



NDIS deadly cuts

M Santos

People with disability have gained an eight-week reprieve following a deal between the Greens and Labor to gain support for Labor's tax changes. The Senate inquiry into the cruel, inhumane cost-cutting NDIS bill will now have until 14 August to report – an extension of eight weeks.

If passed the government's bill, disingenuously titled Securing the NDIS for Future Generations, would undermine the essence of the NDIS which is to provide personalised support based on individual needs.

The government had initially given the inquiry four weeks in which to report. Submissions closed after two weeks. Despite this there were 4,000 submissions from disabled people, carers, family members, experts, and advocacy groups. Their anger was palpable.

The bill was so rushed that there was not even time to upload all the submissions. The simple English description of the bill was not uploaded until after submissions had closed.

There were only three days for actual hearings, all held in Canberra.

Unusually for an inquiry, all submissions were opposed to the bill. It had been produced without consultation, while seeking to impose massive cuts to existing packages of up to 50% and throw 160,000 disabled off the scheme without the necessary state supports to meet their needs. Hundreds of thousands of disabled would be denied entry to the scheme in coming years.

The Senate committee issued an interim report at the end of the four weeks which only tinkered with the bill. Senator Jordon Steele-John, Greens Senator for Western Australia, issued a dissenting report calling for the bill to be withdrawn.

DEADLY CUTS

The bill is based on cutting costs by \$35 billion in just four years, regardless of the needs of the disabled and carers and families.

Submissions highlighted a range of serious concerns including:

- Participants' funding would be set below assessed needs

- Cuts would lead to an increased reliance on unpaid carers, who in some instances have disabilities, and/or would be forced to leave the workforce
- Assessments based on automated decisions – Robodebt Mark 2 – as if everyone with a particular condition has the same needs regardless of other disabilities and circumstances
- A 'one-size-fits-all' approach to assessment
- No framework in place for disabled people thrown off the scheme
- It will cost lives and do untold harm to the disabled and carers
- Significantly diminishes the role of the Administrative Review Tribunal and the judiciary, eroding pathways to access justice
- All participants' plans would be reviewed with the aim of cutting back plans or throwing disabled off the NDIS to cut costs
- Government claims to be addressing fraud but is in fact targeting the disabled.

The bill enables the Minister to enact 50% cuts to funding for social and community participation using broad Ministerial powers, rather than through an assessment of an individual participant's circumstances, goals, support needs and capacity for community engagement.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Disability Discrimination Commissioner Rosemary Kayess slammed the bill:

"The NDIS was introduced as a human rights-based reform. It was built on the principle that people with disability can live independently and participate in the community with access to supports that enable choice, control and inclusion. This Bill has the potential to be regressive in the protection and realisation of the rights of people with disability, which is contrary to Australia's obligation regarding the principle of non-retrogression.

"Measures proposed in the Bill as well as the Ministerial discourse about the changes place stronger emphasis on financial considerations in decision-making than on human



wannapik.com

rights. This reinforces an ableist framing of people with disability as a cost pressure to be managed, rather than as people who have rights and who are entitled to equality and participation."

Kayess also raised concerns about the considerable powers of the Minister.

REDEFINING PERMANENT

There is a new requirement that a disability would not be considered permanent, a requirement for eligibility, unless

a person had undertaken all "appropriate treatments."


As the Greens point out in their dissenting report, "... concerns were raised that decisions regarding which treatments must be pursued would be determined through the rules made by the Minister, rather than by an individual's medical professionals."

Continued on page 2

measures proposed in the bill place stronger emphasis on financial considerations than on human rights

3 
Solidarity with Venezuela!

6 
NSW: police sent in to public housing protest

8 
Not the shakeup we're looking for

14 
Cuba's reforms deserve support

Guardian

Issue 2197

6 July 2026

Happy Birthday!

The United States turns 250 this year. You'd expect some epic celebrations, but they've been somewhat overshadowed by President Trump's clownish behaviour. In the middle of a war he started, he's put time into having tantrums about problems with Washington's reflecting pond. It's supposed to be blue. Now it's an unwholesome green thanks to algae.

That war? Trump has claimed to have ended it 40 times before the current fragile ceasefire. Then there's Trump's blatant corruption, something this newspaper doesn't have enough space to cover.

It's too bad that Trump isn't an exception, some kind of monster who's taken over an otherwise inspiring nation.

He's not an aberration. Trump is more of a 'mask-off' moment for a nation that has always engaged in theft of land and human beings from other nations.

The US mythologises itself as the land of freedom, welcoming migrants from everywhere to a nation where anyone can succeed if they work hard. It's a good example to other countries of how good a country can be. A former Secretary of State, Madeleine Albright called the US the "indispensable nation."

Contrary to the US self-image, it has been horrendous for the rest of the planet. There has been imperialism as the 'Land of the Free' stole land from Mexico and took over Cuba and the Philippines.

After slavery on an industrial scale was finally ended, the US practiced racism of such barbarity it inspired Adolf Hitler. Here, Trump is a return to form, with his minions taking down pictures of accomplished people of colour and his Secretary of Defence sacking Black generals.

Still, it's a great place to live, right? That's why people from all over the world want to move there, right? Wrong.

Although a select minority have become astronomically rich, like Elon Musk, briefly the world's first trillionaire, the US has not been good to its own people. The US is a land of staggering inequality, a land of homeless encampments that look like small cities, a land where the "right" to bear arms is worth over 44,000 deaths in a year. The US is a nation where the rich have the best medical care available while millions of working-class people just pray that they stay healthy.

It's true that the US once inspired Ho Chi Minh, who wrote his own Declaration long before his country beat the US in a war of independence. The present-day US has lessons for the rest of us. It's an example of what happens when capitalism gets its way. The end point of a nation that serves capital is Donald Trump's corruption.

The US is visibly crumbling, in what looks like being a century of self-humiliation. It can't finish the war it started. Its largest battleship had to run away from Ansar Allah, also known as the Houthis, who control Yemen, one of the poorest countries on earth. The US still has a lot of power, but that's slipping away as other nations wake up to the cost of depending on it. Certainly the Gulf states recently attacked by Iran are realising that hosting US bases doesn't make you safe. It makes you a target. It would be great if Australia worked this out too.

So happy birthday USA. Here's hoping your downfall is rapid and doesn't take the rest of us down with you.

NDIS deadly cuts

Continued from page 1

Serious concerns were also raised that these new rules fail to adequately account for barriers to accessing treatment, including affordability, geographic location, waiting times, potential risks, costs involved or an individual's personal circumstances and preferences.

The Occupational Therapy Society for Invisible Disability spoke about the new rules during a public hearing: "Their introduction shifts NDIS eligibility decisions away from the sum of available evidence of the impact of the person's disability to a single assessment. There is currently no demonstrated assessment tool capable of delivering the type of objective, functional assessment contemplated by the bill while accurately reflecting the complexity of disability."

Many submissions argued that changes to the definition of permanent disability would create additional obstacles for disabled people accessing the Scheme. This is by design, part of the cost-cutting process forcing disabled people off the Scheme.

"Behind every funding reduction is a person whose life becomes smaller. Behind every delayed support is a family forced to fill the gap. Behind every unmet need is someone whose dignity is compromised," one submission noted.

Children and Young People with Disability Australia raised concerns that the bill is silent on chemical restraints where somebody is forced to take medication as a way to suppress particular behaviours or conduct.

"That's what we're concerned about for children in particular – an early adoption of chemical restraint as a way of satisfying appropriate treatment before non-chemical or medication support is available to them."

It was reported that women were being coerced into having hysterectomies so they didn't have to fund menstrual support.

Women With Disabilities Australia (WWDA) argue

that "the reforms risk deepening existing inequalities for women, girls and gender-diverse people with disability. WWDA is deeply concerned by the Bill, and the broad powers it gives the government to tighten access, reduce supports, cap funding and shift people to other systems before new rules, safeguards and tools have been designed.

"Significant cuts to the NDIS and participants' supports will never be safe policy unless there are strong, accessible and properly funded alternatives in place."

POLICY

Commissioner Kayless warned: "The NDIS must operate as a human rights-based scheme, ensuring that people with disability have access to individualised supports that enable dignity, autonomy, independence and participation in the community. The proposed reforms raise significant concerns about the extent to which this framework is being preserved."

The NDIS cost just over \$46 billion last year and has been growing at around 10% a year. That is less than is spent on the uncapped, destructive military machine which aims to kill and disable more people.

In the same week as announcing the NDIS cuts the government announced an additional \$53 billion in spending on preparations to fight US imperialism's wars.

The Communist Party of Australia calls on the government to cancel AUKUS, rein in military spending and tackle the NDIS fraud which the government admits is mostly attributable to private providers and parasitic intermediaries.

The bill should be thrown out and the government carry out serious negotiations with the disability community, listen to their needs, and legislate based on these needs, not on cost-cutting.

For more information see *Guardian* 4 May 2026, #2188

"NDIS cuts: 'We will fight back'" 🌟



IPAN NATIONAL CONFERENCE

2026

SPEAKERS | FORUMS | WORKSHOPS | NETWORKING

TOPICS INCLUDE | CLIMATE CRISIS | INDIGENOUS RIGHTS | AUKUS | PALESTINE | THE WORLD |

TIME TO BREAK FREE

FROM THE US

Old Stock Exchange, Adelaide

Sat, Sun 25-26th July

FOLLOWING THE PUBLIC MEETING FRI 24TH

SPEAKERS

Nick Hanna
Aunty Sue Haseldine
Rodrigo Acuna - Global South
Shirley Winton - Australia
Naek Flores - Pacific
Mike Khizam - Palestine
Sen. David Shoebridge

INTERNATIONAL KEYNOTE SPEAKER

ABBY MARTIN
US journalist and filmmaker



EARTH'S GREATEST ENEMY

Find more screenings
bit.ly/book-film



Book now bit.ly/IPAN-26



ipan.org.au Independent and Peaceful Australia Network



The CPA stands in solidarity with the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela!

The Communist Party of Australia (CPA) sends its deepest message of solidarity with the Venezuelan people, the Bolivarian government, all progressive organisations, unions, grass roots communes, and our fraternal comrades in the Communist Party of Venezuela (CPV).

We pay tribute to all those on the front line, rescue and health workers, attending the victims in the aftermath of two catastrophic earthquakes that struck on the 24th of June, impacting La Guaira, Simon Bolivar International Airport, and the capital Caracas.

We are receiving reports on the growing number of deaths and injured people. The Venezuelan people urgently need humanitarian assistance and solidarity from the international community.

The CPA calls on the Australian government to join the international call and send urgent aid to the people of Venezuela.

The heroic Venezuelan people are enduring a difficult year, which began with the military attacks of 3 January and the illegal kidnapping of President Maduro and his wife, Parliamentarian Cilia Flores, leading to the death of over 100 people, including 32 Cuban heroes. Under Trump and Rubio, the

United States of America is ratcheting up its genocidal, imperialist offensive in the region.

The unity of the Venezuelan people will overcome this new challenge brought about by a natural disaster of two back-to-back earthquakes.

Our hearts go out to the families who have lost loved ones in this tragedy, and we wish the injured a speedy recovery. Venezuela is not alone!

**International Department
Central Committee
Communist Party of Australia**

27 June 2026

Venezuela responds to the earthquake tragedy

Graham Holton

Twin earthquakes of 7.2 and 7.5 on the Richter scale, followed by numerous aftershocks, have shaken the republic of Venezuela. Geologists have called it the biggest earthquake to hit the South American country since 1812. At time of writing, the death toll is at 1,943, with thousands of people unaccounted for and more than 10,000 people injured.

Interim President Delcy Rodríguez appeared on state television, alongside National Assembly leader Jorge Rodríguez and Interior Minister Diosdado Cabello, announcing emergency measures and activating the country's disaster-response apparatus. 'Together we will overcome this tragedy.'

