

ASIO powers for repression

M Santos

“This legislation is without precedent ... its provisions potentially allow for the mistreatment of ethnic minorities, the suppression of dissent and the detaining and investigation of wholly innocent Australians ... Labor is determined to defend Australia’s hard-won democratic freedoms.”

That was Anthony Albanese speaking 2003 against the then Howard Coalition government’s so-called anti-terrorism amendments to the ASIO Act to expand the powers of ASIO.

There was such strong public resistance to this bill, that the government was forced to withdraw the legislation and negotiate amendments with its own backbenchers and the ALP.

In March 2003, when the bill was again before Parliament, Albanese compared the Howard Coalition government’s doctrine to the words of Hermann Göring, Hitler’s Reich Marshal, at the Nuremberg war crimes trials.

Albanese said it was “intellectually dishonest to exploit public fears and anxieties about terrorism to introduce laws for which no justification has been or could be made.”

“This draconian measure even applies to those not even suspected of any offence. In other words, a person may be detained and questioned by ASIO simply because of the activities of a family friend or a university group of which they were once a member.”

To get the legislation through

the Senate after months of wrangling, the Howard government was forced to include a sunset clause. The legislation was sold as a temporary, emergency measure in the aftermath of the 9/11 attack in New York. It passed with Labor’s support.

The sunset provision has been renewed on five occasions by successive Labor and Coalition governments.

Move on to August 2026, when media attention was focused on the NDIS cuts and gambling legislation, and the very same Albanese, with the support of the Coalition and One Nation, not only removed the sunset clause, making the Act permanent, but expanded ASIO’s draconian measures, further eroding “Australia’s hard-won democratic freedoms.”

The 2003 Act included the following provisions:

1. Detention powers

ASIO can compel any person – **even someone not suspected of any crime** – to attend for interrogation and detain them incommunicado for up to seven days. This includes children as young as 14. There’s no limit on number of new warrants for detention.

No charges have to be laid.

2. No right to silence

Refusing to answer ASIO’s questions, or giving false or misleading information, is a criminal offence carrying up to five years jail. This removes two of the most fundamental protections in the legal system – the right to silence and right against self-incrimination.

3. Restricted legal representation

While a lawyer may be present if approved by ASIO, their role is



heavily constrained:

- They cannot intervene in the questioning or advise clients on how to answer.
- They must surrender their notes before leaving.
- They can be removed if ASIO decides they pose a “security risk” – for example, if they might tell a third party the interrogation took place.

4. Secrecy provisions

It is a crime for a person to tell anyone – including family – that they have been detained and questioned, let alone any information about the questioning or the process of detention. This secrecy extends to the lawyer present. A breach of this provision carries a jail term of up to five years.

Liberty Victoria said that these

provisions “severely restrict the freedom of the press and the freedom of public discussion,” warning that the penalties “could enable a government to keep critical information sensitive to the government’s electoral prospects from the electorate during an election period.”

Continued on page 2

A fundamental principle of Australian law is that the authorities have to prove guilt. This legislation reverses that burden of proof.

3



AUKUS Pillar 2: autonomous vehicles

8



Communism: The long game

10



Nat Seeligson's Symphony for Peace

14



Cuba: crisis and the road to recovery

Guardian

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Crossing state lines

At first, it seems like a very Western Australian thing to do. Faced with a contested by-election in Secret Harbour, Labor put up a gas lobbyist for fossil fuel giant Woodside. A lot of people in Secret Harbour work for Woodside, but they work for the other side of the company, not the corporate side Labor's candidate came from (see page 5 this issue).

It isn't just about WA. The state is notoriously in thrall to large fossil fuel corporations, but doing what the big end of town wants doesn't stop at the state border. On a national scale, Australians are faced with parties 'of government' that might as well be a single party when it comes to choosing between the needs and wants of the people and the needs and wants of the large companies and their lobbyists.

Just look at federal Labor's record on gambling and fossil fuel companies. Prime Minister Albanese has never met a lobbyist he wasn't willing to help out. As for gambling, you will never get odds as good as those that Labor faced on the issue of banning gambling advertising and sponsorship. 81 per cent of voters wanted gambling ads off the internet. 87 per cent wanted a total TV ban on gambling ads during prime-time, while three quarters were in favour of a total ban on gambling ads. Albanese opted for the lobbyists.

Independent Senator David Pocock called it a "betrayal of all Australians." He was not wrong. He could have said the same about Labor's terrible record on fossil fuel expansion and carbon emission reductions.

The difference between the two parties of government, as Labor and the Coalition are often called, is that Labor wants to make capitalism slightly nicer, but not at the expensive of big profits for corporations, while the Liberal-National Coalition just wants to let big business do whatever it wants. On gambling advertising, the two parties are literally on a unity ticket.

That leaves the Greens and One Nation. The Greens struggle to be heard and are written off and marginalised by mainstream media.

PHON is backed to the hilt by Australia's richest woman. One Nation talks about the cost of living, but serves capital, not workers. The party presents itself as being for ordinary Aussies against "elites." It's significant that PHON had nothing to say about gambling advertising, despite the huge popularity of a total ban.

Pauline Hanson's party has a role to play in Australia. They're here as an alibi for capital, as a distraction from the real problems working Australians face.

The problem isn't the parties, it's the system. Australia is set up for big corporations to be the gorilla in the room that does whatever it wants. Labor pretends to be interested in making the gorilla behave itself. The Coalition acts as though giving the gorilla even more of what it wants than Labor does will make it civilised. One Nation wants workers to blame other workers, especially foreign ones, for real problems.

We need a system run by working people, the vast majority of Australians, for working people. Gas industry lobbyists won't do that. Blaming migrants won't help. Workers need real solutions to the cost of living crisis and the climate crisis. We're not going to get them from the Labor-Coalition duopoly or from Hanson's make-make believe.

Elections are important in Australia, but they are far from being the only game in town. Get into your union and make it strong. Get into anti-AUKUS activism and let's make this country genuinely independent. Consider joining or supporting the Communist Party of Australia as we work for real solutions.

ASIO powers for repression

Continued from page 1

5. Bypasses judicial warrants

Warrants for detention could be issued by an "issuing authority" including a member of the Defence Force, Australian Public Service employees, parliamentarians, Directors of Public Prosecution, or former judges or senior counsel. All unlikely to refuse ASIO's request.

6. 'Fishing expedition' risk

The powers enable ASIO to conduct broad 'fishing expeditions' against individuals, including activists, journalists, or political opponents. For example, ASIO could interrogate someone who attended a union or peace activist meeting and demand to know who said what. This information could then be passed on to other authorities and abused.

7. Reversal of the burden of proof

A fundamental principle of Australian law is that the authorities have to prove guilt. This legislation reverses that burden of proof. As the late Hannah Middleton said, people arrested "for some nebulous association with or assistance to a banned organisation would have to prove their innocence."

8. International human rights law violations

The ASIO powers breach Australia's obligations under international human rights law, including:

- Right to privacy – forcing non-suspects to answer questions
- Right against self-incrimination
- Right to freedom of expression – undermined by secrecy provisions
- Right to be free from arbitrary detention
- Reversal of onus of proof.

Former Independent National Security Legislation Monitor Roger Myles, a statutory office holder who independently reviews Australia's national security and counter-terrorism laws and could

make recommendations for law reform, concluded that questioning and detention warrants "are not proportionate to the threat of terrorism and are not necessary" and that secretly detaining persons "whether or not they are implicated in terrorism is a step too far."

Albanese's reference to "the suppression of dissent and the detaining and investigation of wholly innocent Australians" and references "democratic freedoms" could not be truer.

ASIO POWERS EXPANDED

In 2026 Albanese's amendments removed the sunset clause making the Act ongoing, and expanded ASIO's powers even further, increasing the potential for abuse.

The amendments include four new specific grounds for questioning:

- Sabotage
- Promotion of communal violence
- Attacks on Australia's defence system
- Protection of Australia's territorial and border integrity from serious threats.

'Promotion of communal violence or social cohesion' is aimed at humanitarian anti-genocide, pro-Palestinian protesters and commentators. The government portrays these humanitarians as undermining social-cohesion while supporting the Zionist lobby and Israel's genocide.

'Attacks on the defence system' are aimed at anti-AUKUS protesters and those opposing the Australia-US alliance and Australia's surrender of its sovereignty to US imperialism.

These provisions widen the scope for abuse and would not be added unless there was an intention to use them.

The NSW, Queensland, and Victorian Councils for Civil Liberties

jointly stated: "These powers need to be scrapped, not made permanent. Any government interested in maintaining its identity as 'democratic' would not have laws with such far reaching powers."

The issuing of warrants for interrogation has been amended, limiting those authorised to former judges acting in a personal capacity or the Attorney-General, the latter always acting on ASIO's advice.

This legislation is everything that Albanese said about the original bill in 2003 and even more dangerous and anti-democratic. Its scope is so wide that no one is safe from it. In particular it could be used against trade unions and their members, left and progressive political parties, the peace movement, environmentalists, and other activists.

Michael Cope, Queensland Council for Civil Liberties said, "these are the powers of a police state."

It shows just how far Labor has moved to the right in breach of international laws, democratic and human rights, and potentially Australia's Constitution.

ACTION

The Act must be repealed. The campaign must start now.

The bill has been passed, but there is a provision that requires the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security to review the amendments on the third anniversary of their commencement.

The broadest front of trade unions, left and progressive parties and individuals, peace activists, environmentalists, and other democratic forces from within the Labor Party must be built.

This legislation threatens everyone. It should be publicised.

The CPA calls for the immediate repeal of these draconian and repressive laws and the adoption of a Bill of Rights at the federal level. ✳

Survey Time! Prizes!

So that we know more about what the *Guardian's* readers think, we have made a survey. You can access it three ways:

1. Through this link <https://shorturl.at/kKVj4>
2. With the QR code
3. If you'd rather do a survey on paper, please email info@cpa.org.au or call 0424 638 601 and we'll mail one out

Anyone who does the survey and provides contact details will go in a draw for either some Cuban coffee beans or a \$50 shopping voucher.



