It certainly worked on me. I probably wouldn't have read a

story about a drunken man doing property damage. Anyone who has spent any time in the UK knows that drunkenness is a real, nationwide problem. If anything, this man seems to have well-integrated into British culture, and anyone who doubts that should pay attention to a good chunk of our pubs and restaurants before, during and after any England or Scotland match in the FIFA World Cup.

The Mirror's decision is a common one in the UK, and it is profoundly dangerous. What it is leading up to is nothing short of the expansion and worsening of racist riots and pogroms as we've recently seen in both Southampton and Belfast.

Violence committed by racialised people against white people is immediately framed in civilisational terms because those are the terms that have been in circulation the longest and most visibly. Violence committed by white people against racialised people is not framed that way because the presumption remains that 'our civilisation' is the default, the norm – and it is certainly superior.

That drunkenness is a real problem for many people in this

country, especially men, is inconceivable in this story. Framing it that way would not only humanise this one individual when the intent is to dehumanise him, but it risks also creating a link between him and his new country, and therefore risks making his race irrelevant.

Doing so would also invite questions about racism in the British press, questions such as "why is a person's race or origins relevant when the story has nothing to do with either race or origins?" Such questions require a culture of accountability, which barely exists in the UK.

Add to that the desire by centrists to 'understand' racists without centering the experience of their victims and we find ourselves in a rapid mainstreaming of white supremacy promoted throughout British political culture.

Even among a self-identified anti-racist culture – even Reform voters do not say they are racists – there is still a noticeable lack of urgency to view the far right as an existential threat, particularly among its white population.

It's not that most white people suddenly started liking Reform or Nigel Farage, or started paying

attention to racist agitator Stephen Christopher Yaxley-Lennon (who goes by Tommy Robinson to sound less upper-class). It's that many white people still do not understand how dangerous the far right is because they aren't its first targets. Unless you're trans, of course, in which case you're well aware of how dangerous they are.

THE CASE OF BELFAST

Just look at Belfast. Fascists torching buildings and cars are dangerous to everyone regardless of race, but Belfast's Sudanese population still had "to leave work early – and many aren't venturing out of their homes" because any racialised person anywhere near fascist riots is aware that their physical safety and that of their loved ones is at immediate risk.

The pogroms were apparently triggered, we are told, by a Sudanese man's attempted murder of a white man, and yet the Northern Ireland Indian Nurses Forum reported its members were too "frightened and distressed" to go to work (much of this country's core infrastructure such as healthcare is

being supported by immigrants.) A Black father of three who has lived in east Belfast for 13 years had to first see if the streets were safe enough to take his kids to school, as the racist riots made their way to his street and set a bus on fire near his flat. The Indian driver of one of the torched buses said he was "traumatised" by what happened.

There's a generalised attitude towards unrest and violence in Northern Ireland as something predictable. And this isn't unfounded – sectarian violence, annual marching season tensions, and the legacy of paramilitary structures have made sporadic disorder a feature of life there for decades.

Belfast writer Lee Hurley puts it bluntly: "What we saw on the streets of Belfast, and beyond, was more racism and thuggery from groups who have terrorised this country my entire life. 27 people, including children, were left homeless for no reason other than the colour of their skin. It is terrorism."

shado-mag.com/articles/opinion/the-belfast-pogrom-was-predictable/
edited for space ❄️

Ecuador: Mining HQ bombed

The headquarters of the Agency for Regulation and Mining Control (Arcom) in the city of Machala, capital of the coastal province of El Oro, in southern Ecuador, has been attacked with explosive devices that caused material damage but no injuries, police sources confirmed.

The detonation occurred at the facilities of the state agency responsible for supervising mining activity in the country, which depends on the Ministry of Environment and Energy.

Colonel Remigio Albiño, police commander of the province of El Oro, indicated that after the detonation "all units in the sector were activated" and explained that the explosive device was launched from inside a car that was accompanied by a motorcycle.

According to the police chief, the explosion affected

several buildings and "a pamphlet" was found at the scene that alluded to Arcom and institution officials, regarding alleged extortions that were taking place there.

So far, no further details have been released about the type of explosive used or the possible perpetrators of the attack.

For its part, the Ministry "strongly" condemned the attack, which it described as an "attack with explosives," and detailed that it occurred a few hours after 88 operations against illegal mining in different areas of the province of El Oro.

"It is not a coincidence, it is a reaction from those who intend to intimidate a state that has decided to confront the mafias with firmness," they said.