Rodríguez emphasised national unity, warning that casualty figures would likely rise as rescuers search through 850 major

collapsed buildings and reach isolated communities. The government mobilised the health-care network in Caracas, La Guaira, and other disaster zones. Hundreds of older buildings – built before the strict modern building codes – have collapsed or been rendered uninhabitable. Roads, bridges, electricity networks, telecommunications systems, and public facilities have been damaged. International humanitarian assistance has been offered by Colombia, United States, India, the United Nations, European and other countries.

A major priority of the Bolivarian revolution under Chávez and Maduro was provision of health services to poor areas. That network will be of immense value in the months ahead.

Transport services at the Simón Bolívar international airport have been suspended. The disruption to port facilities will hinder trade and relief efforts for some time. The closure of airports, schools, and

transport systems means significant losses in productivity.

Businesses in affected areas have closed, workers have been displaced, and tourism has been disrupted. Power outages, transport disruptions, and damaged logistics networks could reduce productivity and exports in the short term.

Many of the hardest-hit communities were already experiencing economic hardship before the quakes. Recovery costs, loss of employment, and housing shortages are likely to increase poverty and place greater demands on social services. Reconstruction will require billions of dollars in public and private investment, placing additional pressure on a government already facing fiscal constraints. Venezuela's economy is heavily dependent on oil exports.

The cost of rebuilding will be in the billions of dollars and slow Venezuela's economic recovery and reduce its GDP by several percentage points. The disaster adds

to the burden of housing shortages, unemployment, and reconstruction costs.

Venezuela was facing US sanctions, hyperinflation, shortages, declining state revenues before the disaster. This makes recovery more difficult. Limited access to international finance may force the government to rely heavily on foreign aid, loans from allies, and humanitarian assistance.

The Venezuelan government needs to be wary, as a reliance on large foreign investment may lead to what Naomi Klein called 'disaster capitalism.' Enforced neoliberal economic policies of deregulation, privatisation of state enterprises, mass layoffs, and reduced government intervention will lead to major societal shocks.

The coming months will require the distribution of aid and major reconstruction. This is Rodríguez's first major challenge and good governance will increase her government's popular support. ✪

Health workers stand against Lebanon war

Statement from the Health and Community Services Union (HACSU)

We stand in solidarity with the healthcare workers, emergency services, disability support workers, mental health clinicians and drug and alcohol workers who are continuing to provide treatment, care, and support to the people of Lebanon and Iran under uncertain and terrifying conditions.

Surrounded by danger, inundated with thousands of displaced people, and stripped of even the most basic resources, healthcare workers continue to show up day after day, caring for the countless victims of war.

Even as the conflict engulfs their own lives and impacts their own families and loved ones, the

healthcare workers of Iran and Lebanon refuse to turn away, holding fast to their duty to heal in the face of unimaginable hardship.

HACSU is profoundly concerned for the safety and wellbeing of people with disabilities, and those living with mental ill-health, and risky substance misuse, who bear a disproportionate burden in times of conflict.

As violence escalates, the barriers they face in accessing even the most basic services and support become more severe and more dangerous. This is an urgent humanitarian concern that demands immediate and compassionate international action.

We note that many healthcare facilities across Iran and Lebanon

have been forced to close, including the Delaram Sina Psychiatric Hospital in Tehran which has been destroyed beyond repair resulting in countless patients not being able to receive the treatment they need when they need it most.

HACSU members will always stand side by side with our international healthcare worker family and stand up for the patients, participants, and consumers they support.

Hospitals, caring facilities, and healthcare workers must never be a target of war, and those nations who engage in such reckless and illegal warfare must face the full force of international law.

HACSU firmly supports peace and does not accept claims that this

war is in the interest of or promotes the freedoms of working people in Iran, Lebanon, or across the world.

Some argue that this war is meant to free and liberate the people of Iran. We reject this claim. As we have seen across the Middle East and across the world, bombing and violent military interventions do not create freedom, democracy, or peace.

Painfully high fuel prices, interest rate hikes, and deepening inequality are not accidental – they are the predictable consequences of war.

HACSU members on the front-line of delivering critical treatment, care and support within the mental health, disability and drug and alcohol sectors are seeing firsthand

the impact of relentless budget cuts on the patients, consumers and participants they support, while they themselves struggle to make ends meet.

HACSU also calls on the Albanese Labor government to rethink AUKUS and put the \$368bn towards things that matter to working people and their families right now: safe, accessible healthcare, housing, and medical supplies.

The war in Iran and Lebanon once again proves that PEACE IS UNION BUSINESS. ✪

NAIDOC Week 2026: fifty years of Deadly

Peter Farmer

NAIDOC Week is one of the most important, celebratory weeks in the calendar for First Nations Australians.

National NAIDOC Week celebrations are held annually across Australia in the first week of July. This year's celebrations take place from Sunday 5 July to Sunday 12 July 2026.

2026 offers extra reason to celebrate, being the 50th NAIDOC Week. The 2026 theme – Fifty Years of Deadly marks a milestone. It's a tribute to the people who built this movement: the Elders who stood firm, the First Nations organisers who made space, the First Nations artists who turned resistance into expression, and the communities who keep showing up, year after year.

NAIDOC Week is now celebratory. Its history is more sobering, having its origins in a Day of Mourning protest and congress first held on 26 January 1938. One of the first major civil rights gatherings anywhere in the world, this protest moved the following resolution:

"WE, representing THE ABORIGINES OF AUSTRALIA, assembled in conference at the Australian Hall, Sydney, on the 26th day of January, 1938, this being the 150th Anniversary of the Whiteman's seizure of our country, HEREBY MAKE PROTEST against the callous treatment of our people by the whitemen during the past 150 years, AND WE APPEAL to the Australian nation of today to make new laws for the education and care of Aborigines, we ask for a new policy which will raise our people TO FULL CITIZEN STATUS and EQUALITY WITHIN THE COMMUNITY."

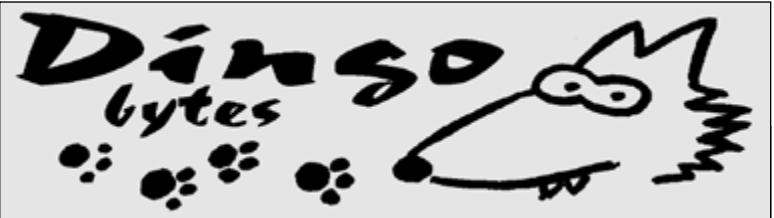
From 1940 until 1955, the Day of Mourning was held annually on the Sunday before Australia Day/Invasion Day, and was known as Aborigines Day. In 1955 Aborigines Day was shifted to the first Sunday in July after it was decided the day should become not simply a protest day but also a celebration of Aboriginal culture.

In 1956, major Aboriginal organisations, state and federal governments all supported the formation of the National Aborigines Day Observance Committee (NADOC).

In 1975, the NADOC committee decided that the event should cover a week, from the first to second Sunday in July – now a day of remembrance for Aboriginal people and their heritage.

In 1991, with a growing awareness of the distinct cultural histories of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, NADOC was expanded to recognise Torres Strait Islander people and culture. The committee then became known as the National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee (NAIDOC). This name has become the title for the whole week, not just the day.

A note on language: while the National NAIDOC Committee acknowledges the now defunct and inaccurate term 'Aborigines,' it has been retained in the title due to historic use by Elders in establishing this week of commemoration in 1938. In 1967 the ongoing registered title of the Committee became the National Aboriginal and Islander Day Observance Committee. 🇺🇦



Councils from every State and Territory have united with unions representing the entire Local Government sector to warn the Federal Parliament of a looming financial crisis that threatens the very survival of councils.

At the National General Assembly of Local Government last week in Canberra, a letter calling attention to the crisis was signed by all State and Territory Associations representing more than 500 councils from across Australia and sent to the Speaker of the Parliament as well as every MP and Senator.

Union leaders representing the whole Australian Local Government workforce joined with the Presidents of State and Territory Local Government Associations in a joint media conference to demand fairer funding for the sector.

This joint call to increase Commonwealth Financial Assistance Grants to 1 per cent of federal taxation revenue comes as a growing number of regional councils face severe financial pressures that threaten basic services.

"Today mayors from every corner of the continent are joining with unions representing the whole Local Government workforce to say this crisis in funding for councils must be addressed," Local Government NSW President, Mayor Darcy Byrne, said.

"In regional communities in particular there is simply not enough funding for basic services to be maintained. That's why we have taken this unprecedented step to force the Parliament to act on this crisis.

National Secretary of the Australian Services Union, Emeline Gaske, has highlighted the impact the crisis will have on the Local Government workforce.

"Council workers keep Australian communities running every single day," Gaske said.

"They collect our bins, run our libraries, maintain our roads, and support communities through floods and fires. They do this work professionally and with commitment, but they need councils that are properly resourced to back them up."

In NSW alone, there are 50,000 council workers serving the local communities.

General Secretary of the United Services Union, Graeme Kelly said the level of assistance from the Commonwealth has been declining steadily.

"The Federal Government has watched Financial Assistance Grants fall from 1 per cent of Commonwealth taxation revenue to barely half that over thirty years. That decline has real consequences for the workers and communities who depend on council services. Restoring the 1% benchmark is the single most important thing Canberra can do for local government," Kelly said.

PARASITE OF THE WEEK: Bendigo Bank (again). The Finance Sector Union (FSU) has urged Bendigo Bank to prioritise reskilling workers over redundancies as the bank continues to cull its Australian operations.

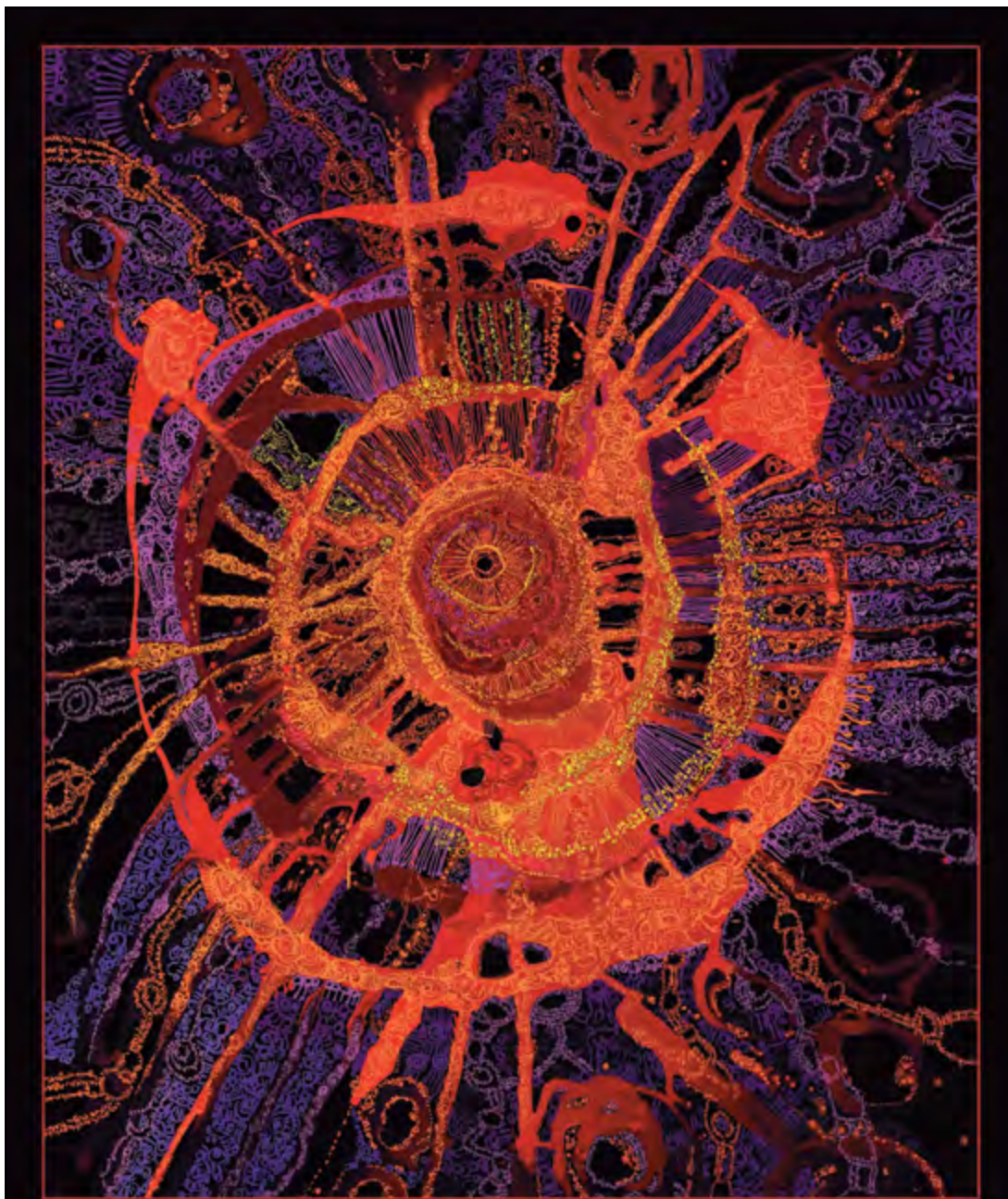
Workers have been told that some functions performed in the Customer Enablement Business and Agribusiness Lending Operations department will now be run by global tech giant Genpact. The FSU understands up to 80 workers could lose their jobs as a result.