AUKUS Pillar 2: autonomous vehicles

Graham Holton

Everyone knows about AUKUS and nuclear-powered submarines.

What has been little discussed in the media is AUKUS Pillar 2, which deals with advanced military technologies, especially unmanned combat aerial vehicles (UCAV), known as combat drones and autonomous technologies. Drone and autonomous-system technology are rapidly changing the character of war. The Ukraine and Iran wars have shown that drones are essential for surveillance, targeting, maritime patrol, and attack.

The Discussion Paper AUKUS Pillar 2 by Nova Systems argues that AUKUS is a catalyst to forge new collaboration on advanced technology. On the contrary, critics believe it will increase military competition, contribute to a regional arms race, and create challenges for international agreements.

The AUKUS Pillar 2 'signature project,' announced in May 2026, was concerned with uncrewed underwater vehicles. In June 2026 Australian, British, and American forces tested AI-controlled drone swarms, with up to six drones operating together.

Drone technology consists of information flowing between drone, sensors, communication networks, AI, and command-and-control. AUKUS Pillar 2 consists of an interconnected system of satellites, aircraft, ships, submarines, drones, AI, and commanders. This has increased Australia's dependence on the US for satellite communications, AI, secure data networks, electronic warfare, intelligence databases, navigation systems, and cyber capabilities.

The Royal Australian Navy has established a Maritime Autonomous Systems Unit, incorporating Ghost Shark (Large Autonomous Underwater Vehicle), Blue-bottle (Uncrewed Surface Vessel), and

Spear-tooth (Large Uncrewed Underwater Vehicle). These autonomous systems are capable of long-range surveillance and potential strike missions.

The technology allows a small number of very expensive crewed platforms to be supported by large numbers of inexpensive autonomous platforms. In June 2026 Australian, British, and American personnel used a common hub to exchange mission and sensor data in near real time.

This has raised concerns with our regional neighbours. The ASEAN foreign ministers' 2025 communiqué expressed concern about autonomous weapon systems, fearing an arms race and the destabilisation of regional security. ASEAN sees autonomous weapons as a political and strategic problem. ASEAN members feel the need to arm themselves with drones, and seek to strengthen international rules to govern autonomous weapons.

Singapore has established a dedicated counter Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS) organisation. In April 2026 Singapore's defence minister argued that ASEAN should connect systems, share information and establish common standards. Malaysia has its own interceptor drone, Indonesia is exploring defence cooperation involving drone technology, and Vietnam is strengthening its conventional anti-submarine capabilities and domestic defence industry.

From China's perspective, AUKUS Pillar 2 contributes to strategic competition, increasing military tensions, weakening regional trust, and challenging the existing international security framework. Beijing believes that long-term peace depends on inclusive regional cooperation, and not exclusive military alliances. The Australian government needs to use due care to avoid escalating into a regional technology arms race. 🇺🇸



Hiroshima Day Naarm/Melbourne 6 August 2023.

ASEAN ministers fear an arms race and the destabilisation of regional security

AUKUS and the ALP National Conference: Buying off the union movement

A Armstrong

AUKUS remains one of the biggest flashpoints in the labour movement. The 2026 ALP National Conference demonstrated the ALP's ability to use state mechanisms to co-opt unions into supporting a short-sighted military pact that inflames tensions with our largest trading partners and is unlikely to deliver what war hawks promise.

The usual suspects, the Shop, Distributive and Allied Employees Association (SDA), the Australian Workers' Union (AWU) and the Transport Workers Union (TWU) fiercely supported the pact.

Opposition came from the Australian Manufacturing Workers' Union (AMWU), the Electrical Trades Union (ETU) the Maritime Union of Australia (MUA) as well as the Labor Against War (LAW) grouping.

The Commonwealth and Public

Sector Union, (CPSU) and the United Workers' Union (UWU) adopted a neutral position, marking a reversal from their historical opposition. The lynchpin was the AMWU, which historically opposed AUKUS but tempered its stance after amendments on nuclear waste, First Nations consultation and the promise of 20,000 jobs. The ETU, MUA and LAW maintained their opposition.

A revealing fracture emerged within the AMWU. Former national

secretary Doug Cameron a founding member of LAW, faced off against his former protégé Stephen Conroy, who labelled anti-AUKUS forces as "appeasers." Cameron responded by calling Conroy's comment a "cheap shot" and "removed from reality." This exchange exposes how far the union leadership has been brought to heel.

What this conference shows is that the ALP is adept at buying off the union movement. Amendments and job promises are crumbs used

to secure compliance, while genuine debate is silenced. Motions from LAW were shut down before reaching the floor.

For communists, the lesson is clear. We must continue to organise within our unions, break away the leadership and force them to adopt a genuinely anti-imperialist approach to AUKUS. The fight against militarism and US hegemony must continue, both inside the labour movement and on the streets. 🇺🇸

Yoorrook final report, one year on: from truth telling to implementation

Peter Farmer

The Yoorrook Justice Commission was Victoria's and Australia's first formal truth-telling inquiry into historic and ongoing systemic injustices perpetrated against Indigenous people through colonisation, led by First Peoples.

Its final report was released one year ago. It delivered 100 recommendations on First Peoples injustices', after a four-year truth-telling inquiry. An RMIT expert says that more needs to be done to enhance public understanding and create institutional reform.

Dr Jeremie Bracka, of RMIT University School of Law says that one year on, the real challenge is no longer truth-telling, but implementation.

"History shows that even the most ambitious truth commissions can struggle to leave a lasting public legacy if governments, institutions and communities fail to sustain momentum.

"Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission sat for almost seven years, from 2008 to 2015, and produced 94 Calls to Action. Yet research and public commentary continue to suggest that many non-Indigenous Canadians remain unfamiliar with its findings and recommendations.

"Truth-telling, by itself, does not guarantee public understanding or institutional reform. That is the challenge Victoria now faces.

"The Yoorrook Justice Commission was unprecedented, not only as Australia's first formal truth-telling process, but as the first Indigenous-led truth commission anywhere in the world to operate alongside treaty negotiations."

Bracka's work focusses on three "practical" areas where he says reform is both necessary and achievable: police accountability, land justice, and the role of Victorian universities in truth-telling and repatriation.

"If Yoorrook is to become more than

a remarkable historical record, its recommendations must continue to inform public debate, policy development and institutional practice long after the Commission has concluded."

The Liberal-led opposition is vowing to tear up Victoria's treaty if it forms government after November's state election, so it's hard to be optimistic about the recommendations, or Dr Bracka's three areas.

In the area of bail, Yoorrook recommends that the government create a presumption in favour of bail, with obvious exceptions for murder and terrorism. 🇺🇸

Victorian doctors dispute update

A Kurihara

Recently doctors at Victorian public hospitals have commenced industrial action for the first time in 20 years.

After over 12 months of negotiations, doctors are fighting for a 30% pay increase over four years as well as improvements to conditions, safety, training and career development.

On 27 August, doctors from Northern Health, Mercy Health and Austin Health walked off the

job for four hours. In addition to these stopwork actions, doctors across the state are participating in a range of work bans.

The Stop Work action saw a huge turnout by doctors who want fair pay and working conditions.

Oncologist Belle Sassé spoke, saying that the megaphone was needed “because clearly the government hasn’t heard our message: Victorians deserve care from doctors who are rested and alert, not overworked and fatigued!”

“Doctors deserve fair pay and

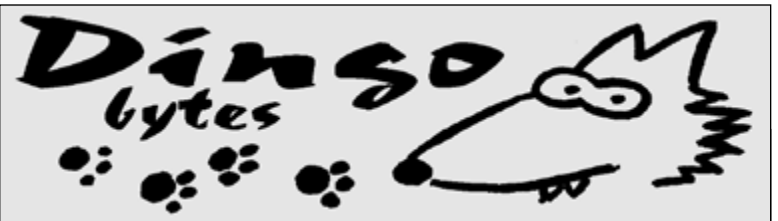
conditions, not the proposed cuts to overtime pay and other conditions!”

The Australian Medical Association and the Australian Salaries Medical Officers’ Federation (ASMOF) are looking for progress on pay and working conditions, including excessive and unpaid overtime, fatigue, job security access to leave and protection for training and career development.

ASMOF Victoria CEO Grant Forsythe said doctors wanted to resolve the dispute and see genuine progress at the bargaining table. ✖



Photo: AMA Victoria FaceBook



The Australian Education Union (AEU) has welcomed the release of a new study into misogyny in schools by Monash University, that outlines the increasing problem of persistent sexism and gendered violence faced by teachers.

The report, *Duty of Care: Teachers’ experiences of sexism, misogyny and sexual harassment in Australian schools*, was commissioned by the AEU and surveyed 2,668 AEU members. It is Australia’s largest study of misogyny and gendered violence in schools.

The findings highlight the growing influence of the manosphere on students, and the significant risk of teachers leaving the professions due to misogyny and gendered violence.

AEU Federal President Correna Haythorpe said the report was a sobering read that highlights the urgent need for actions by governments to address this growing problem.

“This research confirms what we know anecdotally, that there has been a disturbing rise in boys displaying misogynistic attitudes in schools, often fuelled by the manosphere, with increasing reports of sexism and gendered disrespect towards female students and teachers.

“Female teachers are reporting persistent misogyny, sexual harassment and a lack of respect from some male students, including language and behaviour that reflects disturbing beliefs about male superiority.

“This report highlights the significant impact this misogynistic behaviour is having, and the risks it poses to the teaching profession as a whole if it is not addressed by governments.

“This behaviour is disrupting girls’ education and driving teachers out of the profession at a time when Australia is already facing a teacher shortage. These issues cannot continue to be dismissed or ignored. Schools and school leaders should not be expected to deal with these issues alone. This is a systems issue that requires a systems solution.

“Schools need strong support from governments and education departments with clear policies, proper resourcing and strong leadership to challenge misogyny and support safe workplaces and learning environments.”