Telesur ✳

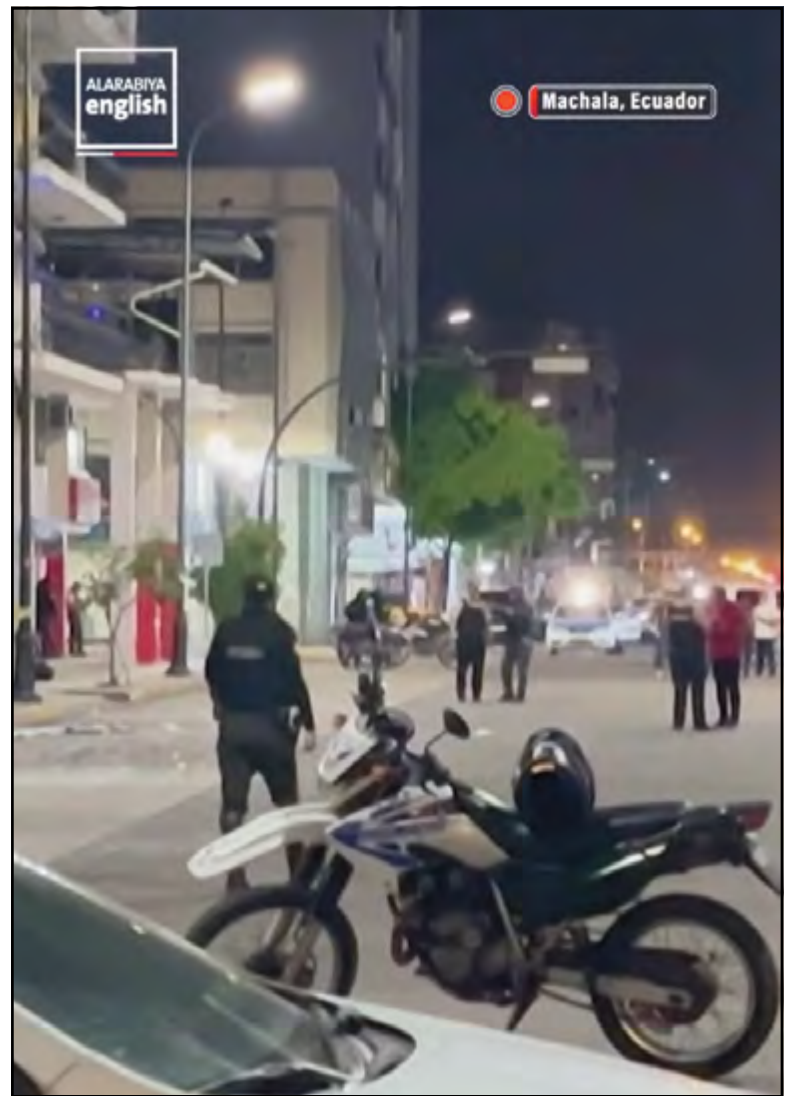


Photo: @AlArabiyaEnglish

'a reaction from those who intend to intimidate a state that has decided to confront the mafias with firmness'

IMPERIALISM

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16 JUNE - SAMIR AMIN AND UNEQUAL DEVELOPMENT

30 JUNE - THE FINANCIALISATION OF EVERYTHING

14 JULY - IMPERIALISM IN POWER

Albanians rise up against Trump resort

Peter Farmer

Albania's Prime Minister, Edi Rama, is trying to quell protests over a holiday resort being constructed by Jared Kushner, the son-in-law of US President Donald Trump.

Kushner's firm, Affinity Partners, has started work on a \$1.6bn luxury holiday resort in an area that includes Albania's only island, Sazan. Protesters are concerned that

the resort could further endanger the more than 200 species of birds as well as the Mediterranean monk seal, that depend on the waters in a marine national park around the island.

Ivanka Trump has described the island as "a find." Her husband's firm wants to turn a former military base on Sazan into a resort, as well as building villas, apartments and hotels in the protected area.

Protestors have been outside

the Prime Minister's office holding up signs reading "Nation is not for sale."

The Protection and Preservation of Natural Environment (PPNEA) in Albania has led over 40 environmental groups in protests and has written to the government demanding suspension of the project. A petition on PPNEA's website demanding the project's cancellation has attracted almost 60,000 signatures. ✳

Russia to help Cuba with renewable energy

Russian Deputy Energy Minister Evgeniy Grabchak recently stressed that his country is cooperating with Cuban authorities to support the development of renewable energy sources in the Caribbean nation.

According to statements made to *Sputnik*, Russian companies in the energy sector "are actively working in Latin America, and one of our niches is in the Caribbean island, with the construction of facilities with the use of natural resources.