The union is also concerned that some functions of the Financial Crime Risk area have been outsourced to Genpact although the bank claims that the area will receive a net increase of 33 workers as a result.

The union believes that this presents an opportunity for Bendigo Bank to reskill employees affected by the restructure. For workers who choose to, Bendigo should provide upskilling and development to transfer them into these Financial Crime roles instead of facing the prospect of having no job.

The bank has not been shy about its ambition to shrink its Australian workforce. Bendigo announced a partnership with Genpact and Infosys in April that saw some staff forced to work for Infosys on inferior contracts and left up to 1,000 other employees uncertain about whether their jobs will be outsourced too.

The FSU has met with affected staff to hear their concerns and provide advice. FSU National Secretary Julia Angrisano said: "Every time an Australian job is lost there is an economic and social impact that affects us all. Banks don't offshore or outsource to improve efficiency; they do it for profit."



NAIDOC WEEK
50 YEARS
DEADLY
5-12 JULY 2026

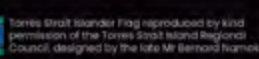
Paralpi by Zaachariaha Fielding

Paralpi extends Zaachariaha's acclaimed *Inma* series and reflects a deeply cultural and immersive narrative grounded in Country. The artwork depicts the sounds of *Paralpi*, a significant place just outside Mimili on the eastern APY Lands in South Australia. As Zaachariaha describes, *Paralpi* is a place where people come to embrace and celebrate children, where they are taught by Elders to move and mimic their Clan emblem – for Mimili, this being the maku (witchetty grub).

#NAIDOC2026 #FIFTYYEARSDADLY #NAIDOCWEEK
facebook.com/NAIDOC @naidocweek @naidocweek



Aboriginal Flag
Designed by Mervyn Thomas.



Torres Strait Islander Flag reproduced by kind permission of the Torres Strait Island Regional Council, designed by the late Mr Bernard Namok.

Cuba for unionists

Vinnie Molina

A very successful screening of the *Cuba after Castro* documentary by Abby Martin and Matt Belen was held in Boorloo/Perth on Saturday 27 June. The documentary gives viewers a close-up encounter with Cuban President Miguel Diaz-Canel.

The event targeted unionists under the banner Cuba for Unionists. It was well attended and funds were collected which will go towards buying solar panels and battery for a community child care facility in the Cuban province of Guantánamo.

A panel of three unionists from Perth shared their first hand experience in Cuba solidarity. Each of them has visited Cuba for May Day and/or on the Southern Cross brigade. They all agreed that Cuba changes people's lives. The project is sponsored by the Australia-Cuba Friendship Society nationally.

Everyone present pledged their solidarity with the Cuban people and their right to self-determination.

The Southern Cross Brigade is attended by Australians and New Zealanders of all ages and backgrounds. Age is no barrier, as it has had brigadistas as young as 6 and as old as 88! The next Brigade will run in December 2026 and January 2027. Inquiries to cubabrigade.org. 🇺🇦



Data centres

These huge, droning, temperature-controlled, windowless factories are popping up in lots of Australian cities, suburbs and towns – and there are many more on the drawing board.

We didn't ask for them – and Australian electricity and water authorities did not plan for them, until very recently – yet every one of us who clicks on an AI tool, watches a series on Netflix or Stan, or does internet banking is using them.

What are they? How do they affect the climate, our water resources and nature? Can they be built and maintained in a way that isn't environmentally disastrous?

WHAT HAPPENS IN A DATA CENTRE?

In a nutshell, data centres power online activity. And online activity is increasing all the time. More and more people are conducting more and more of their daily activities on the internet. The rapid emergence and imposition of artificial intelligence (no referendum has ever been held to ask people if they wanted AI to start taking over their lives, jobs etc) has supercharged this trend, sending electricity demand through the roof.

WHY ARE THEY BEING BUILT NOW?

Shares in AI companies have skyrocketed in the last two years. Tech giants Alphabet, Amazon, Meta, and Microsoft are collectively expected to spend around a trillion dollars on expanding their AI capacity in 2026 alone. A trillion dollars in one year. A significant chunk of that investment goes into the construction of new data centres.

At present, the USA hosts far more data centres than any other country, but there are plenty of others being built in Europe, China, India, and elsewhere. At the moment there are around 300 data centres in Australia, with plans afoot for another 100. OpenAI chief executive Sam Altman recently said Australia could become a "data centre capital of the world."

HOW BAD ARE THEY FOR THE CLIMATE?

Data centres are notoriously voracious energy consumers. At present they use just over 2% of the power in Australia's national electricity market, but the Clean Energy Finance Corporation expects that figure to be 11 per cent in a decade.

New research by energy analyst Ketan Joshi for Greenpeace Australia Pacific detected "early signs of a data centre-fueled

gas boom in Australia." It found a single proposal for a gas-powered data centre at Moss Vale in NSW would wipe out that state's entire projected 2028 emissions cuts. The Greenpeace report concluded the rush to build AI data centres "will derail Australia's energy transition unless the government urgently intervenes."

A separate report by the Climate Council found if governments don't boost renewable energy and firming capacity and restrict the use of offsets, data centre demand will push up power prices for homes and businesses and worsen the climate crisis.

WHAT ABOUT WATER AND NATURE?

We live in a dry land. Australia has the lowest percentage of rainfall as run-off of any inhabited continent and the least amount of water in rivers.

Data centres use huge amounts of water to cool the whirring computer stacks. Water Services Australia has warned the average Australian data centre is seeking to use up to 40 million litres of fresh water a day. That's as much water as 80,000 households use.

Data centres presently consume about 3.5 billion litres of water per year in Sydney alone – under 1% of the total demand. Sydney Water predicts that will jump to 25% by 2035. At least 89 data centres in the Sydney area are believed to be drawing directly from the public drinking water supply.

One particular AI data factory planned for South Australia, the nation's driest state, intends to draw water from the already over-stretched River Murray for cooling.

WHAT'S IT LIKE TO LIVE NEAR A DATA CENTRE?

Some of these data centres are massive. Plans for Australia's largest data centre, just north of Western Sydney Airport, would see 52 hectares (imagine 26 MCGs) of paddocks and dams turned into a buzzing compound of bitumen, concrete and steel.

They generate a lot of noise and heat that affects local communities. One study in the USA found data centres are creating heat islands, warming the land around them by as much as 8.8°C.

American AI ethicist Masheika Allgood says many data centres rely on diesel generators for back-up power. They sometimes run on diesel for months when maintenance is needed, worsening living conditions in the vicinity with engine noise and particulate pollution.

University of Technology Sydney researcher Bronwyn Cumbo says where there



Google data centre, Iowa. Photo: Chad Davis – flickr.com (CC BY 2.0)

are clusters of data centres, such as Northern Virginia in the USA and Dublin in Ireland, some locals have experienced increased energy and water prices. She says communities have also reported water shortages and damage to places of great natural value.

Many communities are standing up and speaking out to oppose the imposition of data centres on their towns and suburbs. In May 2026 more than 200 locals protested against AI company Cloud Carrier's plans in Moss Vale in the NSW central highlands. Communities around Perth, in Melbourne's west and at Sydney's Lane Cove are organising against data centres.

CAN DATA CENTRES BE BUILT IN A WAY THAT ISN'T AN ENVIRONMENTAL DISASTER?

In February 2026, a range of groups (including ACF) released a joint statement setting out some principles for data centres in Australia. To maximise public benefit and minimise public harm, the statement said all new data centres must:

- Be powered by 100% additional renewable energy
- Strengthen grid stability
- Be appropriately sited to minimise impacts on nature and land use

- Minimise embodied emissions and maximise efficiency and circularity
- Use water resources responsibly
- Operate with transparency
- Commit to earning and delivering ongoing social licence
- Support the training and upskilling of the workforce.

In March 2026, the federal government released its "expectations" for data centres.

The ACF welcomed the government's direction and the inclusion of expectations relating to additional renewable energy supply and sustainable and efficient water use but stressed that giving big tech corporations guidelines was not enough.

"If you want to build a data centre in Australia, you should be compelled to build the renewables and water recycling infrastructure to service it," said ACF CEO Adam Bandt.

"We are disappointed the government has not listed any expectations relating to the siting of these data centres, to minimise impacts on nature, or relating to community benefits sharing and proper consultation with local communities and First Nations.

"We urge the Albanese government, in partnership with States and Territories, to impose strict, measurable obligations on the tech titans to make sure they do their share, consult properly and don't drain our resources or derail the clean energy transition," said Bandt.

Australian Conservation Foundation 🇺🇦

NSW: police sent in to public housing protest

On Friday 19 June, police escalated the NSW government's efforts to demolish Waterloo South public housing, forcefully removing dozens of community members and residents at the site and arresting one.

Public housing residents and supporters had begun a community camp-out outside the homes of public housing tenants which are slated for demolition under Phase 1 of the NSW government's Waterloo South demolition project.

A community camp-out has stood for over three weeks at the site resisting NSW government efforts to knock down the homes of 750 public housing tenants.

60 police officers entered the site and forcibly removed a group of community members including Waterloo South public housing residents, and tenants of Aboriginal Housing at The Block in Redfern. One arrest was made.

Grant Donohue, public housing tenant representative in Waterloo tower (Marton Building) said, "This is about public housing keeping a roof over the heads of people who are suffering and desperately need it. There's a strong community down here in Waterloo, but the government is not fulfilling their obligations to refurbish these houses and maintain the buildings.

"We need to invest in new public housing, but why knock down perfectly sound homes that are only 50 years old? These buildings could be easily refurbished. Especially in a housing crisis, it's silly that they're going to put a wrecking ball through these homes."

Karyn Brown, a Waterloo public housing resident for over 30 years pointed out that the words "public housing" were not once mentioned in the letter tenants received from Homes NSW. "Families are living in cars, and yet, they are demolishing public housing. It's ridiculous," she added.

"We're here to protest against the demolition of public housing in a housing crisis. Homes NSW are treating us tenants and housing activists in the Waterloo Encampment, like we are a danger. We are here to protect the rights of tenants."

'Relocation' just means being put at the top of the ever-increasing waitlist for public housing. 2030 is too late. Public housing has always meant security and dignity, and Rose Jackson has taken both of those things away from us.

Suelin McCauley, Action for Public Housing Spokesperson, and Surry Hills public housing tenant said the police action was "an ambush. The NSW government knows that the demolition is shameful, that is why they had to send 60 police in the dark of night."

McCauley promised that the community campaign to defend public housing would ramp up after the Minns government's use of authoritarian tactics to fast-track the destruction of public assets for private profit.

Action for Public Housing 



Photo: Action for Public Housing facebook

Unions slam Queensland's 'twisted priorities'

Graham Holton

Queensland unions have been closely watching how Premier David Crisafulli's Qld Liberal National Party would approach rising wages and increased public debt.