PARASITES OF THE WEEK: the Big Tech purveyors of ecologically and economically disastrous data centres. Public opposition to the centres is growing in Australia and elsewhere. In Britain opponents are demanding governments “slam the brakes” on data centres as communities risk water shortages.

UK Green Party leader Zack Polanski demanded stricter environmental rules be introduced and for locals to have a greater say on whether the centres are built in their areas.

Polanski said a moratorium on “energy-guzzling, water-guzzling data centres” was needed. He called it “outrageous” that data centres are treated as critical infrastructure at a time when three-quarters of the UK is in drought.

Tech justice and climate campaigners echoed these warnings, as the government pledged not to give Big Tech a “blank cheque” but maintained that a moratorium on new data centres would be a “disaster for jobs and national security.”

Foxglove is a tech justice non-profit organisation. Co-executive director Rosa Curling warned that without “urgent action” the public and the plant will “be left to foot the bill for the environmental and social costs of these energy-hungry giants.”

She warned that a single ‘hyper-scale’ data centre requires enough energy to meet the needs of millions of homes, producing “millions of tonnes of climate pollution.”

“Any action to pause or slow down this construction frenzy is positive, but the reality is that the government and local authorities already have the power to say that data centres can only be built if tech billionaires, not the British public, pay for their costs in full.”

The group demanded as a minimum that “no hyper-scale data centre should be given the go-ahead unless the developer also builds new renewable energy and storage to power it completely – and commits to not draining local water supplies.”

Meanwhile in Australia, Anthony Albanese has backed down on demands that states must power new AI data centres entirely using renewable energy.

Tasmania – Child Safety and Youth Justice workers walk out

Peter Farmer

On 26 August union members working in Child Safety and Youth Justice walked off the job to attend a stop work meeting. At the meeting, workers discussed concerns about the negotiation of their agreement – specifically the Tasmanian government’s proposal to cut the Child Safety Allowance by 40%.

The allowance is a measure to retain and attract staff. Cutting this allowance is an attack on workers’ conditions, and threatens the sustainability of Tasmania’s Child protection services.

The Health and Community Services Union

(HACSU) and the Community and Public Sector Union (CPSU)’s Tasmanian members working in Child Safety and Youth Justice say that the allowance plays a critical role in attracting and retaining the skilled workforce needed to keep children safe. At a time when the system is under significant strain, the government should be strengthening, not weakening, its ability to recruit and retain experienced staff, including support staff.

Union members made it clear that Minister Jo Palmer should immediately intervene to scrap the proposed allowance reduction and ensure the state can attract the relevant staff needed for a well-functioning child safety and youth justice system. ✖

Surge in support for Semaphore Club

Peter Farmer

There has been a nationwide surge in support for South Australia's much-loved Semaphore Workers' Club (SWC). The club, a beautiful seaside pub that hosts blues nights and other events, was broken into recently (see Guardian #2204, 31 August 2026), with some damage done.

Comrades involved in running the club put the word out, and around the country people raised a glass to the Semaphore Club and donated. The funding target was \$25,000, but more than \$28,000 has been raised to date.

An event was held at the SWC for people to show support. It was absolutely packed out. Ultimately, the attack has galvanised support around the club and raised its profile in the community, so it's a bit of an own goal by the fascists.

The club has used donations to replace stolen supplies and upgrade security. Although the funding target was reached within a week, the Semaphore Workers Club is always happy to take donations. Check their website for details.

(semaphoreworkersclub.com.au) ✳



Naarm (Melbourne) comrades raising glasses in solidarity.

Labor's Secret Harbour collapse

Emily Muagututia

The political landscape of Western Australia's outer suburbs changed course on the weekend of 29-30 August as the Australian Labor Party (ALP) suffered a humiliating defeat in the seat of Secret Harbour, ceding the electorate to Pauline Hanson's One Nation. For the working class, it is the latest symptom of a bankrupt political establishment that has abandoned workers' interests in favour of neo-liberalism and identity management.

Secret Harbour has historically been a safe seat for Labor. Yet in a display of breath-taking arrogance, the party machine chose Georgia Tree, a lobbyist for Woodside, one of Australia's largest gas corporations, as its candidate. Tree did not even live in the electorate.

For the workers of Secret Harbour, many of whom are on the other side of the

gas industry as fly-in-fly-out (FIFO) workers while struggling to pay mortgages, this candidate was a slap in the face. It signalled, in the clearest possible terms, that Labor no longer sees its constituency as workers to be represented, but as consumers to be managed, while its true loyalties lie with the fossil fuel barons who bankroll its campaigns.

Labor's loss is not a surprise to those who understand the material conditions of the region. Secret Harbour is a suburb of FIFO workers, tradies, and young families crushed by the housing crisis and stagnating wages.

For decades, the ALP positioned itself as the party of the working people, yet its recent record tells a different story. Under the Albanese government, Labor has continued the liberal agenda by subsidising fossil fuel giants, refusing to cap rents, and offering nothing but toothless rhetoric on cost-of-living pressures. The working class sees through this charade.

One Nation's victory, however, is not

a victory for the people. Hanson's party offers reactionary nationalism dressed in populist clothing. It scapegoats migrants, fans imperialist paranoia, and promises simplistic 'solutions' that avoid the fundamental contradiction, which is the capitalist system itself. The fact that desperate workers have turned to such a party reflects the complete ideological failure of Labor to provide a socialist alternative.

This by-election exposes the crisis of bourgeois democracy. The ALP, once a reformist vehicle for trade unionism, has fully integrated into the ruling-class apparatus. Its preference deals and campaign machinery are not geared towards helping working people, but towards managing their discontent while catering to the demands of big business.

When the people cry out for public housing, energy sovereignty, and worker control of industry, Labor offers means-testing and market adjustments.

One Nation's rise in Secret Harbour is a warning. The working class is angry, and rightly so. But without a vanguard party armed with scientific socialism, that anger will continue to be channelled into xenophobia and false consciousness.

The only genuine path forward is the organised struggle for state power, the nationalisation of key industries, and the destruction of the two-party duopoly that serves only the bourgeoisie.

Labor has lost Secret Harbour because it dropped any pretence of fighting for the workers a long time ago. The question now is whether the working class will choose to fight for itself, or whether it will continue to be led astray by the false promises of the far right. History offers its verdict that only a revolutionary break with the capitalist state can secure the future of the people. ✳

Sydney Ferries workers take action

Sydney Ferries workers have taken industrial action as frustration grows over private operator Transdev's failure to deliver a fair and sustainable wage offer to the committed and passionate workers who keep Sydney Harbour moving.

On Wednesday 2 September, members of the Maritime Union of Australia (MUA) stopped work and assembled for a mass members' meeting as part of escalating industrial action in their fight for a better Enterprise Agreement.

The action impacted ferry services across the Sydney network, including services operating to Manly, Circular Quay, and Parramatta.

MUA members are seeking a 5% wage increase, together with guaranteed annual increases in subsequent years that properly protect workers' wages against inflation and the rising cost of living.

MUA Deputy Branch Secretary Paul Garrett said workers had repeatedly gone above and beyond to keep the Sydney Ferries network operating and were now demanding that Transdev recognise their contribution.

"Our members kept Sydney Ferries running throughout COVID, dealt with a fleet of 13 overseas-built, defect-ridden vessels that were not fit for purpose, and have continued to work long and demanding hours to keep the public moving," Garrett said.

"They have always demonstrated their commitment to the job and to the travelling public, and they are now asking for a fair wage increase to catch up with the spiralling cost of living in this city," he added.

Garrett said Transdev had so far failed to put a serious wage proposal on the table. "Workers are determined to see a mechanism put in place that will ensure their pay keeps pace with inflation," Garrett said.

"Sydney Ferries workers will not sign off

on an agreement that whittles away their purchasing power year after year while the cost of living keeps going up," he said.

The MUA said it regretted the disruption to commuters but placed responsibility for the industrial action squarely with Transdev's failure to reach a fair agreement.

During other enterprise bargaining processes, no industrial action was taken by Sydney Ferries workers because negotiations were productive and cooperative. The same spirit of cooperation towards good faith bargaining has not been adopted by Transdev's bargaining team during these latest negotiations.

"Sydney Ferries workers do not take industrial action lightly, particularly when they know it affects the travelling public," Garrett said. "But our members have been pushed to this point. They are prepared to escalate this campaign until Transdev realises that its workforce deserves a fair deal."

As a gesture of goodwill to commuters affected by the morning's stoppage, Opal readers on Sydney Ferries will be switched off from 2pm for the remainder of the day, allowing passengers to travel on the ferry network without charge.

Garrett said the dispute also highlighted the fundamental problem of putting an essential public transport service in the hands of a private operator.

"Sydney Ferries are an essential public service and they should be publicly owned and publicly operated," he said.

"The community should not have to rely on a privately owned and operated multinational company like Transdev to decide whether the local workers who operate Sydney's iconic ferries deserve a decent wage."

Maritime Union of Australia ✳

Townsville military buildup

Graham Holton

The Defence Strategic Review placed great importance on Australian defence planning on the defence of Australia's northern approaches. In 2024, the Australian government announced a \$35 million infrastructure spend at Lavarack Barracks and the RAAF Base in Townsville to improve the ability of the Australian Defence Forces (ADF) to operate from northern bases.

The government described Townsville's geographical position and Army-Air Force integration as strategically important for its National Defence Strategy. The government sees Townsville as important to AUKUS, because strategically Townsville fits its military requirements.

Townsville has exceptional geographic value and strategic significance, situated at the approaches to the Coral Sea, Torres Strait and South-West Pacific. It is closer to Australia's northern approaches and Pacific neighbours than the major population centres in south-eastern Australia. The city is one of Australia's three leading military centres, alongside Darwin and the Brisbane/Amberley complex.