"As far as the construction of power plants and networks is concerned, it is above all with Cuba that we have an intense collaboration," he remarked.

Grabchak highlighted that the 27th edition of the St. Petersburg Forum (Spief-2024), in which Cuban Vice Prime Minister Ricardo Cabrisas Ruiz participated, was an important showcase to strengthen ties and create commitments in terms of collaboration with Latin American countries.

Prensa Latina ✳

*Something
to say?
Write to
the Editor!*

Check out the official Instagram account
of the Communist Party of Australia
communist.party.australia
www.instagram.com/communist.party.australia/

Israel faces legal action for abuse of flotilla captives

Italy has launched a probe into far right Israeli National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir's alleged mistreatment of international activists who took part in an aid flotilla bound for Gaza, days after a similar investigation was opened by France. It comes as the EU is considering sanctions on Ben-Gvir over the alleged abuse.

The scandal was triggered by the IDF's interception of the Global Sumud Flotilla in May, an international civilian initiative set up to break the Israeli blockade of Gaza. Activists have repeatedly attempted to reach the Palestinian enclave over the years, but their vessels have ended up attacked, sunk, burned, bombed, or stopped by Israeli forces.

The enclave remains in dire need of humanitarian assistance. Nearly its entire population of approximately 2.1 million is displaced, while roughly 60% of Palestinians in Gaza have lost

their homes during the latest war between Israel and Hamas.

The latest attempt to run the blockade was no exception – the ships were boarded by the Israeli military in international waters off Cyprus and over 400 activists were detained. The detainees were expelled after a few days in custody, alleging widespread mistreatment at the hands of the Israeli forces, including beatings, torture, sexual assault, and outright rape.

While Israel has repeatedly taken an extremely heavy-handed approach to those involved in such endeavours, the latest incident was further aggravated by the actions of Ben-Gvir. The minister showed up at a prison ship housing the detainees waving a large Israeli flag, taunting the kneeling and bound activists and urging the government to jail them for a long time. He also posted the video online.

France has opened a preliminary investigation into suspected "torture" and "war crimes" against the crew of the Gaza-bound flotilla.

Italy, which has emerged as a strong supporter of Israel in the conflict with Hamas, has taken similar action. Italian prosecutors have begun an investigation of Ben-Gvir on suspicion of torture and kidnapping of the country's nationals among the activists.

The Italian probe was openly mocked by the recalcitrant minister, who said he would not "shy away from one investigation or another and will continue to stand proudly alongside our fighters."

"The land of the Boot has become the land of the flip-flop," he added, referring to Italy's geographical shape and an apparent shift in its position towards Israel.

The remarks landed poorly in Rome, with Italian Foreign Minister Antonio Tajani lashing out at Ben-Gvir. "Unacceptable words that we send back to the sender; they are not worthy of a minister," Tajani wrote on social media.

rt.com 



Global Briefs

JAPAN: The Japanese government will send specialists to Greenland to study the possibility of mining rare earth metals and other critical minerals. Japan is seeking to diversify its rare earth metal supply sources amid the global high dependence on China. China accounts for about 70% of global production. The US Geological Survey estimated Greenland's rare earth reserves at 1.5 million tons, making it eighth in the world. Based on this data, Japan intends to study the types of resources, their reserves, and production costs in very harsh climate conditions in order to assess the feasibility and scale of investment.

GERMANY: A conflict of interests between Germany and France has led to the termination of a joint aviation project. Germany and France have cancelled their joint 100 billion Euro sixth-generation fighter jet program launched in 2017 by former Chancellor Angela Merkel and President Macron. Had the program proceeded and succeeded, it would have enhanced interoperability among European armed forces and in the long term, pushed US fighter jets out of the European market.

IVORY COAST: The Ivory Coast has launched a national commitment against gender-based violence. It aims to reduce the dramatic increase in annual cases, which grew from 2,000 to more than 10,000 in less than ten years. "Gender-based violence is not a private matter, a tradition, or a religious practice; it is an injustice and an attack on human dignity," declared the Minister for Women, Family and Children. The initiative, promoted by the Ministry, brings together traditional and religious authorities, civil society representatives, youth, artists, media, and officials from neighbouring countries around a zero-tolerance policy for violence against women.

CHINA: Beijing has marked the 25th anniversary of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation with a grand reception including diplomats from SCO member countries and delegates from international organisations. The SCO was founded in Shanghai in 2001 and exists to promote multilateralism and a more equal global governance system.