Initial union response has been largely critical, seeing an over emphasis on spending restraint and public-sector cuts. The government plans to reduce staff numbers in 13 departments, which would increase workloads and weaken services. A total of \$9.3 billion will be spent on cost-of-living relief.

Amy MacMahon, Greens MP for South Brisbane, said the budget does "nothing to

help frontline workers like teachers and nurses pay their bills, despite years of stagnating wages, staff shortages and worsening conditions."

The Queensland Council of Unions (QCU) described the budget as "missed opportunities and twisted priorities," needing more investment in the public service sector and cost-of-living relief. General secretary, Michael Clifford, said: "Queenslanders deserve quality healthcare, education, public safety, and mental health services. That can't happen unless we also have a workforce that is trained and skilled and paid fairly."

The Queensland Nurses and Midwives' Union (QNMU) had called for permanent


jobs for graduates, broader safe staffing ratios, more regional housing support, and measures against workplace violence. While health spending remains high and more frontline staff are planned, health unions argue that workforce investment does not go far enough.

The QNMU has been demanding a 5.1 per cent annual wage increase, up from the 2.5 per cent rate the state government offered. A representative said, "A fair wage rise, which keeps up with the cost of living, is critical to the recruitment and retention of nurses and midwives in this state."

The Queensland Teachers' Union (QTU), Together Queensland (a branch of the

Australian Services Union), and the Australian Workers' Union (AWU) have been critical. They are against public-sector job cuts, and call for more investment in health and education staffing.

The Construction, Forestry, and Maritime Employees Union (CFMEU) is demanding a 5.5 per cent increase as the "absolute bare minimum" for its members. The Electrical Trades Union (ETU) proposed a 5.1 per cent annual wage increase for public sector workers, but that has been rejected.

Crisafulli's campaign described the LNP's policies as "the right plan," but for working people it's anything but. 

US planning weapons stockpile in Victoria

Tender documents published by the US Navy earlier in June suggest that it has allocated \$30 million to construct warehouses and offices at an Australian military base at Bandiana in the state of Victoria, AFP reported.

The US stockpile, which is expected to reach full capacity by 2028, will initially be stored in

Melbourne before being moved to the base, according to the papers.

The US Navy is planning to hire around 110 engineers, mechanics, and safety experts via a global defence contractor to manage the arms depot, the agency said.

A spokesman for the US Marine Corps told AFP that its activities in Australia "support integrated global sustainment by maintaining

ready-for-issue equipment and supplies for operations and exercises across the Indo-Pacific."

The Pentagon has asked the US Congress for \$500 million in 2027 to position equipment and fuel across the Asia-Pacific to deter China. The first American stockpile in the region is expected to open in the Philippines later this year.

The right-wing Lowy Institute think tank has warned that Beijing now has the capability to strike northern Australia from outposts in the South China Sea. AFP pointed out in its article that the American stockpile in Victoria is being set up outside of the range of Chinese ballistic missiles.

Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Lin Jian rejected the

Lowy report, urging Canberra to stop hyping up the "China threat." Beijing is developing its military capabilities for defensive purposes and has no plans of targeting other countries, Lin stressed.

RT.COM 

Racial profiling in WA

Giovanni Torre

Questions in West Australia's state Parliament from Greens MP Brad Pettitt have revealed that more than half of the people strip searched by WA Police so far in 2025-26 were Indigenous.

The number of strip searches carried out by WA Police has increased by 44 per cent over the past seven years. Almost two thirds of strip searches carried out on women were on First Nations women.

Dr Pettitt, the Greens (WA) justice spokesperson, told *National Indigenous Times* the "sheer volume of strip searches being undertaken by WA Police, particularly when you consider the incredibly disproportionate impact the practice has on First Nations Western Australians, is deeply concerning."

"Over the last seven years the number of strip searches carried out by WA Police has increased by 44 per cent and is on track to break through 50,000 this year for the first time. Over the last decade, that number has more than doubled," he said.

"More than 50 per cent of all strip searches carried out in the financial year to date have been on First Nations people and almost two thirds of strip searches carried out on women were on First Nations women. These statistics are astonishing, given First Nations people make up just 3.5 per cent of the population here in Western Australia."

Kurin Minang human rights expert and law academic Associate Professor Hannah McGlade said the data provided "more evidence of racial profiling and discriminatory policing."

"The Police Commissioner, Police Minister and the

Attorney General need to start taking responsibility for this shocking state of affairs," she said.

"We have seen it with police dog attacks, we have seen it with road stops: there is a pattern of racial profiling.

"Women making up more than half of the strip searches is horrific."

A WA Police spokesperson said strip search numbers "reflect operational activity, including custody volumes, enforcement activity and lawful use of search powers."

"Police may conduct strip searches under relevant legislation where it is lawful and necessary, based on the circumstances and reasonable suspicion that evidence may be concealed.

"The decision to conduct a strip search is based on the circumstances of the incident and takes into account antecedents, criminal history and behaviour. Age, sex, and race are not factors in the decision to conduct a strip search."

The spokesperson said the number of strip searches conducted has increased in recent years "due to the significant rise in the number of offenders processed."

Dr Pettitt said there is "very little accountability and transparency around search practices and very little public information about how and when police use strip searches."

"Rest assured I will be following this up in Parliament," he said.

"What is clear is that this is just more evidence that the Cook Labor government is the most authoritarian Labor government we have ever seen."

National Indigenous Times 🇺🇸

PEACE NOTES

Denis Doherty

US BASES

An article in *Covert Action*, "US Military Bases around the world are facing growing protest from an emboldened antiwar movement" by Jeremy Kuzmarov, came to our attention.

The article covered actions against US bases in Ireland, Germany, Holland, South Korea, Philippines, and Australia. Many may be surprised that the US has a base in Ireland despite that country's neutral status, but conservative Irish governments have previously allocated Shannon Airport as US territory. The article covers a protest action at Shannon where an Irishman climbed on top of US Hercules with a hatchet and started damaging the plane. His actions caused US \$75 million worth of damage. He explained that "protests outside Shannon Airport, ... are growing in scale because of popular anger at Ireland's complicity in the Israeli genocide in Gaza and Iran War – along with previous illegal US and NATO wars like in Libya, Afghanistan, Iraq, and Serbia in the 1990s." In Australia there have been many actions at Pine Gap during the genocide in Gaza, and next month a demonstration is planned to protest this base being used to conduct a war against Iran.

In the Netherlands a prominent Dutch punk rock musician called Ilse Terheggen has written a song about the bases there. Here's a part of her song.

NATO power is tearing up the peaceful skies,
Fighter pilots ready to destroy thousands of lives,
American war-heads authorise the threat,
More pollution, more weapons, more war, more murder, more profit.

JUST AND EQUITABLE

Some years ago, the US put out two key documents about its position in the world, one called 'Joint Vision 2020' and the second 'Project for a new American Century.' The Joint Vision document introduced the term 'full spectrum dominance,' which basically stated that the US will dominate in the underwater, surface water, land, air, and space domains. The 'Project' document laid the plans for the domination by the US of countries by military force if necessary. These documents spelled out the bellicose and hegemonic activities that the US intended to carry out. These documents are over 20 years old but influenced 'the forever wars' Trump railed against before starting another one.

In contrast, China has just released a document called 'More Just and Equitable Global Governance: China's Principles, Proposals and Actions.' It puts forward proposals to strengthen the UN and for all to follow International Law. This document is online and covers 37 pages.

It is essential reading for peace and political activists. In one small section called 'The Law of the jungle seriously undermines the International rule of law' the document states that "unilateralism and hegemonism cause only grave harm, openly trampling upon international law and the basic norms governing international relations." China goes on to explain what it is doing and what it is encouraging others to do so we can have a more peaceful and stable world.

China is insisting that it is part of the Global South and promotes South to South trade and exchanges. Meanwhile Australia's Defence Minister Richard Marles says in quivering tones someone may attack our sea lanes so we must have nuclear powered submarines. The object of these suggestions is promoting better global governance. Where's the threat and where's the advantage in increasing military spending?

AUKUS Public Enquiry

<https://aukuspublicinquiry.com/#tor>

All Party members and supporters are encouraged to check out the AUKUS Public Enquiry website. A branch can send a submission to the enquiry; members should register to attend the hearings. This move puts into action the following statement from our recent Party Congress on 'Work in the peace movements for peace and tearing up the AUKUS agreement.'

AUSTRALIA-CUBA FRIENDSHIP SOCIETY PRESENTS:

CANBERRA PREMIERE
14 AUGUST
6:30PM

FIDEL UP CLOSE
AN INTIMATE PORTRAIT OF FIDEL CASTRO

14 AUGUST 6:30PM
NATIONAL FILM AND SOUND ARCHIVE, ACTON
Tickets \$17/\$30, scan QR to purchase

A FILM BY GABRIEL BERISTAIN ROBERTO CHILE AND EDUARDO FLORES

VEDADO FILMS RTV COMERCIAL ODESSA FILMS MEXICO

Not the shakeup

Warren Smith
MUA Deputy National Secretary

Many people are rightly angry about the direction of politics in Australia: angry with Labor and angry with the Liberal-National Coalition. Given Australia's wealth as a nation, and the squandered opportunities for ordinary working class people to improve their lot, that anger is completely justifiable.

For a nation that claims values of “a fair go” and sharing, the reality is stark and blows away any notion that these so-called values are implemented by the major political parties. This includes One Nation, whose policies on this front offer not only more of the same but something worse. They are all part of a system that develops laws and policies favouring owners of capital over working-class people.

WHO OWNS WHAT

The richest 10 per cent of households in Australia own around 45 per cent of all wealth.

The next 30 per cent own around 38 per cent of all wealth, and the bottom 60 per cent of households own a mere 17 per cent.

Australia's 131 billionaires – about 0.001 per cent of the population – hold around 2.9 per cent of all household wealth.

In other words, 131 *individuals* have as much wealth as the poorest 2.8 million *households* combined.

Since 2020, the wealth of Gina Rinehart, Andrew Forrest, and Harry Triguboff, Australia's wealthiest individuals, has doubled – not from their own hard work but through ownership and investment – at a rate of around \$1.5 million per hour.

Workers' wages have in most cases gone backwards, or where workers are highly organised and have economic leverage, have only just kept pace.

So if you're critical of the ALP, Liberals and Nationals, and for justifiable reasons, that anger should also be directed at One Nation, who are part of a system that favours the rich.

The political elites compete for power over a system they do not control but are expected to manage in the interests of billionaires and corporations.

The billionaires and corporations can move them on when they don't toe the line.

The real powers behind capital use massive monopoly media power and sophisticated campaigns based on blaming minorities and causing division through misinformation to maintain control of a system that works for them, not for us.

ONE NATION LINKED TO BOSSES AGAINST WORKERS

The evidence that One Nation is part of this gang of thieves is obvious.

If you move past the blame game, racism, and fake culture wars, and look closely at One Nation's actions in parliament, you see the real story.

- This is their record:
- Opposed increases to minimum wages



Pauline Hanson in plane donated by Gina Reinhart. Photo: Aviationbystirling – wikimedia.org (CC BY-SA 4.0)

- and wage-setting changes that benefit low-paid workers.
- Attacked wage rises for early childhood educators and publicly opposed minimum wage increases for millions of workers whose pay is tied to the award system.
- Supported cuts to Sunday and public-holiday penalty rates.
- Voted against “Same Job, Same Pay” for labour hire workers.
- Voted against stronger rights for casual workers, including better pathways for conversion from casual to permanent.
- Opposed a stronger definition of ‘casual’ tied to the reality of work rather than just the contract.
- Opposed measures to stop the ‘permanent casual’ rort and ensure access to arbitration when bosses refuse conversion.
- Backed in Morrison government changes that locked in an employer-friendly casual definition, stripped long-term coal casuals of court-recognised rights to leave entitlements, and blocked access to arbitration on casual-to-permanent conversion.
- Voted against reforms to increase workers' bargaining power, including:
 - Laws to stop employers terminating enterprise agreements during bargaining to force wage cuts.
 - Laws to ban pay secrecy so workers can organise around fair pay.
 - Stronger rights for workplace delegates and better right-of-entry provisions to tackle wage theft.
- Sided with the Coalition on key Fair Work changes, including allowing workers to be forced to vote on permanent cuts to pay and conditions with only 24 hours' notice.
- Voted against making industrial manslaughter a criminal offence.
- Voted against expanding the Asbestos Safety and Eradication Agency's role to include silica.