Townsville is Australia's largest army base, with Lavarack Barracks home to the 3rd Brigade – the Army's principal deployable combat brigade in northern Australia – as well as elements of 1st Division, 11th Brigade and 17th Sustainment Brigade. The RAAF describes Townsville as a potential forward operating base for operations to the north and South-West Pacific.

Townsville is a forward military hub, combining combat forces, air power, training areas, port access and its proximity to the Pacific giving Australia the capacity to quickly assemble, train, sustain and deploy a substantial force. The airbase brings together the infantry, armoured forces, artillery, helicopters, Army

aviation, air transport, logistics, and medical support. The port supports naval and military logistics, with the ADF having priority access to Berth 10.

Townsville allows personnel, vehicles and heavy equipment to move quickly between land, sea, and air during multinational exercises. This is important as our military strategy depends heavily on moving forces over large distances.

The major training centre at the Townsville Field Training Area allows large-scale exercises involving armour, artillery, infantry, aviation and amphibious forces. This is important because Australia is training for high-intensity warfare alongside allies. The Army described this year's Exercise Southern Jackaroo as a rehearsal for war, bringing together more than 3,000 Australian, US, Japanese, South Koreans, Malaysians, Papua New Guineans, South Korean, and other partners.

In 2026, the right-wing Lowy institute warned that China has the ability to strike northern Australia with missiles deployed from the South China Sea. In reaction Chinese officials rejected the idea that China's military development is threatening Australia, and accused the US and its 'allies' of "hyping up the China threat."

In June 2026, China's Foreign Ministry responded to a fearful Australian assessment of China's growing strike capability by saying Chinese military development was intended to safeguard China's sovereignty and security and not to target any specific country.

Townsville's significance is its ability to train and deploy forces to Australia's military operations, making it part of the wider US alliance system operating on China's southern and eastern strategic approaches. The result is a security dilemma in which defensive measures by one side become evidence of offensive intentions to the other, making Australia part of an ever-expanding military arms race. ★



Lavarack Army Barracks, Townsville, c 1966.

Photo: Queensland State Archives – flickr.com (PDM 1.0)

The Army described this year's Exercise Southern Jackaroo as a rehearsal for war

NSW Locals to disrupt Pauline Hanson's campaigning

Sam M

At the Toronto Hotel, in Lake Macquarie NSW, Pauline Hanson – who has planned ticketed dinner there – will be disrupted by members of the community in a snap rally.

Attendees to the rally are gathered to call out what they see as a vile expression of a racist, denialist, and sophistic ideology, something they say will never be welcome in Australia.

Locals have called on local venues to exclude Pauline Hanson's One Nation event, as to prevent her followers from targeting vulnerable people and spreading her divisive rhetoric to Newcastle.

Gauri, a spokesperson and local high school student said, "I'm here

to stand up for everyone, Hanson is not wanted here," continuing that "Pauline is bought out by Gina Rinehart. For the 'Aussie Battler' she claims to be, she certainly didn't catch the train to Fassifern when she arrived in Newcastle."

Gauri finds Hanson's racist, anti-immigrant and anti-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander rhetoric most reprehensible, stating that: "I am a first-generation immigrant, it's pretty hard to get permanency, let alone citizenship in this country. It costs \$10 grand to even start the application. This country gets so much out of immigrants for free, without needing to help them through education, or access healthcare, Pauline's own money comes from the work of immigrants." She expands, exclaiming "We all bleed

red, I don't know what Pauline doesn't get, she's already red on the outside!"

Finally, Gauri condemns Hanson's attacks on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, stating that the discrepancy in life expectancy between these communities and white communities is on average 10 years, concluding that "If Pauline did a single Aboriginal Studies lesson, she'd see the real problems that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities face, and stop spewing these gross lies."

Sam, another spokesperson from a local high school, also expressed his own rejection of Hanson's rhetoric. He began by saying that "Pauline Hanson's explicit policy of climate change denialism

will only lead to catastrophe." He added that "continuing to subsidise the coal industry is counterproductive to achieving Australian prosperity and avoiding job losses."

Sam explained that unmitigated climate change "is expected to lead to 800 million excess deaths, and at least \$4 trillion in damages by 2050."

Sam continued to explain that "according to the National Climate Change Risk Assessment, by 2050, national disaster relief will cost approximately \$40b annually."

Sam now turns his attention to his home region of the Hunter, stating that "this problem is, unfortunately, much bigger than just Pauline Hanson. Who can blame coal miners for wanting to continue working in these mines when it pays

so well? Who can blame them when the only politician promising this is that chronic liar Pauline Hanson?"

According to Sam although concerns about the coal industry are particularly relevant in the Hunter region, "the industry is dying, just look at Mt Arthur and Ashton." He concludes, "by continuing to subsidise the coal mines without a plan to shift employment into other industries, we risk letting the communities around these mines die as well."

According to the Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analytics, Hunter coal mines plan to reduce their output by 43% between now and 2034. ★

Two-year rental agreements part of union push for renters' rights

Australia's union movement is pushing the Federal government to introduce a national two-year rental standard, and for one in 10 new homes to be dedicated to public housing.

Unions are putting renters' rights in the spotlight.

These new reforms were announced at a housing summit in Canberra this month, which was hosted by the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU). The new national tenancy standard of two years aims to give

renters greater stability, make it easier to plan ahead, and reduce the financial pressures of having to repeatedly move homes.

Under the proposal, landlords would be required to offer at least two years of housing security as the default standard, with renters still free to choose shorter leases.

Australia currently has no national minimum legal lease term, with minimum terms varying from state to state. That's despite many countries around the world requiring minimum leases of multiple years,

including Japan and numerous European countries.

The ACTU's plan also includes stronger protections against unfair evictions and rent gouging.

Finance Sector Union member Jimmy Whitfield attended the summit and spoke about the pressure many finance workers face when it comes to renting.

"Renters are scared to complain about issues about their properties, which can leave lasting consequences to your health,

like black mould or poor insulation," said Whitfield.

"We need serious protections to make sure our renters are safe ... and have a secure place to live that isn't going to be taken out from under them when they're forced to pay hundreds more per week."

Federal Housing Minister Clare O'Neil, who attended the housing summit, welcomed the ACTU's proposals and said they would be considered by the government.

Finance Sector Union ★

Murujuga petroglyphs are being destroyed by pollution

Graham Holton

At Murujuga, a sacred cultural landscape across the Burrup Peninsula and Dampier Archipelago, 1,500 kilometres north of Perth, Western Australia, there are up to two million petroglyphs that tell the story of the relationship between Ngarda-Ngarli traditional owners and this land over 50,000 years.

In July 2025, the Murujuga Cultural Landscape was added to the UNESCO World Heritage List in recognition of its unique cultural and spiritual significance.

This ancient art, far older than the cave art of Western Europe, is close to industrial complexes that produce chemical fertiliser and Woodside's North West Shelf gas facilities that process liquefied natural gas (LNG) for export. Concerns have been raised that industrial pollution is degrading the rock art. Analysis from the Murujuga Rock Art Monitoring Program (MRAMP) suggests that current air pollution levels are below thresholds that accelerate weathering of the outer layer of granophyre rocks.

This points to sulphur dioxide emissions from previous decades as the main culprit. Atmospheric chemistry, rainfall pH and laboratory tests point to older levels of sulphur dioxide, emitted from industry and shipping, that produced acid rain.

Lead scientist Ben Mullins said that these emissions were having the "most significant effect" on the

petroglyphs. "Transport fuels, shipping fuels industry all have some level of sulphur in their fuel." The studies show that the pollution has affected a larger area of the ancient rock surfaces than previously estimated.

While government and industry-backed reports conclude that modern emissions are not measurably worsening the effects, independent experts and traditional cultural advisers continue to debate the ongoing risks posed by the nearby heavy industrial projects. MRAMP will continue research on the interplay of air quality, rock surfaces, and microbial communities.

The Murujuga Rock Art Strategy provides a long-term framework to support the protection of Aboriginal rock art at Murujuga. The Strategy builds on previous work to guide monitoring, scientific analysis and management activities, to strengthen the understanding and protection of this ancient landscape.

Federal Environment Minister Murray Watt approved a 40-year extension of Woodside's North West Shelf extending the life of Australia's biggest gas project until 2070. Watt said his department would review the report and update the North West Shelf approval if needed.

Murujuga Aboriginal Corporation (MAC) deputy chair, Audrey Cosmos, said her people were "always going to be sad about industry." Ngarluma director on the MAC board, Belinda Churnside, called on the WA government to honour its pledge to support the rock art monitoring project. 🌟

\$23 billion, the cost of doing business

FK

Facebook owner Meta will pay US\$23 billion (AU\$32 billion) after a landmark court battle over teen social media addiction.

An RMIT expert says Meta's settlement mirrors the defensive strategies used by big tobacco in the

late 1990s to protect core business models and neutralise existential regulatory threats.

Professor Shelley Marshall, Deputy Dean, RMIT School of Law says that while Meta's multi-state settlement is a landmark moment in the fight against addictive technologies, negotiated settlements are vastly more advantageous to

Big Tech than statutory bans like Australia's under-16 social media laws.

"Australia now prohibits platforms from allowing minors under 16 to hold accounts. By contrast, the US settlement relies on financial penalties and behavioural guardrails – such as daily usage prompts and default break reminders.

"This keeps adolescents inside Meta's ecosystem, maintaining brand habituation, and long-term usage.

"In the 1990s, tobacco companies paid multi-billion dollar payouts because it protected what mattered: keeping products on shelves. What they fought hardest were the real business killers – advertising bans, display restrictions, and plain packaging.

"For platforms of Meta's scale, multi-year financial settlements and compliance requirements represent manageable operational costs. Outright statutory prohibitions that eliminate underage market access pose the true threat to the business model."

Speaking to the *Guardian*, the *Workers' Weekly*, Professor Marshall said that Meta "absolutely worked for a settlement" because of a desire to keep teens "in the pipeline." The settlement is not nothing and news about it will get the message to the public that social media is addictive, but overall the US approach left the onus on parents.