PALESTINE: The number of demolitions of Palestinian properties has increased drastically in East Jerusalem. Most recently, the family of a Palestinian Muslim guard who kept a yeshiva (a Jewish religious-nationalist school) safe after it was abandoned in 1929 is now being evicted as the yeshiva says it needs more space. Israeli authorities have also issued an eviction notice to a 97-year old.

SWITZERLAND: Swiss voters have voted against a referendum proposal to put a limit on 10 million on the population size. The measure was put up by the Swiss People's Party, a right-wing nationalist party that focusses on restricting immigration, and blames migrants for a range of Swiss social problems.

LEBANON: The Lebanese Health Ministry has published the latest death toll from Israeli strikes on Lebanon since 2 March. "The total number of victims of the aggression from 2 March to 13 June is 3,756 dead and 11,632 wounded," the Ministry said in a statement. Israel continues to strike Lebanon despite the current ceasefire and ongoing US-brokered Lebanese-Israeli negotiations.

HUNGARY: Hungary's main opposition party Fidesz has re-elected former prime minister Victor Orban as its leader for another year, despite the party's loss in the April elections. Some 729 delegates out of 737 voted to re-elect Orban at the party's congress.

An interview with
President Miguel Díaz-Canel

Cuba After Castro

FILM SCREENINGS

GADIGAL-SYDNEY

Friday 26 June 6pm

NSW Teachers Federation 23-33 Mary Street, Surry Hills

BOORLOO-PERTH

Saturday 27 June 3pm-6pm

Perth Trades Hall Centre

82 Beaufort Street Perth

CANBERRA

Monday 29 June, 7pm

AEU ACT Branch, 71 Leichhardt Street Kingston

NAARM-MELBOURNE

Friday 10 July 6pm

Kathleen Syme Library and Community Centre, 251 Faraday

Street, Carlton

www.cpa.org.au

South Africa: from declaration to action

Molly Dhlamini

South Africa witnessed a historic Conference of the Left convened by the South African Communist Party (SACP) in May 2026. The gathering brought together communist parties, socialist organisations, trade unions, community formations, women's organisations, youth movements, progressive intellectuals and academics, progressive traditional leadership, faith-based organisations, and international solidarity partners in what can be described as the most significant gathering of the South African Left in the democratic era.

For more than three decades after the democratic breakthrough of 1994, progressive forces often engaged each other through fragmented campaigns, issue-based coalitions and sectoral struggles. Never before has such a broad spectrum of left and progressive forces met collectively to deliberate on a common program of action aimed at rebuilding working-class and popular power. For this reason alone, the Conference of the Left represents a historic turning point.

The conference was convened at a time when global and South African capitalism is experiencing a profound crisis. Mass unemployment, deepening poverty, worsening inequality, gender-based violence, de-industrialisation, corruption and growing social despair shape the lives of millions. Poverty affects more than half the population while South Africa remains one of the world's most unequal societies.

These realities have reinforced a fundamental conclusion: political freedom alone is insufficient without economic emancipation. The Marxist tools of analysis remain critical. Ownership and control of the means of production in South Africa cannot remain in the hands of capital.

From a Marxist-Leninist perspective, the central contradiction remains the concentration of ownership and control of the

economy in the hands of monopoly capital which is significantly white. The democratic breakthrough of 1994 was a major victory over apartheid and the colonial project, but the negotiated settlement did not fundamentally alter economic relations to benefit the majority of the previously oppressed black South Africans. Political rights were secured, but economic power remained largely intact in the hands of established capitalist interests.

The transition averted what could have been a bloodbath or civil war, although the period was marred by orchestrated violence. However, the land question and the economic question remain fundamental and critical to complete the Revolution.

Evidence of this structural continuity is reflected in financial concentration and industrial decline. Manufacturing contributed approximately 23.7 per cent of GDP in 1990 but had fallen to about 12.8 per cent by 2024–2026. At the same time, finance, insurance, real estate and business services expanded substantially as a share of economic activity. This process of financialisation increasingly shifted economic accumulation towards financial markets and speculative activities rather than productive investment, job creation and industrial development.

This reality does not diminish the achievements of democracy. Rather, it highlights the unfinished tasks of the National Democratic Revolution. The struggle for national liberation must be advanced towards economic liberation. Land ownership patterns, financial power, industrial ownership and control of strategic resources remain largely concentrated in monopoly capital and its agents. The Conference of the Left therefore reaffirmed that the present period requires a renewed struggle for economic emancipation.

The conference also undertook a process of self-criticism. Delegates acknowledged that while women constitute some of the most militant and capable organisers within

progressive movements, they have not been adequately represented at the centre of leadership and organisational processes of the Conference of the Left. The conference resolved that this reality must change.