- Voted against better rights for gig workers and against measures to keep transport workers safe.
 - Opposed provisions intended to ensure workers don't go backwards during enterprise bargaining, effectively siding with employers' ability to strip conditions.
 - Made deals with the Coalition that cost mineworkers tens of millions in entitlements.
 - Backing on-paper “casual” definitions that allow employers to keep workers permanently insecure while avoiding proper leave and redundancy obligations.
 - Called for stronger boss powers to sack workers “on the spot” over alleged misconduct.
 - Used rhetoric about unions and workplace laws that frames workers as “lazy” and “not wanting to work,” and calls for an “overhaul” of industrial relations to make dismissal easier and roll back entitlements – a position unions and the ACTU describe as openly anti-worker.
- You get the picture: this mob are not the solution.

CULTURE WARS

First, we need to understand what culture is.

Culture is not just “art and ideas.” It is the way a society's dominant economic class organises and shapes meanings, values and everyday life to maintain its rule.

The ruling class uses culture – media, education, religion, art, law, and popular entertainment – to normalise its power, make exploitation seem natural or invisible, and win consent from the oppressed.

Economic relations shape cultural life: what's possible, what's rewarded, what's censored.

Culture is a key ideological apparatus. It spreads ruling-class ideology, including individualism, racism, nationalism, and sexism, so workers blame themselves or

each other, not the system. At the same time, social culture is full of contradictions.

Workers create their own cultures of solidarity, struggle and resistance through songs, stories, humour, rituals, union traditions and subcultures.

At work and across organised labour, culture tends to emphasise collectivism, mutual dependence, trust, discipline, safety and loyalty to the collective.

In the maritime industry and many others, culture is a form of working-class self-organisation, reflected in picket lines, delegate structures, stop-work meetings and international solidarity – all ways workers turn shared conditions into class power to improve our lives.

Bosses try to break that culture through labour hire, automation, anti-union laws, racism, sexism, and competition between sections of workers.

A militant union culture has to consciously fight for unity across job type, race, and gender, otherwise the ruling class can break solidarity and turn workers against each other instead of against exploitation and their real enemy, the bosses.

One Nation is trying to smash that culture in favour of employers.

MULTICULTURALISM AND THE MYTH OF A MONOCULTURE

Australia's national identity has for a long time recognised, although not without right-wing contention, that it is a multicultural country and society.

The genesis of official multicultural policy dates from the Whitlam government and was a part of a broad rejection of the historic White Australia policy and recognition of First Nations rights.

Beyond adopting elements of different national cultures in a cohesive way, the usual Australian understanding of multicultural also includes working-class culture and the co-existence, albeit with contradictions, of ruling-class culture and working-class culture.

**openly anti-worker ...
this mob are not
the solution**

we're looking for

Multiple cultures exist in society whether we like it or not.

Multiculturalism as the adopted cultural norm and government policy of Australia is a developing process through which a new culture emerges from the interaction and coalescing of the various cultures present in the community.

Something new develops out of the positive cultural contributions of migrants to broader Australian society, and the old British colonial culture is reshaped.

First Nations culture, the true original Australian culture, was systematically smashed by colonialism but still makes a contribution to multiculturalism. It should make a greater and more dominant contribution.

This new multiculturalism encompasses language, food, art, religion and celebrations, and is shared with all Australians. It seeks to stop the negative processes of assimilation and the imposition of an Anglo-Saxon cultural stereotype.

One Nation repeatedly portrays multiculturalism as a "failed concept" that erodes a supposed core Australian culture, linking it to immigration, housing pressures and "radical Islam."

In reality, One Nation's monoculture project is built around "whiteness" and white supremacy. It is a dangerous fascist concept that creates division amongst workers. Monoculturalism seeks to undermine acceptance of different religions and languages in the community.

The bottom line is that religious, language and cultural differences pale into insignificance when we consider the exploitation of working people of all ethnicities, cultures, dialects, and backgrounds by employers.

Monoculturalism backs in the criminal distribution of wealth in this country.

It divides and is an effective tool for employers to push back the organisation and struggle of working people against greedy corporations and billionaires.

One Nation, as the champion of these ideas, is leading the fight on behalf of the bosses.

IMMIGRATION

Australia moved from an overtly racist immigration monoculture policy to official multiculturalism in the 1970s. Today's "monoculture" rhetoric is essentially trying to wind that back.

This is a political push to restore elements of the old White Australia policy that treats diversity as a threat rather than a fact of life. Australia's population is now clearly multi-ethnic and multi-faith, built on post-White Australia migration. We are better off for it.

Across all the arguments against immigration and for a monoculture, or more accurately the restoration of the White Australia policy, there are three underlying themes. They are genuine social problems, insecure work, and underfunded services. The cause of these problems are the policies of government catering to the wealthy elite.

When housing is a problem you build more houses, public houses. Generations of Australians grew up in public housing but it is rarely talked about now being replaced by terms such as affordable housing.

Insecure work is a result of anti-union neoliberal laws that have destroyed union density and curtailed the ability of workers to take industrial action.

Services being underfunded is not caused by immigration but by governments adopting neoliberal and market-based solutions to social issues. Examples of this are poverty level pensions, underfunded hospitals and schools and cuts to the NDIS while at the same time having the finances to spend \$380 billion on nuclear submarines that tie us into the US war machine and make us all less safe. A portion of this war spending could fix every one of these issues with plenty left over.

To deal with these specific problems through directing anger at migrants and refugees plays directly into the playbook of the far right. The parties of government are now being threatened by the monster they have created by delivering years of austerity and neoliberalism. The anger should be directed at the housing speculators, landlords, bosses, and corporations who were the drivers of such policies.

These same forces have then developed this mythical "Australian identity" which is defined in white, Anglo-Christian terms, then used as the yardstick to judge and exclude everyone else. The contradiction is the majority of Australians still come from white European backgrounds and many of them have fallen for blaming other victims based on racist assumptions and not the real culprits of this social theft.

A UNION PATH FORWARD

When Pauline Hanson argues for a monoculture and against immigration these are racist arguments that deeply hurt our fellow workers and union members. They undermine our ability to campaign for better wages and services because we are too busy blaming each other. Our focus needs to be on the real problems.

The alternative to billionaire politics and racist culture wars is a united working-class movement that fights for public ownership and democratic control of the key sectors that dominate our lives such as housing, energy, transport, health, and education. Social need, not private profit, should set the priorities.

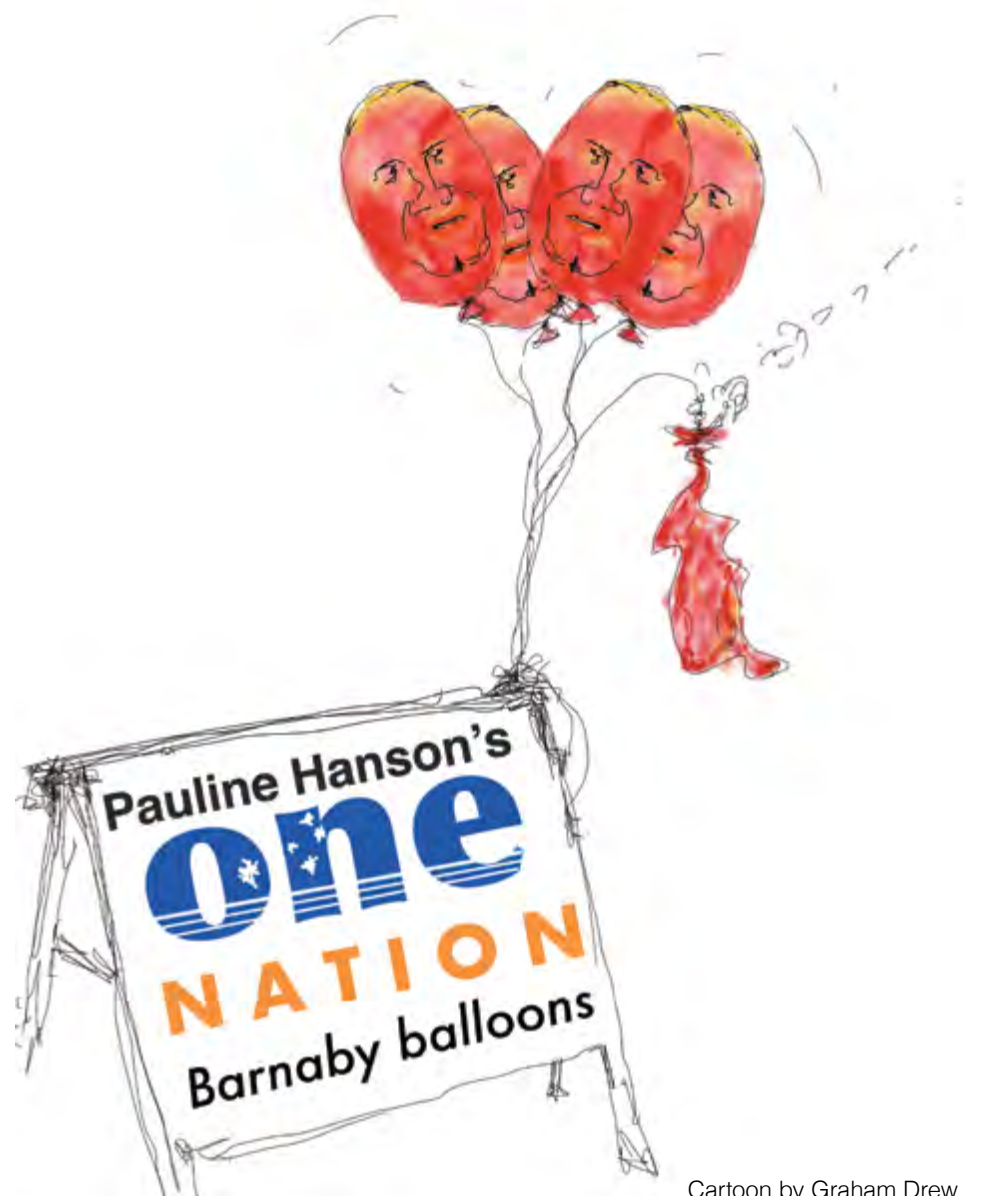
Instead of tax cuts and subsidies for corporations and war machines, a serious program would redirect wealth into massive public housing construction, fully funded public hospitals and schools, liveable income support, and a publicly owned renewables plan that delivers secure, union jobs while protecting the planet.

Building that kind of program means strengthening unions and workplace organisation, winning real rights to strike, expanding collective bargaining, and restoring sector-wide agreements.

To break the billionaire media grip and the weaponisation of racism, there needs to be a broad united front of unions, community organisations, First Nations, migrant, and anti-racist groups committed to defending multiculturalism, opposing fascist and far-right forces, and insisting that an injury to one is an injury to all. ✖



Pauline Hanson. Photo: jfish92 – wikimedia.org (CC0)



Cartoon by Graham Drew

monoculturalism backs in the criminal distribution of wealth in this country

The 50-year struggle – documenting American unions

Graham Holton

The history of labour movements in the United States is complex, achieving victories after tough struggles in the workplace and on the picket lines. Over the past fifty years private-sector union membership in the United States has fallen to under 7 per cent. Unions have a hard time even existing in the US, as the recent struggles to establish a union for Amazon workers have shown.

Hollywood films deliberately avoid or underplay the important role of unions. They are marginalised, portraying union members as stereotypical tough working-class men, underplaying the important role organised labour has made in improving the lives of millions of Americans. Hollywood films rarely consider issues such as wages, workplace safety, or collective bargaining, instead putting forward the image of the ‘self-made’ millionaire.