She said that while Meta would change its behaviour somewhat – and faces the prospect of individual lawsuits in US states, overall it could live with that. 🌟

PEACE NOTES

Pacific Dragon Exercise

Denis Doherty

"Working together for a strong, secure, stable Indo-Pacific region." That's how the public relations people of the US and Australian military reported how concerned they are for the security of our region while being engaged in stirring up a regional war in Western Asia.

Exercise Pacific Dragon is a biennial multilateral ballistic missile defence and tactical data information-sharing exercise. That the name includes the word 'dragon' hints that the exercise is really an exercise on how to threaten China and really mess up our good relations in the Indo-Pacific.

HMAS Sydney conducted integrated air and missile defence activities during Exercise Pacific Dragon in the Pacific Ocean, off the coast of the Hawaiian Islands from 6-15 August 2026. It marks the third occasion that the Sydney has conducted this exercise, following involvement in 2022 and 2024. Australia took part in the exercise alongside ships from Chile, Italy, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Spain, and the US.

Despite public spats between Spain and the US, they sent a ship to this somewhat useless exercise. South Korea is being 'punished' by having its annual exercises to defend against the DPRK halved in a fit of spite from President Trump. It still sent warships to this exercise. Japan which is suffering greatly due to its dependence on Persian Gulf oil still sent a warship. Australia has a 12.5 % tariff imposed on it by the US and still sent a warship. Everyone is working together for security?

75th Anniversary of ANZUS

Our PM announced proudly that 1 September 2026 represented the 75th anniversary the ANZUS Treaty and added the usual glib phrases about it. Here is a sample to turn your stomach:

"Today marks the 75th anniversary of the ANZUS Treaty, a cornerstone of Australia's defence and security, and a foundation of our enduring cooperation with the United States and New Zealand. The Alliance has underpinned peace, stability, and prosperity in our region. The United States remains our closest ally and principal strategic partner." The reaction to these comments were overwhelmingly antagonistic. Australia should seek a better partnership than with one with an ugly US which is creating mayhem worldwide as its empire sinks.

The US resumes bombing

The US claimed that it was transferring its efforts to an economic war using sanctions to punish the Iranian people, and that it had finished with bombing. Again, the US proves it cannot be trusted to keep its word or tell the truth. It has bombed Iran's Larak Island, a small island off the coast of Bandar Abbas in the Strait of Hormuz, marking the first known US strikes on Iranian territory in more than a month. Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) quickly responded to the US attack, launching strikes against US bases in Jordan.

Rally on 20 September

The *Guardian* Issue #2203, 24 August 2026 proclaims from its front page "Communists call on the international peace movement to mobilise to stop AUKUS." The weekend of 19-20 September is the time to put that call into action. The Australian Anti-AUKUS Coalition has on its website "Join us the weekend of September 19-21 to celebrate the International Day of Peace and to demand the end to war and AUKUS. There are events planned in every state and territory and more joining every day." Check out the website for an event near you at antiaukuscoalition.org

The Sydney event details: 2 pm Sydney Town Hall 20 September. All our members and supporters please turn up to show the world we want AUKUS scrapped!



Communism: The long game

A Carruthers

Australia had one of the largest Communist Parties in the Anglophone world in the middle of the last century. That this didn't continue is not a testament to its failure. On the contrary it points to something immensely positive: Communism forever marked itself into the annals of Australian history.

We have excellent foundations to build on. We inherit a vast history. We don't just see it as the dead past but rather a living history to take up and continue into the future. We have a responsibility to continue the project all those Australian Communists first believed in and worked towards.

It also shows us something else: the fact that Communism is a long game. It isn't a passing fad; it's a long-term trend of history. It waxes and wanes in various times and eras. Its fortunes rise and fall. Mistakes set us back, victories propel us forwards.

As we are seeing today, the tendency is forwards. As Jack McPhillips put it in 2004, "The socialist movement has not been frustrated. The cause of socialism is gaining its victory."

Lately comrades have been looking into the history of Communists in our region: Asia and the Asia-Pacific. It's a fascinating history. Hundreds of thousands of people, Communists, died, not just in Laos, Vietnam, China, and Korea but also in Indonesia, Timor, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Burma, and elsewhere.

In Thailand there was a protracted Communist insurgency that lasted for a large chunk of the twentieth century from 1965 to 1983.

In Malaysia there were several Communist insurgencies in two stages, spanning most of the century from 1948 to 1989.

In Indonesia, there was the 1965-1966 genocide of the PKI, Partai Komunis Indonesia. This was supported by the USA (CIA), the UK and Australia, with the strategy of liquidating Communism in the Asia-Pacific by killing Communists indiscriminately, dehumanised as they were in the Cold War era. Three million people died in Indonesia because of ruthless Western anti-Communist geostrategy in Asia.

What did these Communists want? They were sick of being controlled by imperialists and comprador capitalists. They wanted the freedom to live in a system and a society of their own creation: a society managed by the workers and peasants, not imposed from above, or from without. They wanted the chance to do what Korea, China, Vietnam, and Laos are now able to do: build a socialist society.

The CIA, the UK Crown and the Australian state, did everything to suppress Communism both at home, and in the region. Communism was brewing and as it became more powerful in the 1940s and 1950s, so grew the attempts to suppress it. Increasingly dissatisfied by the major parties, workers in Australia turned to the Communist Party of Australia because it represented true working-class democracy, a chance for workers to seize control of their own destiny.

The government under Menzies tried banning the CPA several times, but failed. Later efforts to spread ideological confusion at home created havoc on the Australian left in the era of high neoliberal reaction, namely the 1980s and 1990s, but that quickly failed. Capitalism once again didn't convince the vast majority of its long-term efficacy.

We are back. Communism in Australia is not dead. Communism in our region is also not finished. Communists will pop up again no matter how hard we get hit. Communism is a trend of history. To think you can kill it is merely idealism. As capitalism reaches the height of its development so does its inability to generate wealth for the great mass of people. Socialism becomes the only way out of the labyrinth.

This is happening as we speak. Now socialism is the only way young Australians can have a roof over their head and a secure future. The repeated failure of the non-Communist political forces to articulate a way forward is being exposed. The reality is, Communism is here to stay and Communism is the future for all humankind.

As the great Spanish Communist Dolores Ibárruri put it in a letter to her son: "Never doubt for a moment that Communism is the only ideal to which it is worth devoting one's whole life." ✳



Increasingly dissatisfied by the major parties, workers in Australia...

Regardless of any guilt

Paul Gregoire

Legislation currently before New South Wales parliament is increasingly causing alarm. While the bill is being framed as part an ongoing crackdown on organised crime, the majority of the laws contained in it create new powers that rights groups warn will result in an "unprecedented police surveillance network" in this state.

NSW police minister Yasmin Catley introduced the Crimes and Other Legislation Amendment (Further Organised Crimes Reforms) Bill 2026 into parliament on 6 August. She then asserted that the laws involve a response to "emerging techniques and evasive methods used by organised crime offenders." Catley neglected to mention that this is at the expense of all our privacy.

The Bill raises the penalties applying to refusing to cooperate with NSW Crime Commission questioning. The rest of the laws impinge on everyone.

These additional laws would see images

of people captured by road toll cameras being stored for police, NSW driver licence images uploaded into a national database and an extreme law to facilitate the scanning of the content of digital devices enacted.

The NSW Council for Civil Liberties has condemned "the tenfold increase in state surveillance," which is due to the significant expansion of "police powers across three key areas that massively increase state surveillance." The rights group further insists that the provisions of the bill seek to treat regular law-abiding citizens as "automated suspects."

"We are looking at a future where police can demand your phone passcodes on the beat under threat of seven years in prison, using controversial forensic software to download your entire digital life, including encrypted and deleted content," said NSWCCCL president Timothy Roberts.

"At the same time, the Minns government is quietly trying to hand over our driver's licence photos to a federal biometric database without any public consultation, resurrecting Peter Dutton's mass surveillance network

plan that federal bipartisan committees rejected," he continued.

The first key surveillance reform involves the expansion of the digital evidence access order (DEAO) regime, which permits NSW police to scan the entire content of a person's mobile device, including encrypted and deleted information, instantly. This power that is currently linked to the execution of warrants, will now be made available in the field, under certain conditions and with court approval.

The second reform involves sharing NSW driver licence images and identity photos to a federal database of ID images. This will create the ability to verify the identity of a person with the matching of a single image to prevent fraud. The government has promised not to abuse the power the law gives them.

When road toll cameras capture images of a vehicle, photos of the driver and passengers will no longer be redacted. They will be collected and stored to be available in cases relating to toll payment and for NSW police law enforcement investigations.

"By giving police unredacted access to our toll networks and ability to face match, the government is effectively building a state-owned version of the 'Flock' camera networks used in the United States," Roberts explained.

"In the US, such surveillance systems are seeing massive public opposition with reports of the cameras producing incorrect suspects, systemic corruption and dozens of police officers using the cameras to stalk their wives and ex-partners."

As for the sharing of all NSW driver licences to a federal database known as the National Driver Licence Facial Recognition Solution, it serves to resurrect the wet dream of former Liberal leader Peter Dutton. In 2018, the then-home affairs minister was seeking to establish the National Facial Biometric Matching Capability as a key policy.

Sydney Criminal Lawyers
(edited for space) ✳

The many lies of Marco Rubio

Hedelberto López Blanch

Marco Rubio, a US politician of Cuban descent, now Secretary of State of the United States, has been characterised throughout his political career by a lack of ethics, corruption scandals, an extreme tendency to lie, far-right positions, and an unhealthy obsession with overthrowing the progressive governments of sovereign nations in Latin America – mainly Cuba, Venezuela, and Nicaragua, and lately Brazil, Colombia, and Mexico, as well.

Rubio was born in Miami on 28 May 1971, to Cuban parents who had migrated to the United States. It was a turbulent time in Miami, when drugs, crime, and intolerance toward anything said in favour of the Cuban Revolution were rampant. The United States had created an émigré community to which it granted all kinds of privileges to counter Cuba, while continuing to intensify the economic, commercial, and financial blockade against the island.