The gender question cannot be treated as an afterthought. Working-class women continue to bear the heaviest burden of unemployment, unpaid care work, violence and economic exclusion whilst they remain at the centre of social reproduction, subsidising capital.

The international character of the conference also deserves special recognition. Progressive leaders and solidarity representatives from Zambia, Ghana, India, Brazil, Mexico, the United States, and Venezuela participated in discussions and shared experiences from their own struggles against imperialism, neoliberalism and exploitation.

Delegates emphasised that capitalism cannot be reformed into serving the interests of the majority. While immediate reforms remain necessary, they must form part of a broader strategic project aimed at transformation and building the foundations for socialism.

The conference rejected the notion that austerity, privatisation and financialisation can resolve South Africa's crisis. Instead, delegates called for democratic planning, industrial policy, developmental finance, public ownership and strategic state intervention. The conference stressed that socialism must include worker participation, democratic accountability, social ownership and popular power.

International solidarity formed a major pillar of the conference. Participants reaffirmed their support for the people of Palestine and welcomed South Africa's efforts to hold Israel accountable before international institutions. The conference called for intensified mobilisation, boycott campaigns and solidarity actions in support of Palestinian self-determination.

Equally strong solidarity was expressed with Cuba. Delegates condemned the

decades-long blockade imposed against the Cuban people and reiterated support for Cuba's sovereign right to determine its own future free from imperialist interference. Cuba's achievements in healthcare, education and international solidarity continue to inspire progressive movements in Africa and across the world.

Support was also reaffirmed for the Bolivarian process in Venezuela and the right of the Venezuelan people to determine their own future.

The liberation struggle of Western Sahara was highlighted. The conference extended solidarity to anti-imperialist struggles across Africa and the Global South.

One of the most significant outcomes of the gathering was the establishment of the Council of the Left. The Council is not a political party and does not replace participating organisations. Rather, it provides a mechanism for coordination, political education, campaigning and collective intervention. It could become one of the most important instruments for rebuilding Left unity in South Africa.

The conference repeatedly returned to a central lesson from Marx, Engels, and Lenin: organisation is decisive. The working class cannot simply resist exploitation. It must organise to exercise power.

The success of the Conference of the Left will be measured by whether workers become better organised, whether communities become more mobilised, whether women occupy leadership positions, whether youth become active agents of transformation, and whether the Left succeeds in rebuilding popular power to solidify freedoms.

Globetrotter (edited for space)

Molly Dhlamini is a member of the Central Committee and Deputy International Secretary (15th Congress) of the South African Communist Party ✪

US 250th anniversary a working class history

Graham Holton

The 250th anniversary on 4 July marks the United States Declaration of Independence from Britain in 1776. It was a bourgeois revolution that overthrew colonial rule and removed feudal and mercantilist restrictions that hindered capitalist development in America.

The revolution established political independence but did not fundamentally challenge private ownership of productive property, class inequality, slavery, and the dispossession of Indigenous peoples.

Washington and Jefferson were wealthy landowners and slave owners whose interests aligned with America's emerging capitalism.

The revolutionary armies and militias were largely composed of small farmers, labourers, indentured servants, artisans, and sailors.

They carried much of the burden of fighting, yet after independence political power remained concentrated among wealthy merchants, plantation owners, and professionals.

Popular movements sought to extend the promises of freedom to

groups excluded from the original revolutionary settlement. This led to a class struggle that was part of the contradictions within American capitalism.

Immediately after independence class conflict emerged, such as Shays' Rebellion, in which indebted farmers protested against taxation and foreclosures. The contradiction between liberty and slavery is central to the analysis of the revolutionary era.

The plantation economies of the Southern states generated enormous wealth through the labour of enslaved Africans and others. Cotton exports fuelled industrialisation, with Northern merchants and banks profiting.

Many Indigenous nations supported Britain as they feared American settler expansion. US independence accelerated the westward expansion into Indigenous lands through warfare, treaties, and land seizures. Settler colonialism was a key source of capital for the new republic.

Labour struggles won voting rights, union rights, and social protections. Labour fought against persistent class inequality and the concentration of wealth under a modern capitalist system. From

a working-class perspective, the most significant anniversaries are the Great Railroad Strike of 1877, the Haymarket Affair, Pullman Strike, and the Flint Sit-Down Strike. Workers struggled against the rise of industrial corporations in the 1930s during the Great Depression, and the Civil Rights and labour struggles of the 1950s and 1960s. These movements expanded democracy more substantially for ordinary people than the political changes following 1776.