Hollywood films offer a jaundiced view of unionists as thugs, as in *On the Waterfront* (1954) and *Kill the Irishman* (2011). There have been rare exceptions such as *Norma Rae* (1979), starring Sally Field, which follows textile workers forming their union. *Matewan* (1987) dramatises the 1920 coal miners’ struggle in West Virginia. These are two of the most significant American films dealing with the working class and organised labour.

Harlan County, USA (1976) is one of the greatest documentaries ever made on the US union movement. The Academy Award-winning cinema vérité documentary by Barbara Kopple follows the harrowing 1973 Brookside Strike against the Eastover Coal Company in Kentucky. The coal miners and their families fought for safer conditions and union recognition. In the following fifty years what have union documentaries achieved?

Union Maids (1976) is an important study on women’s labour history. It follows three women who organised industrial unions during the Great Depression. *The Wobblies* (1979) is an oral history of the Industrial Workers of the World, featuring veterans of the radical union movement. *The Last Pullman Car* (1983) chronicles steelworkers’ attempts to save the historic Pullman rail-car factory in Chicago.

American Dream (1990), also by Barbara Kopple, examines the heartbreaking 1985-1986 Hormel meatpackers’ strike in Austin, Minnesota, exploring the internal battles between workers and union leadership. *Dolores* (2017) examines the life of Dolores Huerta, who co-founded the first US farm workers’ union with Cesar Chavez. They expanded the labour fight into a platform for civil rights and feminism. Union-related films include *Final Offer* (1987), Michael Moore’s *Downsize This!* (2002), *Bisbee ’17* (2018), and *An Injury to One* (2003).

The best recent documentary is *Union* (2024), an important account of Chris Smalls establishing the first union at an Amazon warehouse in Staten Island. It tracks the Amazon Labor Union (ALU) from its earliest organising attempts to the historic 2022 vote at the JFK8 warehouse. Workers campaigned in parking lots, bus stops, break rooms, showing the human cost of fast shipping. Amazon’s immense wealth (including Jeff Bezos’s Blue Origin space-flight) is juxtaposed with the precarious life of exhausted warehouse workers boarding buses at dawn. It documents Amazon’s union-busting tactics, using surveillance, intimidation, and mandatory ‘captive-audience’ meetings. High on Films called it a ‘keenly observational digital portraiture’ of one of the most significant labour movements of the 21st century.

While unions have played an important part in US public life, the impact of union documentaries has been uneven. Since 1976 US documentaries have helped expose social problems, record historical experiences, amplify marginalised voices, thereby hoping to influence political and cultural change. They created a visual record of workers’ struggles, preserving workers’ voices that might otherwise have been forgotten. Labour documentaries serve as archives and as arguments for the continuing relevance of unions in the class struggle.

The achievement of these documentaries is that they ensure that the experiences, victories and defeats of workers remained visible to today’s viewers. They inspire new union movements and class struggle in a country in which the major corporations are worth US\$82 trillion, while nearly 11 per cent (36 million) of the population live in poverty. ★



Harlan County, USA (1976)



Union Maids (1976)

New ways of being together

Leo Boix

At a time when artificial intelligence, ecological collapse, and resurgent authoritarianism are forcing us to rethink what it means to be human, three remarkable new books imagine alternative ways of living together.

Though radically different in form – a Caribbean science-fiction epic, an international anthology of trans poetry, and a queer rewriting of Greek myth – all three challenge the isolated, competitive individual at the heart of capitalist modernity. Instead, they propose collective consciousness, chosen kinship and radical interdependence.

Luis Othoniel Rosa’s *Animal Spiral* is a novel that arrives from somewhere beyond the boundaries of contemporary fiction. “Madness is right, that’s what I mean to say,” it begins, before introducing Unraa, a figure whose very presence causes cameras to tremble. From there, the novel unfolds into an astonishing four-century spiral through Puerto Rican, Caribbean and post-human history.

At its centre is the Animal, a collective consciousness born when two middle-aged streamers in Bayamon become the first human

beings to connect their minds through translucent cables. What follows is a dazzling procession of revolutions, floating libraries, hybrid species, artificial intelligences, and planetary transformations. Rosa imagines consciousness itself as a commons, shared across bodies and generations rather than confined to private property.

The novel’s brilliance lies in its political imagination. Beneath the surrealism and technological delirium runs a sustained critique of colonialism and capitalism. Puerto Rico’s history of exploitation becomes the backdrop for a meditation on collective liberation. The result is funny, terrifying, ironic and utterly original – a novel that makes most contemporary science fiction seem timid by comparison.

Questions of transformation and survival animate *Splendor: Trans Poets*, a superb anthology gathering poets from Argentina, Denmark, South Korea, Norway and Canada. In a political climate where trans lives are relentlessly scrutinised and legislated against, these poems insist upon existence itself as a form of resistance.

Among the collection’s highlights are the poems of Argentine Camila Sosa Villada, translated by Kit Maude. “This is an ode to

my ugliness,” one poem begins, celebrating a body that history has taught itself to despise. Elsewhere, in the magnificent Travesti Witchcraft, the poet arms herself “against death, horror, and poverty,” transforming vulnerability into collective strength. These are not poems of victimhood but of enchantment and endurance.

As Rickey Laurentiis writes in his luminous introduction, the anthology participates in a shift of light. Across its pages, identity appears not as something fixed but as something continually becoming. The poems reject the violent demand to justify existence. Instead, they insist that trans people have always been here, carrying languages, memories and futures that the dominant culture struggles to comprehend.

A similar act of reclamation animates Chilean-Italian Roberto Salvador Cenciarelli’s exquisite *How to Repair an Echo*. Reimagining the myth of Theseus and the Minotaur as a queer love story, Cenciarelli transforms the labyrinth from a site of punishment into a domestic landscape of care, desire, and waiting.

His Minotaur is not a monster but a lover making lentil soup, baking pumpkin pie, and laying the



table for someone who may never arrive. “At night, I wait for you at home, pour you soup in a bowl with my favourite ladle,” he writes. The line captures the collection’s peculiar magic: myth collapses into intimacy. Heroism gives way to tenderness. Violence lingers, but as memory rather than destiny.

The poems understand that queering a myth is not simply changing its ending; it is changing the terms by which we understand power, desire and belonging. The monster, after all, was never the monster.

Taken together, these three books feel like interventions into our present political moment. Rosa imagines minds linked beyond

ownership and nation. The poets of *Splendor* reclaim bodies and identities from systems determined to regulate them. Cenciarelli rebuilds one of Western culture’s foundational myths around care rather than domination. In an era organised around competition, extraction and fear, these books remind us that another world begins with connection.

Whether through shared consciousness, chosen identity, or queer intimacy, they insist that freedom is never something we achieve alone.

Morning Star ★

What is the secret of the Communist Party of China's long-term governance?

Xiao Qian
Chinese Ambassador to
Australia

This year marks the 105th anniversary of the founding of the Communist Party of China (CPC). Over the past century, the CPC has grown from a small party of 57 members into the world's largest governing party with significant global influence, with more than 101 million members, over 5.4 million primary-level organisations, and a mandate to govern a country of more than 1.4 billion people.

Over the past 105 years, the CPC has led China to rejuvenation from the brink of subjugation. Since the introduction of the reform and opening up policy, China, under the leadership of the CPC, has accomplished in just over 40 years what took developed countries centuries to achieve, creating the two miracles of rapid economic growth and long-term social stability.

Some people have long maintained a critical stance toward the CPC, as Western democratic theories lack a paradigm for the long-term governance of a single party. Failing to understand the CPC and unwilling to observe China up close, they often vacillate between the so-called 'China collapse' and 'China threat' narratives.

In fact, the CPC has foreseen the challenges facing a large party in long-term governance long ago. In 1945, in a cave dwelling in Yan'an, the prominent democrat Huang Yanpei asked Mao Zedong how the Party could escape the historical cycle of rise and fall. Mao replied: through democracy, by letting the people supervise the government. Over 80 years afterwards, the CPC has developed a sound system of socialist democracy with Chinese characteristics, comprising democratic centralism and whole-process people's democracy.

Democratic centralism is a combination of centralism on the basis of democracy and democracy under centralised guidance. It covers democracy on elections, decision-making, administration, and oversight. Delegates to Party congresses at all levels conduct competitive elections. Major decisions are made through voting and require a majority vote to pass. Beforehand, the opinions of Party organisations and members at all levels must be fully solicited. Party affairs are to be made public, so that members understand the decision-making process and are able to oversee leading Party cadres.

Whole-process people's democracy means that all people participate throughout the whole process of democracy, and democracy is institutionalised in law and embedded in every stage of election, consultation, decision-making, administration, and oversight.

The Constitution and laws guarantee citizens the right to vote and stand for election, as well as the right to criticise and make suggestions to any government office or public official. Deputies to people's congresses at the county level and below are directly elected; those at the prefecture level and above are indirectly elected. Before making major decisions, government should fully consult with different political parties, other government offices, and social organisations, ensuring that the people take part in the whole process of state governance.

A vivid example is the CPC Central Committee's drafting of recommendations for formulating the 15th Five-Year Plan in 2024, which took over eight months. During that period, state leaders and the drafting team carried out extensive field research. They listened to views from experts in economics, science, and technology, think tanks, and representatives of grassroots workers such as ride-hailing drivers and food-delivery riders,



Photo: Shen Hong – Xinhua News Agency

and received more than 3,113,000 online submissions.

These were distilled into over 1,500 constructive, representative suggestions across 27 categories. Once the draft was produced, opinions were widely solicited from government departments and figures both within and outside the Party; the text was revised repeatedly to fully reflect the interests of all sectors of society.

Entering the new era, in response to the risks of ideological slackness, lack of competence, alienation from the people, and passivity and corruption that may arise under the conditions of long-term governance, General Secretary Xi Jinping has provided the second answer to overcome the historical cycle of rise and fall—which is 'self-reform'.

Since the 18th CPC National Congress, the Party has exercised

full and rigorous self-governance, strictly implemented the central Party leadership's eight-point decision on improving work conduct, upheld a zero-tolerance stance against corruption, resolutely corrected any misconduct that harms the people's interests, and strengthened disciplinary inspection and oversight.

Adhering to the principle that Party discipline is stricter than state law, the Party has repeatedly affirmed that "those who wish to hold office must not seek personal wealth; those who seek personal wealth must not hold office." A complete set of institutional norms for the Party to continue working to purify, improve, renew, and excel itself has been forged through intra-Party regulations, ensuring that the Party remains progressive, clean, and capable of governance.

In 1945, the CPC established

wholeheartedly serving the people as its fundamental purpose. This requires the Party to have no special interests of its own and to represent consistently the fundamental interests of the overwhelming majority of the people. This has enabled the CPC to rapidly self-examine whenever it stumbled during its growth, ensuring that the Party is always on the path of self-revolution.

In 2020, a longitudinal survey for more than 10 successive years by the John F Kennedy School of Government, Harvard, found that 93.1% of the Chinese public expressed satisfaction with the central government and the CPC, and the figure had risen continuously over the years. History and the people have cast their vote, underwriting the CPC's long-term governance. ✪

Trust in the US plummets

Global confidence in the United States has declined significantly in recent years, with fewer people around the world viewing it as a reliable partner, according to a new survey by the Pew Research Centre.

The survey found that there were particularly steep declines in confidence in countries that have traditionally maintained close economic and security ties with Washington.

In Canada, confidence in the US as a reliable partner fell from 83 per cent in 2022 to 35 per cent in 2026.

Similar declines in confidence were recorded in France, Germany, and Britain, where the figures fell from 62 per cent to 27 per cent, 83 per cent to 39 per cent and 82 per cent to 49 per cent, respectively.

Australia also saw confidence fall sharply, from 79 per cent in 2022 to 37 per cent this year.

The survey also revealed widespread scepticism towards US President Donald Trump, with a median of just 23 per cent of adults who said they have confidence in his handling of world affairs.

President Trump received negative ratings on several major foreign policy issues, including tariffs, the Gaza conflict, Iran, Greenland, and the Russia-Ukraine conflict.

People's assessment of Washington's willingness to consider other countries' interests have also plummeted.