Manuel Giberger, an advisor to the Director of the Federal Bureau of Narcotics, stated in an interview with *Réplica* magazine that “an Al Capone-style mafia was being forged in Miami.”

One of Rubio’s first lies was recorded in his official Senate biography, in which he claimed that his parents fled Cuba after Fidel Castro took power in 1959. He followed the claim in a television interview, in which he emphasised: “My parents lost everything: their home, their family, their friends, even their country. But they also found something: the United States.”

In October 2011, this lie began to be exposed in various media outlets, such as *The Washington Post*, which, with official documents, specified that during his political career, Rubio always claimed to be the son of exiles from the Castro regime, a claim he repeatedly made in his last campaign for the US Senate and which, until recently was included in his official biography on the Senate’s website.

The truth was that his parents left Cuba for the US in 1956 – three years before the revolution. This deception was essential to win over the intransigent right-wing population of Miami.

This character’s life is also closely linked to drug trafficking. When he was 16, his brother-in-law, Orlando Cicilia, was arrested in 1987 for trafficking a huge shipment of drugs, valued at \$15 million. He lived with Barbara, Rubio’s sister, very close to the house where Marco lived with his parents. At the trial in 1989, Rubio, then 18, refused to testify whether he or his family had received money from Cicilia.

The drug trafficker, who was sentenced to 25 years in prison, was released 12 years later after reaching an agreement with the prosecution, and his brother-in-law, who was already a member of the Florida House of Representatives by then, used his position to get Cicilia a real estate license. These tangled relationships have led him to be known in Miami as “Narco Rubio.”

Reaffirming his narco-corrupt “vocation,” Rubio influenced Trump to pardon drug trafficker and former Honduran President Juan Orlando Hernández, who was imprisoned in the United States with a 45-year sentence, imposed by judges in the Southern District of New York, for the crime of introducing 400 tons of cocaine into US territory.

After his release, and following international condemnation of Hernández’s acquittal, Trump himself stated that he did not know or have much knowledge of who this man really was. Of course, Rubio knew him well, because, as the Canadian magazine *Vice* reports, he received more than

\$600,000 to fund his election campaigns through the BGR Group.

Then-Senator Rubio arrived in Honduras in 2018, had his picture taken, hugged Hernández, and, at a press conference in Tegucigalpa, praised the president “for his fight against drug trafficking.” The BGR Group was hired to clean up the former president’s image in New York.

While Speaker of the Florida House of Representatives from 2007 to 2009, Rubio was investigated for fraudulent operations and enrichment at the expense of the state for using public money for his personal expenses. As often happens in Miami when a person has powerful friends and abundant capital, the charges were dismissed.

Rubio’s relationship with former US Rep David Rivera also has a long history tainted by allegations of corruption and money laundering. The two bought a house in Tallahassee which some say was to coordinate their misdeeds and help steal the Venezuelan company Citgo, a US subsidiary of PDVSA, the state-owned Venezuelan oil and gas company. Citgo was handed over to the “ghost president” Juan Guaidó, who was being set up to take over from Venezuelan president Nicolás Maduro in the event of a coup. Rivera was arrested in December 2022 and acquitted the next day, often the case in Miami with wealthy criminals.

Then there is the current US Secretary of State’s relationship with the National Rifle Association. He has received more than \$4 million from the NRA, which it could be argued politically obliges him to defend it under any circumstances.

For example, when a mass shooting occurred on 2 December 2015, in San Bernardino, California where 14 people were killed and 21 others were wounded, then-Sen Rubio immediately came out in defence of the NRA. During a campaign event, he declared, “I went to buy a gun on the 24th, Christmas Eve, a weapon, and both my wife and I have weapons of this type.”

Rubio is known as a staunch Zionist and has benefited from his connection to the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC), which has given him large sums of money and supports him unconditionally in his political campaigns.

Rubio has promoted and supported the genocide and extermination of Palestinians in the Gaza Strip. He was one of the first to call Benjamin Netanyahu and visit Israel in 2023 to offer his full support to the prime minister.

Ever since he arrived in the Florida House of Representatives in 2000, Rubio has been engaged in a quarter-century-long propaganda campaign against Cuba. He has proposed and co-sponsored countless laws against the island’s government. As a US senator during Trump’s first term, and supported by another shady former senator, Bob Menéndez, Rubio led the way in imposing 240 different sanctions against Cuba. Upon becoming secretary of state, he reinforced his infamous propaganda against medical missions abroad and against the countries that accept them.

In writing the epilogue to the book *Rubio: An Uncontrollable Mythomaniac*, the president of Casa de las Américas, Abel Prieto Jiménez, stated, “This work is very useful for understanding what José Martí called ‘the poisons of the soul’ that was referring to the nature of the United States. He was referring to greed, the cult of money, the lack of ethics, the shameless use of lies, opportunism, and the corruption of politicians. The character portrayed in the pages of this work epitomises the moral crisis of the empire’s elites, particularly those in Miami.”

Granma ✖



Marco Rubio. Photo: US government works (CC0)

Fidel x100

Nearly a decade after Fidel Castro’s death, the Cuban Revolution confronts one of its most difficult moments since the Special Period. The United States has once again tightened the longest economic blockade in modern history. Cuba’s continued inclusion on the US State Sponsors of Terrorism list has further restricted the island’s access to international finance and trade. Washington has moved to impose a total blockade on oil deliveries to the island, barring one Russian tanker that got through in March 2026. The effects of the sanctions are the intended consequences of an economic war designed to make everyday life increasingly difficult and undermine the social foundations of the Revolution.

Economic war has always been accompanied by ideological war. The blockade seeks not only to constrain Cuba materially but also to isolate its revolutionary experience from new generations and the peoples of the world.

Defence of the Revolution cannot be reduced to economic resilience alone. It also requires the continued organisation of culture, political education, historical memory, and international solidarity. Propagating Fidel’s ideas is not an exercise in remembrance but part of defending the revolutionary process itself.

Fidel x 100 is an exhibition of posters from more than 100 cultural workers many of them activists in people’s organisations – from the India, to Brazil to the US itself.

Download the posters at <https://utopix.cc/pix/expo-fidel-x-100/>

Tricontinental



An Al Capone-style mafia was being forged in Miami

Nat Seeligson's Symphony for Peace (1953)

A Carruthers

In 1953, the Communist poet Nattie Seeligson published a long epic poem *Symphony for Peace: A Dramatic Poem in Four Movements*. The publisher was Current Book Distributors, the then printing press for the Communist Party of Australia (CPA).

The poem is an epic. Epic poems were some of the first kinds of poems that human civilisations around the world produced. An epic is by its nature long. The Indian Sanskrit epics *Mahabharata* and *Ramayana* are some of the longest poems in human history, with hundreds of thousands of verses.

Epics often have parts, sections, and a cast of characters. By calling it “dramatic” Seeligson also intended for it to be performed. When I was in Melbourne not too long ago, I staged a small performance of Seeligson's *Symphony for Peace* at a workshop there, with Floyd Kermode, editor of the *Guardian Worker's Weekly*, present. The poem works well performed and the performers enjoyed it.

By being a “Symphony,” the poem is also a musical metaphor. It is not a piece of music. It doesn't have a score, but in notes at the end the poet suggests the kind of music that could be playing to accompany the performance, like Shostakovich's *Fifth Symphony*, and the poem is “musical” in its own way. Symphonies are large-scale orchestral works of music with usually three movements, so Seeligson is suggesting that the poem is “symphonic,” – epic, big, a large-scale work with sweeping themes about the world, in this case, war and peace.

Seeligson was a good friend of General Secretary Lance Sharkey and remained a Party member all his life. He fought in many of the key CPA campaigns of the first half of the twentieth-century, including the international fight against fascism and other cultural work.

WHAT IS THE POEM ABOUT?

The poem is an anti-imperialist poem. That is, it is a poem that takes aim against imperialism and the impact it has on the lives of workers and peoples of the Global South and at home in Australia. Here's an example:

A Spaniard.

I am a Spaniard.
We fought the fascists first,
we fight them still
in the long night of Franco's bloody rule,
yet no helping hand

comes from your Western
“friends of freedom.”

A Malayan.

I am a Malayan.
We fought for freedom yet an iron rod
of old oppression holds us down
under the mocking, ruthless rule
of Western “friends of freedom.”

A Korean.

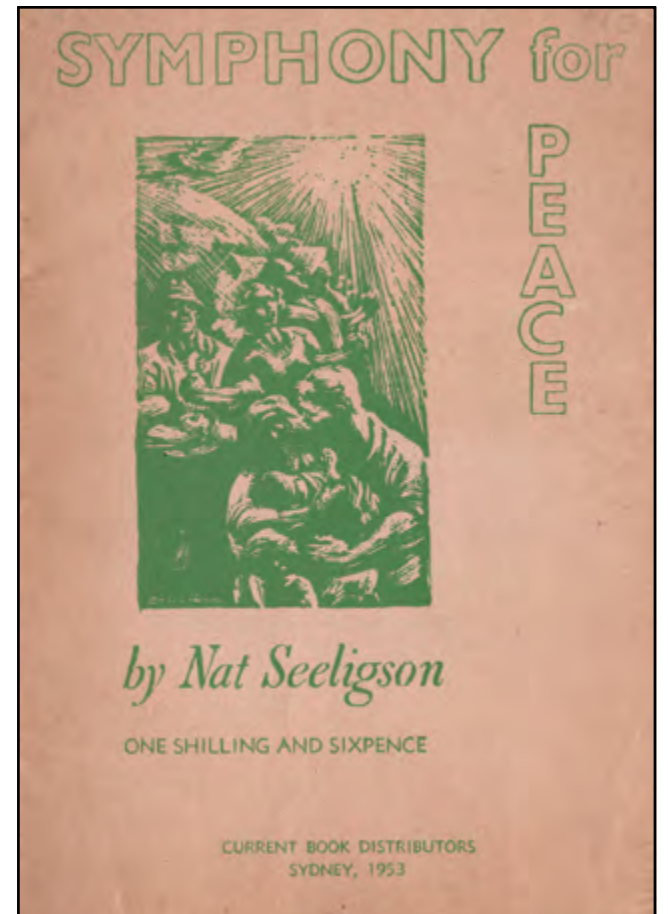
I am a Korean.
Cry out Korea
above your levelled cities
stark as lunar waste,
above your ravaged fields
where numberless lie
the living and the dead
scorched by napalm bombs,
hunted by airborne pestilence.
Cry out Korea
Against those gangsters of Washington,
Chicago and New York
against those Western “friends of freedom”
who churn dollars from human blood.