The US has become the world's richest capitalist economy with its political, social, and international relations shaped by capital accumulation and class struggles. It's also one of the most unequal economies.

The US economy is increasingly financialised with wealth generated through financial markets, real estate, intellectual property, and speculative investments. Workers face increasing pressure on their living standards reduced by rising housing costs, increasing household debt, job insecurity, declining union density, and growing wealth inequality.

US working-class people have a long way to go. ✪

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A FILM BY ABBY MARTIN

EARTH'S GREATEST ENEMY

DOCUMENTING THE ENVIRONMENTAL COST OF HISTORY'S BIGGEST EMPIRE

ABBY MARTIN NATIONAL TOUR JULY 2026

WA	BOORLO / PERTH: 21 JULY LUNA LEEDERVILLE C1 6pm
SA	TARNADANYA/ADELAIDE: 22 JULY CAPRI CINEMA 6:30pm
VIC	NAARM / MELBOURNE: 27 JULY SUN THEATRE YARRAVILLE 6pm
NSW	WOLLONGONG: 28 JULY FRATERNITY CLUB 6pm
NSW	GADIGAL / SYDNEY: 29 JULY DENDY NEWTOWN 6pm

PLANET EARTH vs. THE US MILITARY

Japan: More for the military, less for the people

It has emerged that Japan's Ministry of Defence intends to significantly increase the number of hospital beds at major Self-Defence Forces (SDF) hospitals nationwide in preparation for potential conflict in the Nansei (south-west) islands.

This suggests that preparations for war are steadily progressing based on the assumption that a large number of SDF personnel will be killed or wounded.

For example, the SDF Naha Hospital in Japan's southern Okinawa Prefecture will increase its bed availability from its peacetime capacity of 50 beds to 200 beds in times of emergency. Similarly, the SDF Fukuoka Hospital Fukuoka Prefecture will increase its capacity from 200 beds to 350 beds in a contingency, and the SDF Yokosuka Hospital in Kanagawa Prefecture will see an increase from 100 to 200 beds.

In Okinawa, medical drills have repeatedly been conducted based on a scenario in which the SDF is mobilised in a military conflict involving the United States, resulting in a high number of casualties. Furthermore, a Ministry of Defence official stated that if

SDF hospitals across the country reach full capacity, the ministry may seek cooperation from private medical institutions.

Meanwhile, the ruling Liberal Democratic Party and its far-right coalition partner Nippon Ishin no Ka (Japan Innovation Party) and the Komeito party have recently agreed to cut approximately 110,000 inpatient beds for the general public by the end of March 2027 in order to reduce medical expenses by one trillion yen (about AU\$9 billion).

As part of these efforts, the LDP-Ishin government is already providing hospitals with 4.1 million yen for each bed eliminated.

In the event of an emergency in the Nansei islands, private medical institutions and their staff may be mobilised for "combat casualty care."

The Japanese Communist Party has objected, saying that while it is only natural to make every effort to safeguard the lives of SDF personnel, a situation in which ordinary people become casualties due to war must be avoided at all costs.

Japan Press Weekly 🇯🇵



Half the Sky

Israeli femicide

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Israel has a significant problem with violence against women.

The Israel Observatory on Femicide is the leading monitoring body tracking killings of women across Israel. It defines femicide as women killed as domestic killings or 'honour killings.'

There is a high rate of femicide and disappearances, with a disproportionate number of Arab women being killed. Their deaths are reported as domestic violence or organised crime. These terms hide ethnic inequalities, and tensions between Jewish and Arab communities. Arab citizens make up about 21 per cent of Israel's population, but Arab women account for a large share of murdered women. These include Palestinian citizens of Israel, Bedouin communities in the Negev, and Druze communities.

Most murderers are partners or family members.

According to the Observatory's 2024 report, twenty-three out of forty-two murdered women were femicide victims, averaging nearly two femicides per month. Knives were more common than firearms, and only a minority of victims had previously filed police complaints.

The Femicide report showed that many Arab women's murders remain unsolved, indictments are filed far less often than in cases involving Jewish victims, and organised crime and clan conflicts increasingly affect women. Some women have reportedly been killed because they were viewed as connected to rival gangs or family disputes. Activists argue that killings are often underreported or culturally misunderstood. Disappearances involve domestic violence, trafficking, migrant women, sex workers, and vulnerable minorities. African asylum seekers, migrant workers, and undocumented women are considered particularly vulnerable because they may avoid police contact.

The Israeli government has responded with domestic violence laws, shelters for abused women, restraining-order systems, and specialised police units. Critics argue enforcement is inconsistent, Arab communities receive weaker policing protection, and organised crime has expanded faster than the state response. Women's organisations frequently accuse governments of failing to prioritise femicide prevention.