In Germany, respondents who said that the US takes other nations' interests into account dropped from 60 per cent in 2023 to 23 per cent in 2026.

Similarly, in Canada, Australia, and Britain, the figures declined from 37 per cent, 40 per cent and 49 per cent to 18 per cent, 13 per cent and 26 per cent, respectively.

The proportion of respondents who said the US respects personal liberty has reached its lowest level in several countries surveyed by Pew, including Australia, Canada, and Greece.

From 2021 to 2026, that figure fell from 57 per cent to 33 per cent in Australia, from 60 per cent to 34 per cent in Canada, and from 53 per cent to 36 per cent in Greece.

Overall favourable views of the US also declined in many countries over the past year, including double-digit drops in Indonesia, Italy, Nigeria, South Africa, South Korea and Turkey.

Some of the least favourable views came from predominantly Muslim populations, including Malaysia, Pakistan and Palestinians in the West Bank and East Jerusalem.

Israel, unsurprisingly, recorded the highest level of support among the countries surveyed.

The survey was conducted among 42,151 adults in 36 countries between 8 February and 13 May 2026. *Morning Star* ✪

IMPERIALISM

CPA CANBERRA BRANCH - CADRE EDUCATION SERIES

BALDESSIN PRECINCT BUILDING, 110 ELLERY CRES,
CANBERRA ACT 2601

6:00 - 7:30 PM

14 JULY - IMPERIALISM IN POWER

cpa.org.au

China-DPRK relations ramp up

Maximus M

From 8-10 June a meeting between Chinese General Secretary and President, Xi Jinping and the North Korean General Secretary and President of the State Affairs Commission, Kim Jong Un took place. It represents a significant development for the continued advancement of socialism in the 21st century.

The People's Republic of China (PRC) and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) have a long friendship that has been forged in blood during the 1950-1952 Korean War. Relations between the two countries have mostly been stable.

Xi Jinping's first out-of-state visit this year to the DPRK shows the significance of this event after hosting US President Donald

Trump, and Russian President Vladimir Putin, in Beijing.

The two countries have expressed the continuation of friendly relations, and Kim Jong Un stated that the bond between the two nations is unbreakable. According to Chinese media, the PRC and the DPRK have agreed to continue deepening strategic communication, and to expand practical cooperation. Xi Jinping has said that the meeting "open[s] up brighter prospects for the socialist cause of both countries." Earlier this year, bilateral trade between the two countries rose by 22% compared to last year.

During the two day long trip, there were no publicly announced new treaties that were signed and no major initiatives were declared.

According to China's *Global Times*, Xi Jinping reported that the two sides had in-depth discussions

on safeguarding peace and stability in the region and the world. Xi also said that the mutual understanding between China and the DPRK has become deeper and more comprehensive, and the future development direction has become clearer and more definite.

Despite the absence of formal agreements, Xi Jinping stated that China and the DPRK are at a "new historic starting point." For his part, Kim said that Xi's visit was a complete success, sending a positive message to the world that the DPRK and China are further strengthening their friendly cooperation, and attracting widespread attention from various sides.

The two leaders also visited the China-DPRK Friendship Tower, a memorial to the martyrs of the Chinese People's Volunteers who assisted Korea in the war. 🇺🇸



Stone marking the border of the China and DPRK. Photo: Prince Roy – flickr.com (CC BY 2.0)



Global Briefs

BURKINA FASO: Burkina Faso has broken off diplomatic relations with France, its former colonial ruler, citing violations of sovereignty, foreign interference, and worsening bilateral relations. "The essential conditions for promoting relations based on mutual respect, reciprocal trust, respect for the principles of non-interference in internal affairs, and national sovereignty are not in place," stated Burkina Faso's Communications Minister. It was further stated that France was supporting "subversive networks" and "terrorists."

UK: Housing campaigners are calling on the next Prime Minister to introduce rent controls to tackle the cost-of-living crisis. The Renters' Reform Coalition – an alliance of 18 major housing charities and renters' unions – says that capping rent inflation is crucial as rents have grown faster than wages in 11 of the past 15 years.

SERBIA: Serbia's President Aleksandar Vucic announced that he would resign his post within weeks, paving the way for early elections. Vucic did not specify the exact date for his resignation or the dates for early parliamentary and presidential elections. There have been ongoing demonstrations triggered by the collapse of an awning at a railway station in Novi Grad in 2024. Sixteen people lost their lives there. The protesters linked the disaster to systemic corruption and weak oversight of public infrastructure projects. There is speculation that Vucic would try for the more powerful position of prime minister in the future.

CUBA: 24th International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties will take place on 7-9 August in Havana under the slogan: "Defending and honouring the legacy of the Cuban Revolution on the centenary of Fidel's birth; deepening solidarity with socialist Cuba, strengthening our joint actions, and uniting our forces for peace and against imperialist aggression."

SCOTLAND: The Scottish National Party has appointed nine major banks to advise on a bond scheme worth AU\$2.8 billion, leading to accusations that the government is breaking its own boycott of Israel. One of the banks, Barclays has long been a target of protests by boycott, divestment and sanctions (BDS) campaigners, with Palestine Solidarity Campaign research finding that the firm has lent \$117 billion to and holds \$40 billion of stock in nine firms supplying the Israeli military with weapons and technology that are central to its oppression and slaughter of Palestinians.

VANUATU: Australia and Vanuatu have just signed an agreement, called the Nakamal Agreement, which aims to strengthen economic cooperation while prohibiting foreign military bases in Vanuatu. The agreement commits Australia to providing greater economic support to Vanuatu amid increasing geopolitical competition in the region. Vanuatu has promised to "consult" with Australia before any agreements with China are signed.

YEMEN: Yemen's Deputy Foreign minister has warned that Israeli activities in Somaliland threaten Somalia's unity and the stability of the Horn of Africa. He accused the Somaliland leadership of transforming cities and ports into platforms for Israel's interests at the expense of the Somali people. The Yemeni official stressed that his country is closely following developments in the Horn of Africa and reiterated Yemen's readiness to cooperate with regional countries in maintaining regional security and stability.

AUSTRIA: Austria's Communist Party (KPO) has strengthened its position in Graz, the country's second largest city after securing 35% of the vote. The conservative Austrian People's Party (ÖVP) finished second, followed by the Greens. The far-right Freedom Party (FPÖ), which is the strongest party nationally, came fourth. The result is a significant victory for Mayor Elke Kahr, whose administration has governed since 2021. She has earned broad public support through policies such as housing affordability, public transport, healthcare, and social welfare. In short – dealing with everyday concerns of the people.

Special Guardian subscription offer:

10 issues for \$20

See subscription form page 15

OP-ED: Cuba's reforms deserve support

HF

Cuba has recently adopted reforms to its economy in response to the tightening blockade inflicted by the United States empire (see *Guardian* #2196).

The content of these reforms is in lifting some elements of state control over Cuba's economy in hopes of easing the pressure felt by the Cuban people, and for the state's survival against capitalist encirclement and military threats.

The revolutionary government has reaffirmed that these measures are to protect, not abandon Cuban socialism, and that the people's ownership and control of the fundamental means of production is maintained.

These decisions were not made in a vacuum. No socialist state has ever been built in peaceful international conditions. Cuba has been blockaded by the US since 1960. The Trump administration has made the blockade much worse. Cuban women are

having to give birth in the dark. That's the context.

Dialectical materialism – an analysis of the opposing forces and interconnections in the material world – teaches us to pay attention to the *particular* situations that exist under *universal* principles. What does that mean in practice? Over the past 65 years, the Cuban revolutionaries have taken the *universal* principles of Marxism-Leninism and adapted them to the *particular* context of Cuban society.

When comparing a utopian vision of communism to concrete reality, the real world looks far more boring, or could even be called a betrayal. Fortunately, any Marxist worth their salt does not use utopian arguments because utopias simply don't exist.

It's important to remember that Cuba is just under 145 kilometres off the coast of the world's deadliest imperialist power. Any attempt to blame Cuba for tactical retreats during the time of escalating military aggression is

geopolitical victim blaming. Not only that, thoughtless criticism of an oppressed nation at the wrong time may end up giving the imperialists ideological fuel with which to unleash their terror.

Cuba is not perfect and has never pretended to be. As with any human activity, there are flaws that should be discussed. However, any issues that do arise should be made for the sake of strengthening the revolution, not weakening it. Furthermore, those in the Western world must not have a paternalistic attitude towards the Cuban revolution, especially since Cuba has the experience of building socialism under the most difficult circumstances imaginable.

We in the capitalist world should look to Cuba for inspiration and courage that socialism can still be built despite all the odds against us. We must resolutely work to end the blockade and stand in material solidarity with not just Cubans, but all oppressed people worldwide. Only once the blockade is lifted, can the revolution truly flourish. ✨



May Day 2015 Revolution Square in Havana, Cuba. Photo: KH

Houthis warn over Israeli presence in Somaliland

The leader of Yemen's Ansarallah movement (also known as the Houthis), Abdul-Malik al-Houthi said Yemen is closely monitoring Israeli moves in Somaliland, warning that any Israeli military presence there would become a target for the Yemeni armed forces.

Speaking during Ashura commemorations, al-Houthi urged countries bordering the Red Sea to adopt a common position against Israeli activity in the region, stressing that Yemen "will not stand idly by" in the face of developments affecting the Gulf of Aden and the Bab al-Mandab Strait.

He also called for support for

Somalia against what he described as violations of its sovereignty, saying Israeli activities in Somaliland pose a broader threat to regional security.

Al-Houthi reaffirmed Yemen's commitment to the Palestinian cause, saying the Yemeni people remain steadfast in their "path of liberation and jihad" and that Sana'a (Yemen's capital) continues coordinating with its allies over any future regional confrontation.

He said Yemen "will not hesitate to do its duty in any new escalation of aggression in any arena," while reiterating opposition to what he described as the US-Saudi aggression, occupation and blockade of Yemen.

Al-Houthi also congratulated Iran on what he called its "great victory over the enemies of the nation," describing it as an important victory for the broader Axis of Resistance.

His remarks come amid growing controversy over Israeli-Somaliland ties after Israel recognised Somaliland in December 2025.

Earlier, Somaliland President Abdirahman Mohamed Abdullahi said he did not rule out the establishment of an Israeli military base in the territory following meetings with Israeli officials and the announcement of plans to open a Somaliland embassy in occupied Jerusalem.

Palestine Chronicle ✨

Locked out workers battle a billion-dollar bully

Luis Martinez and Cameron Harrison

Colorado: For years, workers at the Cargill beef plant in Fort Morgan, Colorado, have been forced to choose between their jobs and their basic human dignity. Denied permission to use the bathroom during shifts, some soiled themselves on the production floor rather than risk discipline.

Now, 1,700 members of Teamsters Local 455 are locked out of that same plant because they dared to reject a bad contract offered by management that would leave them unable to afford the very meat they process. The workers here at the Cargill facility are critical to processing millions of pounds of beef for American families nationwide.

"In a town as small and tight knit as Fort Morgan, Cargill Teamsters keep the economy running," the union said.

Cargill, the largest privately held corporation in the United States, booked nearly \$7 billion in profits last year alone. Yet its "last, best, and final" offer to the workers who built that fortune amounts to a paltry 1.82% average annual raise – a hike that doesn't even cover the rising cost of groceries, let alone rent or healthcare.

Cargill insists the offer was fair and that it bargained in good faith. But the company's actions – cutting off worker benefits, filing coercive statements, and now facing new unfair labor practice charges filed by the union – tell a much different story.

Cargill has touted a "\$33.4 million investment over five years" as a "generous offer." However, the details reveal a different story. In reality, that "investment" translates to hourly wage increases of just \$2.15 over half-a-decade.

According to Cargill's own figures, base wages currently stand at \$23.58. Under the contract terms proposed by management, that would rise to \$25.75 by 2031. That represents an average annual increase of roughly 1.82%, a rate that fails to even keep pace with inflation, meaning workers are actually losing money with the proposal.

Servando Shawn Payan, a business agent for Teamsters Local 455, told CPR News, that "with the wages that they were offered, they can't even afford to buy their own product that they work."