These are powerful lines, fiery lines – the choral nature of them, with the choral I – “I am a Spaniard, Malayan, Korean,” is typical of choral verse going back to the Greeks, where the “I” is a collective I. The poet puts themselves in the position of the person who articulates their wish for freedom – I, meaning all of us, can be that person, that oppressed nationality.

“Cry out Korea” is a well-stressed refrain, simple but stark. It is a little-known fact that the Malayan Communists fought a protracted war from 1948 to 1989 against the British and US imperialists and the comprador capitalists locally. As in Thailand, Indonesia, and across our region the Asia-Pacific, Australia was proxy to some of the most brutal anti-Communist, Cold War campaigns, with hundreds of thousands of men and women losing their lives fighting for the dream of doing what Vietnam and China are able to do so well now: build socialism.

The book is also beautifully illustrated by Noel Counihan. It is not readily available so you'll have to take it out at a library or request a PDF from us. Comrades across the Party are digitising and exploring the archive and finding all sorts of gems, using them as inspiration for our fight for socialism now.

Seeligson is not a famous poet, and Australian letters doesn't recognise him as a major writer. Unlike Frank Hardy



and Katherine Susannah Prichard, also from the CPA, who became famous members of what was known as the “Realist” group of writers, Seeligson didn't live long enough or produce enough great work to earn that renown. However, this work is worthy of discussion. It does what a lot of political poetry was unable to do – it has ambition and epic scale; its themes are universal – the fight for freedom from capitalism and imperialism – and is good poetry, good prosody, with good rhythms and lines full of breath and energy.

It can be compared to Nâzım Hikmet's *The Moscow Symphony* or the poems of Brecht.

Stay tuned for more gems from the archive! ★

Worth Streaming: Denial: David Irving vs Deborah Lipstadt

Reviewer: Graham Holton

Denial is directed by Mick Jackson, starring Rachel Weisz as Deborah Lipstadt, and Timothy Spall as David Irving. The film covers the 1996-2000 lawsuit of David Irving versus Penguin Books Ltd and Deborah Lipstadt, a US academic who called him a Holocaust denier and falsifier of history.

Lipstadt's British legal team decides to examine Irving's historical work to demonstrate he had manipulated the primary evidence. In court Irving presents himself as a respectable historian (he is untrained) but clearly manipulative. **Denial** shows the mechanism by which Irving's reputation as a serious historian collapses.

Lipstadt is portrayed as passionate and outspoken. She gradually recognises that personally winning the historical argument is not the same thing as winning the court case. The strongest part of Lipstadt's character arc is learning to trust the British legal system and her historical team. Deborah's defence is to test Irving's interpretation against the material evidence by going to the documents, buildings, photographs, demographic evidence and physical remains. The court case shows how a historical falsified argument can be dismantled through the critical examination of evidence.

The historical consultants' work on Auschwitz was a major component of the actual trial. Tom Wilkinson's Richard Rampton QC, the British libel lawyer, is calm, methodical and almost emotionally detached, dramatically contrasting Lipstadt's approach. The scene in which he visits Auschwitz and studies the physical layout is

effective because it illustrates the film's underlying philosophy, that the claims of history can be tested against the material and documentary evidence.

The film presents Irving as someone who possesses genuine historical knowledge and knows how to use documents, but who selects and interprets evidence according to a predetermined ideological position. **Denial** effectively conveys the judge finding Irving had deliberately manipulated and distorted the historical evidence.

The film does not give Holocaust denial a platform. The Auschwitz sequences tell us emotionally what the historical evidence has already demonstrated intellectually. Irving attempts to transform history into an ideological weapon. His method is to take genuine historical material and reorganise its meaning.

Denial provides a warning: ideological commitment does not invalidate historical interpretation, but becomes dangerous when ideology determines what evidence is allowed to mean. Historical interpretation is never produced in a political vacuum, as institutions, ideologies and struggles over power influence aspects of the past. History is a struggle over who has the power to define historical interpretation.

In 2023 Irving became seriously ill and has been confined to his sickbed in failing health since 2025. The court case is described in Deborah Lipstadt's *History on Trial: My day in court with a Holocaust Denier* (2005). Richard Evans' *Lying About Hitler* (2001) describes Irving's misuse of documents.

As a trained historian I found the film fascinating and well worth watching. **Denial** is being shown on SBS OnDemand. ★

Solutions to Crossword

Guardian 31 August 2026, #2204

Across

- 4 Winter headgear **BEANIE**
- 5 Chinese sci-fi epic, Three Body **PROBLEM**
- 8 What time does when you're in a hurry **FLIES**
- 9 Initials of DPRK leader **KJU**
- 11 Bad place to be up without a paddle **CREEK**
- 14 Scary weather event, named after a child **EL NINO**
- 15 Labor's gambling legislation like leaving **DRACULA** in charge of the blood bank

Down

- 1 Supposed writer of very old poem **HOMER**
- 2 Type of music, can be heavy, death, black, or nu **METAL**
- 3 Making life hard for Fair Work Commissions around the country **AI**
- 5 Kind of housing Australia needs much more of **PUBLIC**
- 6 Stalin and Hercule Poirot had in common **MOUSTACHE**
- 7 Best selling Australian legal comedy **FISK**
- 10 Signing up for more of the same (military) **REENLIST**
- 12 If re-elected, Vic Labor will make this free **DENTAL**
- 13 Crime series with an Indigenous lead, Mystery **ROAD**

Dolly Parton: Working class hero

CJ Atkins

The tributes to Dolly Parton since her death on 25 August have dwelt on her songs and on the causes now attached to her name: her free book program for children and her trailblazing for women in a business men built to keep them out.

Those things aren't the whole picture. Dolly Parton was a woman who spent six decades in the spotlight but never stopped being what she started out as: working class and loyal to everyone else who was.

Dolly Rebecca Parton was born 19 January 1946, the fourth of 12 children, in a one-room cabin in Sevier County, Tennessee. Her parents sharecropped somebody else's land before they scraped together enough, years later, to buy a small farm of their own. "We had a lot of stuff that money can't buy anyhow," she said of those years, "things like love and kindness and understanding. And we had music."

For her entire career, Parton's music was union-made. She was a member of the American Federation of Musicians Local 257 in Nashville until the very end, filing union contracts on her sessions and tours so her band got the wages that come with a union card.

"Before she was an icon, Dolly was a working musician," AFM President Tino Gagliardi said after her death. Local 257 President Dave Pomeroy said, "Throughout her 58 years as a proud member in good standing, she set the gold standard for supporting her band and fellow musicians."

That working-class instinct is also the real backstory behind "9 to 5." The song, and the Jane Fonda film it scored, are remembered now as 1980s workplace comedy, but they grew out of a real class struggle. Fonda based the story on a Boston clerical workers' organisation called 9to5 that rallied secretaries around pay, harassment, and the daily humiliation of being invisible in their own offices.

9to5's research exposed banks and insurance companies illegally colluding to fix wages and keep

women's pay low. The group won a 10% raise before growing into SEIU District 925. "Your boss is organised," founder Karen Nussbaum liked to say. "You better be organised too."

Fonda expressed the class consciousness that the film sought to inspire: "What I found was that secretaries know the work they do is important, is skilled, but they also know they're not treated with respect. They call themselves 'office wives.' They have to put gas in the boss's car, get his coffee, buy the presents for his wife and mistress. So, when we came to do the film, we said ... what you have to do is write a screenplay which shows you can run an office without a boss, but you can't run an office without the secretaries!"

Parton wrote the anthem for the politics and organising that not only defined the fight for women workers but also captured a truth that all workers know: "It's a rich man's game no matter what they call it, and you spend your life puttin' money in his wallet."

She was clear, too, long before it was safe in country music, about where she stood on gay and transgender people. Her 1991 song "Family" put it in a single verse: "Some are preachers, some are gay, some are addicts, drunks and strays, but not a one is turned away when it's family."

Her film production company, Sandollar, put up the money behind *Common Threads: Stories from the Quilt*, the 1989 AIDS Memorial Quilt documentary that won the Academy Award while Ronald Reagan's White House stayed silent on the epidemic.

In 2004, the Ku Klux Klan announced plans to picket Dollywood's Gay Day; the park's spokesman said flatly that the demonstrators "will not be allowed on Dollywood property," and the event went on undisturbed.

Parton made her own position explicit a few years later, after a lesbian visitor was asked to turn a marriage equality T-shirt inside out at one of her parks: "Everyone knows of my personal support of the gay and lesbian community,"



Dolly Parton, Honolulu, Hawaii, 1984. Photo: Alan Light – flickr.com (CC BY 2.0)

she said. "Dollywood is a family park and all families are welcome."

She was secure enough in that support to once enter a Dolly Parton look-alike drag contest at a gay bar in West Hollywood, incognito – and lose. "They just thought I was some little, short gay guy," she said afterwards.

When the fight for marriage equality was raging in the 2000s, she lent her backing in the most Dolly of ways, saying, "Why can't they be as miserable as us heterosexuals in their marriages?"

When she signed on to play a brothel madam in the 1982 film *The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas*, Parton said she hoped the self-appointed "Moral Majority" would watch it, provocative title

and all. "It points a finger at a lot of people, and some of 'em ain't whores," she said. "Like people who get fake religion."