Researchers and women's organisations have warned that periods of war and national crisis can worsen domestic violence. After the 7 October attacks and the subsequent Gaza war shelters and services reported increased stress and domestic abuse risks. Many reservists are returning home traumatised, and women's organisations warned violence prevention was receiving less attention.

Women in the Gaza Strip and southern Lebanon have suffered extremely high civilian casualties. According to the United Nations, by May 2025 more than 28,000 women and girls had been killed in Gaza, averaging roughly one woman or girl every hour. By April 2026, the estimate had risen to more than 38,000 women and girls killed. Supporters of Palestinian organisations often argue that the real death toll is likely higher because many bodies remain under rubble, and Gaza's collapsed infrastructure prevents full documentation.

The UN has accused Israel of the sexual abuse of thirty-one Palestinian men, women, and children from the Gaza Strip and the Occupied West Bank between 2023 and 2025. In May 2026 the UN added Israel to the 'blacklist of sexual violence in conflict zones' because of the large number of sexual assaults, prompting Israel to cut ties with UN chief Antonio Guterres. In April a report from the West Bank Protection Consortium found that sexual violence and other forms of gender-based abuse committed by Israeli settlers and soldiers are spurring Palestinians to leave the Occupied West Bank.

Activists on board the recent Gaza-bound aid flotilla said that they were abducted from international waters and abused while in Israeli detention, including at least fifteen separate cases of sexual assault or rape. To nobody's surprise Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu called the report antisemitic, but the figures from inside Israel show the problem is there no matter what he calls it.

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Guardian

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Editor:

Floyd Kermode

Published by

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

Printed by

Independent Newspaper Solutions Pty Ltd
 Level 5, 219 - 223 Castlereagh Street
 Sydney NSW 2000

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

The drugs (policies) don't work

Carlos Ron

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On 7 March, at the Trump National Doral Golf Club in Miami, US President Donald Trump inaugurated the 'Shield of the Americas' summit, convening right-wing leaders from Latin America and the Caribbean's 'Angry Tide' around what he called a 'counter-cartel coalition.' Washington's recipe was stated plainly: 'The only way to defeat these enemies is by unleashing the power of our military.' Monroeism is on the offensive, and the Angry Tide has become its shield – not against cartels, but against people-centred projects of national sovereignty.

The invited leaders – Milei of Argentina, Paz of Bolivia, Bukele of El Salvador, Noboa of Ecuador, Asfura of Honduras, Peña of Paraguay, Chaves of Costa Rica, Mulino of Panama, Abinader of the Dominican Republic, Ali of Guyana, Prime Minister Persad-Bissessar of Trinidad and Tobago, and President-elect Kast of Chile – are all to the right of the political spectrum. Conspicuously absent were the progressive leaders of Latin America's largest economies: Brazil, Colombia, and Mexico. Of Mexico, Trump declared: "The cartels are running Mexico. We can't have that."

The images from Miami stood in stark contrast to regional gatherings of the last two decades, where Latin American leaders met on equal standing to build frameworks for political coordination and cooperation – such as the Council of South American Defense and the South American Health Council under the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR), for example. In Miami, the assembled presidents competed in a publicity stunt to see who would stand closest to Trump in the photograph or keep the commemorative pen with which he signed the agreements.

WAR ON DRUGS, A FAILED POLICY

It is alarming that this coalition commits to deeper collaboration with the United States on fighting cartels, given the balance sheet of US-led drug control. After more than 50 years of the 'war on drugs,' the US Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) acknowledged before the US Congress that the Sinaloa and Jalisco cartels alone have 'associates, facilitators and intermediaries in all 50 states of the United States.' This is the outcome of half a century of the most expensive and militarised drug control effort in human history.

The aggregate data confirms the verdict. In 2023, 316 million people consumed illegal drugs worldwide – a 22% increase from a decade prior. The US government has invested over \$10 billion in counternarcotics efforts in Colombia since 1999, yet cocaine production more than tripled between 2013 and 2017. The study shows that between 2016 and 2022 – a period of intense US-Colombian cooperation – potential cocaine

production in Colombia rose from 1,053 to 1,738 metric tons, while seizures and forced eradication also increased simultaneously. More eradication, more production. More cooperation, more cocaine.

No contemporary case illustrates this more starkly than Ecuador, whose president Daniel Noboa stood prominently at Trump's event in Miami. Ecuador has been subjected to a process of foreign interference since at least 2017 – producing marked deterioration of the social rule of law and a progressive militarisation of public security across four structural axes: foreign interference, economic liberalisation and external debt, institutional deterioration, and the securitisation of social problems.