Since January 2021, research from the US Senate shows that monthly costs for Colorado families have risen by approximately \$1,250. The Cargill offer does not even come close to bridging that gap.

People's World (edited for space) ✨

PRESENTED BY INDEPENDENT AND PEACEFUL AUSTRALIA NETWORK | PROGRESSIVE INTERNATIONAL MOVIES | IPAN

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	TARNDANYA/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

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

communist.party.australia

www.instagram.com/communist.party.australia/

Far-right minister wins in Canada

Kimball Cariou

Not many people were paying close attention to the contest this spring for leadership of British Columbia's fractious Conservative party. That changed on 30 May, with the narrow victory of Kerry-Lynne Findlay. A former cabinet minister in Stephen Harper's Conservative government, the new leader of the Official Opposition in BC has deep links with far-right, racist, white nationalist movements which are gaining traction across much of western Canada.

Findlay is not a member of the current Legislature in Victoria. But if a member of her caucus resigns, that would open the door for a byelection and a much higher public profile for a politician whose views closely mirror Donald Trump's MAGA movement.

In her victory speech, Findlay declared that she is guided by the ideas of "faith, family, and freedom," a phrase frequently used by US Christian nationalists. The words eerily echo another slogan popularised by Adolf Hitler: "Kinder, Küche, Kirche" ("Children, Kitchen, Church").

Analysts warn that her slogans should not be dismissed as mistakes or misunderstandings. Her victory reflects the conscious strategy of fascist movements to seize on the opportunity created in 2024 by the implosion of BC's main right-wing, pro-corporate political party. After governing for sixteen years under Gordon Campbell and Christy Clark, the defeated BC Liberals rebranded themselves in 2023 as "BC United" in hopes of ousting the NDP.

That strategy backfired spectacularly, allowing room for the rapidly growing provincial Conservatives to push BC United out of the 2024 election. By that point, the Conservatives had been largely taken over by the far-right.

Findlay's rise has been quietly welcomed by some New Democratic Party (NDP) politicians, who calculate that she will be "too divisive" to win an election. That could allow the NDP to maintain its course under Premier David Eby, who has almost completely dropped any progressive social and economic policies in an attempt to appeal to centre-right voters. Analysts who study the rise of fascist and far-right "populist" movements in other countries point out that this approach by reformist parties like the NDP has often failed.

Findlay's husband Brent Chapman – the Conservative MLA for Surrey South – is among those who cultivate a wide range of conspiracies and lies. Chapman's well-documented record includes promotion of the infamous lie that the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting was fake, the Quebec City Mosque massacre was "suspicious," that residential school deaths are a "massive fraud," that Palestinians are "inbred," and so forth.

Findlay herself has been exposed for insinuations about antisemitic conspiracy theories about George Soros and Canadian Liberal politician Chrystia Freeland. (She later called her postings on this topic "thoughtless" and never paid any political price.)

People's Voice (edited for space) ✳



Half the Sky

Femicide, Guatemala's shame

GH

Guatemala has one of the highest rates of violence against women in Latin America, with Indigenous women especially vulnerable. The high rate of missing and murdered women and girls is closely tied to femicide, domestic violence, organised crime, trafficking, corruption, and impunity within the justice system.

According to the 2025 Human Rights Watch report, 48 per cent of Guatemalan women reported gender-based violence at least once in their lives. In the first half of 2024 civil society organisations documented the violent death of 206 women, with 44 per cent classified as femicides. Femicides increased by 14 per cent in 2025.

A number of organisations assist victims and their families. *Mujeres Transformando el Mundo* is a major feminist legal organisation that investigates abuses and supports survivors and their families. It conducts strategic litigation and runs support centres (CAIMUS) across Guatemala. *Grupo Guatemalteco de Mujeres* is one of Guatemala's oldest women's organisations. It monitors femicide laws, operates shelters and support centres, assists women reporting violence, and runs national campaigns against gender violence. Other organisations include *Asociación Generando Equidad, Liderazgo y Oportunidades, Observatorio de la Violencia* and the Forensic Anthropology Foundation of Guatemala.

Maya women face higher risks due to poverty, racism, geographic isolation, weak access to legal protection, and the legacy of Guatemala's civil war (1960-1996) between right-wing governments and leftist rebels. The thirty-six-year conflict was marked by extreme violence, widespread human rights abuses, and the genocide of the Maya population. Sexual violence against Indigenous women was used systematically by state forces and paramilitaries. Courts only began prosecuting these crimes in recent years.

Human rights organisations argue that violence against Indigenous women is the legacy of militarisation and racial discrimination. Researchers and feminist groups point to machismo and patriarchal culture, domestic violence, and economic inequality. The country's weak law enforcement and corruption allow gangs, organised crime, and human trafficking networks to operate.

Disappearances are a major issue among girls aged 13-17, who are disproportionately reported missing, linked to trafficking and sexual exploitation, gang violence, and forced relationships. The country has emergency alert systems for missing minors, but families and activists often criticise the inadequate police response.

Although Guatemala passed a major anti-femicide law in 2008, enforcement remains inconsistent. Specialised courts and prosecutors exist, but many cases are never fully investigated. Indigenous groups, women's organisations, and student movements regularly organise marches and memorials demanding justice for victims of femicide and disappearances. In 2017 a fire at the state-run 'Safe Home' shelter near Guatemala City killed forty-one girls who were locked in a classroom during a protest over abuse allegations. The tragedy became a rallying point against state violence and neglect.

President Bernardo Arévalo has addressed the violence against women, and broader criminal violence, through security reforms, anti-corruption measures, and changes to the judicial system. However, critics, including feminist groups and international human rights organisations, say investigations remain underfunded, rural access to justice is limited, witness protection is weak, and impunity is still extremely high.

The government launched the 'Plan Centinela Metropolitano' on 17 February to increase police and army presence in high-violence urban areas. Arévalo vetoed proposed reforms to sexual violence laws, arguing the legislation could criminalise consenting adolescents.

An interview with
President Miguel Díaz-Canel

Cuba After Castro

FILM SCREENING

NAARM-MELBOURNE

Friday 10 July 6pm

Kathleen Syme Library and Community Centre, 251 Faraday Street, Carlton

Support the *Guardian*
by donating to Press Fund

Subscription to **The Guardian**

- 12 months: \$150 (solidarity price) 12 months: \$100 (concession)
 6 months: \$100 (solidarity price) 6 months: \$75 (concession)
 Special offer: 10 issues for \$20 (new subscriptions only)

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

POSTCODE: _____

Pay by Cheque Money order (Payable to "Guardian Publications")

Phone on 02 9699 8844 or info@cpa.org.au or send to:
Guardian Subscriptions, 74 Buckingham St, Surry Hills, NSW 2010

or by credit card: Mastercard Visa *\$20 minimum on cards

Card# _____

Amount: _____ Expiry Date: ____/____ Date: _____

Signature: _____

Guardian

Editorial Office

74 Buckingham St, Surry Hills, 2010
Ph: 02 9699 8844 Fax: 02 9699 9833
Email: guardian@cpa.org.au

Editor:

Floyd Kermode

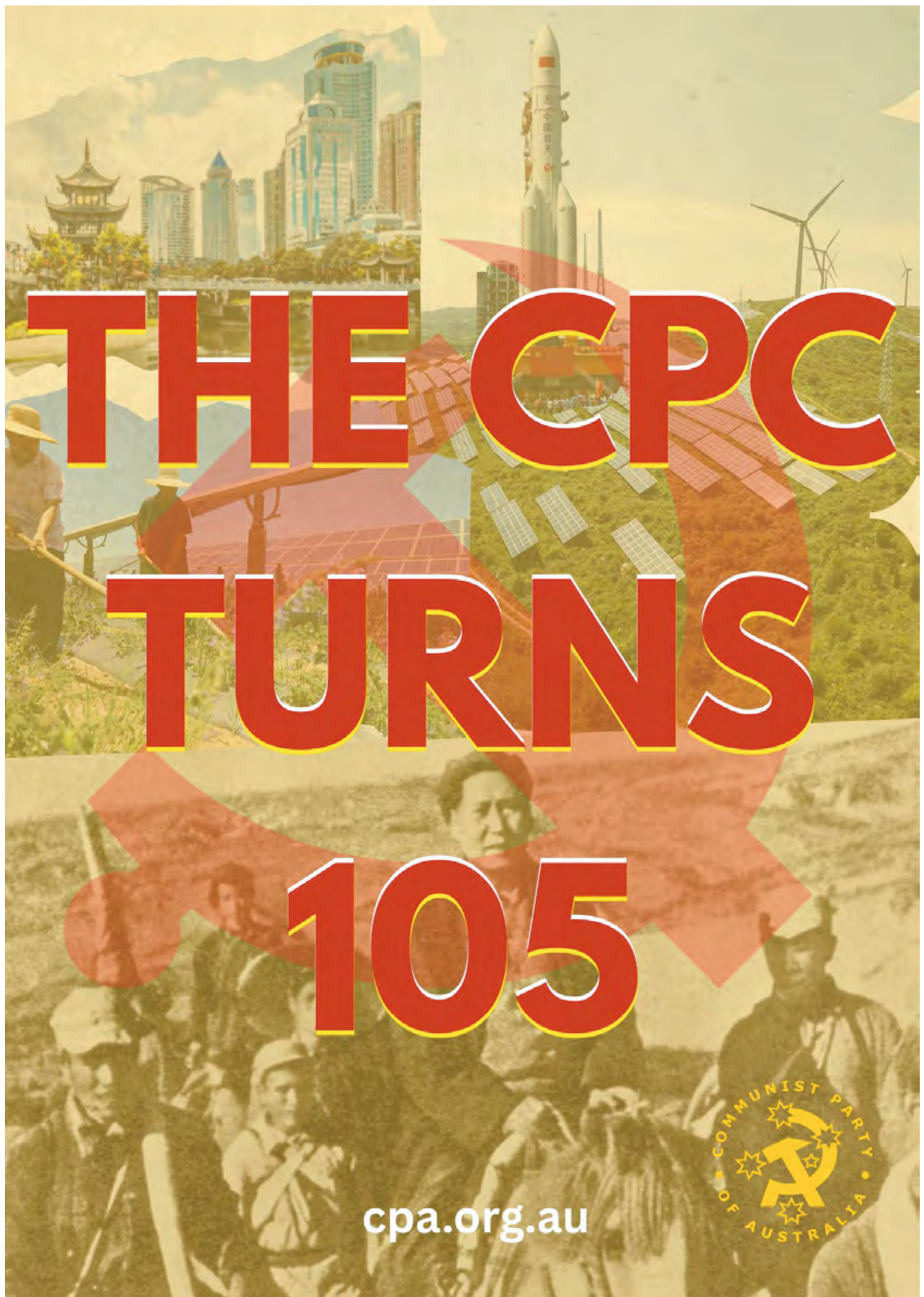
Published by

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



Communist Party of Australia

www.cpa.org.au

cpa@cpa.org.au

Head Office (Sydney)

74 Buckingham St,
Surry Hills, NSW 2010
phone: 02 9699 8844
email: info@cpa.org.au

General Secretary

Andrew Irving
andrew@cpa.org.au

Party President

Vinnie Molina
president@cpa.org.au

Media guardian@cpa.org.au
amr@cpa.org.au

Canberra act@cpa.org.au PO Box 35 Dickson ACT 2602

Darwin Vinnie Molina darwin@cpa.org.au 0419 812 872

Melbourne Andrew Irving cpavic@cpa.org.au
Box 3 Trades Hall, Lygon St, Carlton Sth, Vic 3053

NSW State Comm Christian Goopy nsw@cpa.org.au 02 9699 8844
74 Buckingham St, Surry Hills, NSW 2010

Perth Elly Hulm perth@cpa.org.au 0421 113 343
PO Box 98, North Perth, WA 6906

Qld State Comm 0499 476 540 qld@cpa.org.au

SA State Comm sa@cpa.org.au 0411 805 356 PO Box 56, Royal Park, SA 5014

Tasmania Andrew Irving tas@cpa.org.au 03 9639 1550