Under President Lenín Moreno (2017-21), Ecuador restored US security ties suspended by his predecessor Rafael Correa, rejoining US Southern Command exercises. Under Guillermo Lasso (2021-23), a memorandum of understanding was signed, modelled explicitly on Plan Colombia, with a projected budget of \$3.1 billion over seven years – repositioning Ecuador as the top recipient of US foreign military financing in the region, with \$310 million between 2022 and 2023, surpassing Colombia.

Under Noboa, after presidential candidate Fernando Villavicencio was assassinated during the 2023 campaign, General Laura Richardson of US Southern Command travelled personally to Ecuador to agree a 'joint plan' including the deployment of US military personnel with full immunity from Ecuadorian justice – the same conditions applied in Colombia, and immediately dubbed a 'Plan Ecuador.' The homicide rate reached 47 per 100,000 in 2023. Noboa's *Plan Fénix* deployed armed forces in city streets, built mega-prisons modelled on those in Nayib Bukele's El Salvador, and sought a constitutional reform to permit foreign military installations – such as a base in the Galápagos Islands. The militarisation of public security has not resolved the crisis. It has deepened it, while subordinating Ecuador's sovereignty to Washington's hemispheric agenda.

POLITICAL PRETEXT

The militarised drug war framework does not protect populations from narco-trafficking. It protects political elites from democratic accountability and normalises authoritarianism under the banner of security. Addicted to Imperialism documents that in 2008, 35% of Colombian senators and 13% of House representatives were under investigation for links to paramilitary groups that simultaneously ran drug-trafficking operations. The 'war on drugs' did not dismantle these networks. It provided them with political cover.

This is not surprising when we recall the framework's origins. US President Richard Nixon's chief domestic policy advisor admitted decades later that the administration's 1971 declaration of drugs as 'public enemy number one' had a different target: "The Nixon White House, after that, had two enemies: the antiwar left and black people. ... We knew we couldn't make it illegal to be either against the war or black, but by getting the public to associate hippies with marijuana and blacks with heroin, and then criminalising both heavily, we could disrupt those communities. We could arrest their leaders, raid their homes, break up their



Coca leaves and fruits (*Erythroxylum coca*), Colombia.
Photo: Danna Guevara – wikimedia.org (CC BY 4.0)

the drug war creates the framework for the kind of health concerns, corruption and impunity it claims to be fighting

meetings, and vilify them night after night on the evening news. Did we know we were lying about the drugs? Of course we did."

On a regional scale, from Plan Colombia to the Shield of the Americas, the alleged combat against cartels has consistently served as a pretext for military spending, interventionism, and the displacement of populations from their territories. The most recent illustration is Venezuela: the abduction of its sitting president, Nicolás Maduro, was framed as an anti-drug operation – but swiftly revealed as a mechanism for reinserting Venezuela into Washington's oil economy.

In 1826, Simón Bolívar convened the 'Amphictyonic Congress' of Panama with a vision of extraordinary clarity: a confederation of Latin American republics acting collectively, guaranteeing their independence, and negotiating with great powers from a position of sovereign equality. The Angry Tide is today's antithesis of that spirit. At Miami, Trump declared: "We will not allow foreign hostile influence to establish itself in this hemisphere – including the Panama Canal" – while Panama's President José Raúl Mulino sat in the audience and listened in silence. It is Monroeism at its most undisguised.

Latin America and the Caribbean – its movements, parties and progressive

governments – needs a renewed regional agenda of sovereignty and concrete cooperation, including institutions capable of coordinating a sovereign response to the drug economy. The price of a kilogram of cocaine rises from approximately \$1,500 at the point of production in Colombia to \$20,000 in the United States. The producers – the peasant farmers – capture less than 1% of the global cocaine market's value.

Over 70% of the weapons fuelling cartel violence in Mexico are manufactured in and flow from the United States. The drug war, in its hyper-militarised version, creates the institutional framework for precisely the kind of health concerns, corruption and impunity it claims to be fighting.

The first quarter of this century offers proof that a different ambition produces results. Operación Milagro launched by the Cuban and Venezuelan governments restored sight to over 3 million people. The 'Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America' or ALBA literacy programs eradicated illiteracy in Bolivia, Venezuela, Nicaragua and Ecuador. Regional unity with a true purpose of reaffirming sovereignty and guaranteeing a dignified life for the population must not be abandoned for failed policies and publicity stunts.

Globetrotter ✨



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