She refused to let the film's women be treated as a punchline, either: "Prostitutes ... are some of the sweetest, most caring people I've known because they've been through everything," she said. It was the same argument, dressed up as a comedy, that she'd make in earnest for the rest of her life: judge the hypocrites, not the people they judge.

Years later, after a relative and a friend of hers came out as transgender, she wrote the song *Travelin' Thru* for the 2005 film *Transamerica* about a trans woman. "I have a friend and a relative who are transgender," she explained. "I said, 'I'll be happy to make a stab at that.'" The song earned her an Oscar nomination.

The same reflex showed up when other people were targeted by those in power. In 2005, with Cat Stevens – by then Yusuf Islam – still barred from the United States after being wrongly flagged on a post-9/11 security watch list, Parton put him on her album "Those Were the Days," singing *Where Do the Children Play?* as a duet. "He's a precious man," she said. "He's got a lot of bad press lately, but I think he's out to try to save the world, not destroy it."

In August 2020, as racist police

murder sparked a national uprising that brought millions into the streets, Dolly was asked about Black Lives Matter and her thoughts on the protests. She didn't hedge: "Of course Black lives matter. Do we think our little white asses are the only ones that matter? No!"

When she earned \$10 million in royalties from Whitney Houston's 1992 cover of *I Will Always Love You*, Dolly used the money to buy an office complex and strip mall in a Black neighbourhood in Nashville and made it into her headquarters, bringing development and jobs to an area overlooked by other investors. She said, "And I thought, 'This is the perfect place for me to be, considering it was Whitney.'"

She built all of that – the music empire, the theme park, the 3,000-song catalogue – out of a one-room cabin with no electricity, and she never forgot it. What she did with the fame and fortune it bought her was spend it on people who needed the cover more than she did: the musicians in her band, the secretaries who inspired her biggest hit, the gay and trans kids looking for acceptance in a hostile world, the Muslim man barred at the airport, the Black marchers in the summer of 2020.

That is a working-class hero's résumé.

People's World (edited for space) ★



For her entire career, Parton's music was union-made

Vietnam's 65 years of efforts to ease the pain of Agent Orange

Sixty-five years after the Agent Orange disaster began in Vietnam, the consequences of toxic chemicals remain a painful reality for many families across generations.

As Vietnam marked the Day for Agent Orange Victims on 10 August, policies and programs introduced in recent years show that efforts to address the consequences of war are shifting from short-term assistance towards long-term improvements in living conditions for victims and their families.

Vietnam has spent decades addressing the consequences of Agent Orange through policies supporting victims and their families.

Preferential allowances, healthcare, rehabilitation, vocational training, employment and livelihood assistance have gradually been expanded to help affected families overcome hardship and stabilise their lives.

These efforts reached a new milestone in 2026, when a nationwide program was launched for the first time to replace temporary and dilapidated homes belonging to the children of resistance war veterans exposed to toxic chemicals.

In March, the Prime Minister issued an official dispatch approving the use of unspent money from the Central Fund for the Poor to support the program.

The Ministry of National Defence was assigned to coordinate its implementation with ministries, sectors and local authorities. Localities were instructed to identify eligible households, mobilise additional social resources and deploy local forces to accelerate the work, with the first phase targeted for completion by 25 July 2026.

HOUSING

Significantly, this is the first housing program specifically designed for the children of resistance war veterans exposed to toxic chemicals. It reflects an expansion of Agent Orange policies beyond those directly involved in the war to subsequent generations still living with its consequences.

The initiative was quickly implemented in many localities.

In Vinh Long Province, a review identified 90 households eligible for monthly preferential allowances that were living in temporary or deteriorating homes and needed housing assistance. Of these, 40 were approved for new houses and 50 for repairs.

During the war, the US military dropped vast quantities of bombs and sprayed Agent Orange/dioxin to destroy forests along the Hồ Chí Minh Trail in an attempt to disrupt the main route carrying troops, supplies, and weapons to the southern battlefields.

In addition to central funding of VNĐ70 million (AU \$3,700) for each new house and VNĐ35 million for each renovated home, the province allocated another VNĐ10 million per household. Businesses, organisations and residents were also encouraged to contribute building materials, money, and labour.

In Quảng Trị Province, one of the localities most severely affected by the war, the program was launched simultaneously across the province in mid-July.

A provincial review identified 361 eligible households. Construction began in the first phase on homes for 143 families in 74 communes and wards. The remaining homes will be built according to a set timetable, with the program expected to be completed by 30 June 2027.

Alongside state funding, the province is mobilising resources from the Fund for the Poor, socio-political organisations, businesses and the wider community to ensure that assistance reaches the right beneficiaries on schedule.

The program is also under way in many other localities nationwide. By the end of July, construction had begun on 2,092 homes and nearly 900 had been completed. Military officers and soldiers had contributed more than 44,000 working days to building and repairing houses for affected families.

The housing initiative is the next step in the continuing expansion of policies for families affected by Agent Orange.

While previous assistance focused largely on allowances, healthcare, and livelihoods, improving housing conditions offers a more



Living with Agent Orange, Dong Hoi, August 2015.

Photo: The Advocacy Project – flickr.com (CC BY-NC-SA 2.0)

fundamental form of support. A new home cannot erase the lasting consequences of war, but it can provide families with greater stability, ease some of their difficulties, and give them a foundation from which to improve their lives.

Other forms of assistance for Agent Orange victims are also continuing.

According to Lieutenant General Nguyễn Hữu Chính, Chairman of the Việt Nam Association for Victims of Agent Orange/Dioxin, the association raised more than VNĐ2.424 trillion (AU \$53 million) between 2021 and 2025 to care for and assist victims.

The funding helped upgrade care facilities, build and repair homes, provide medical treatment and rehabilitation, distribute gifts and support livelihoods.

INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT

Alongside domestic efforts, Vietnam's work to address the consequences of Agent Orange has received growing attention and support from the international community.

Legislative resolutions, cooperation agreements, assistance for people with disabilities and dioxin remediation projects have all contributed to improving victims' lives and gradually addressing the toxic legacy of the war.

In October 2023, Belgium's House of Representatives unanimously adopted a resolution supporting Vietnamese Agent Orange victims, with all 134 participating lawmakers voting in favour.

The resolution called on the Belgian federal government to strengthen cooperation with Vietnam in assisting generations of victims, conducting scientific and medical research and remediating dioxin-contaminated areas.

It was one of the few resolutions adopted by a European legislature to comprehensively address the consequences of Agent Orange in Vietnam, reflecting international concern over a problem that continues to affect generations of Vietnamese people.

Several cooperation initiatives followed.

In April 2025, in the presence of King Philippe of Belgium and Vietnamese State President Lương Cường, the Việt Nam Association for Victims of Agent Orange/Dioxin and the Brussels regional authorities exchanged an agreement in principle on assistance to address Agent Orange consequences in Vietnam.

The Aquitara Impact Fund has also introduced livelihood programmes intended to create jobs and increase victims' incomes.

Its An Vui Mart convenience-store model

in Đồng Nai Province has shown promising initial results, with participating households maintaining profitable businesses. In 2026, the fund plans to expand the model to Hà Nội and Hưng Yên with more than 130 stores and total funding of about VNĐ25 billion.

The United States remains another important partner in Vietnam's efforts to overcome the consequences of war.

A project supporting people with disabilities in areas heavily sprayed with Agent Orange was jointly implemented by the Vietnamese government and the US Agency for International Development.

The US initially committed US\$65 million (AU \$91 million) to the project before providing another US\$30 million (AU \$42 million) for its expansion. More than 32,000 people with disabilities and Agent Orange victims have since gained access to healthcare, rehabilitation, livelihood support, and community-integration services.

Bilateral cooperation has also extended to dioxin remediation.

Following the completion of an environmental remediation project at Đà Nẵng Airport, approximately 32.4 hectares of contaminated land were cleaned and handed over for defence, security and socio-economic development purposes.

At Biên Hòa Airport, the country's largest ongoing dioxin remediation project continues to make progress. According to the implementing agency, the excavation of contaminated soil has reached about 48 per cent across the project's total area of 62 hectares. Surveying, sampling and treatment work is continuing as scheduled.

Agent Orange has also remained on the international agenda through advocacy campaigns and efforts to protect victims' rights.

The lawsuit brought by Trần Tố Nga against chemical companies that manufactured and supplied Agent Orange to the US military has attracted international attention for years. It has helped sustain public awareness of the consequences of wartime toxic chemicals and their lasting effects on generations of Vietnamese people.

Sixty-five years after the Agent Orange disaster began, many families continue to live with the consequences of the war. Supporting victims will therefore remain a long-term responsibility.

From new homes, livelihood assistance and rehabilitation services to dioxin remediation and international cooperation, each measure contributes to the shared goal of helping victims and their families achieve more stable lives while gradually healing the wounds left by war.

Viet Nam News

China makes 'major progress' against poverty

A new report to China's State Council has said that rural residents in counties lifted out of poverty saw their per capita disposable income rise to 18,627 yuan (\$3,243) in 2025, up from 12,588 yuan (\$2613) in 2020.

The report on consolidating poverty alleviation achievements and advancing rural vitalisation was delivered to the standing committee of the National People's Congress, the country's top legislature, which opened on 25 August.

Delivered by Maierdan Mugaiti, vice-minister of the ministry of agriculture and rural affairs, the report details that rural counties have seen an average annual growth rate of 8.2 per cent.

According to the report, more than 60 per cent of central government funds earmarked to support rural vitalisation have been used for industrial development.

The report adds: "Nearly three-quarters of people lifted out of poverty have established mechanisms linking their interests with new types of agricultural businesses, helping them share in the benefits of industrial development."

"More than 130,000 rural craftspeople have been trained, while more than four million people lifted out of poverty have found work through public welfare positions."

Despite the achievements of anti-poverty measures, the report cautioned that there was still a risk that people could fall back into poverty.

The report also warned of the growing depopulation of rural areas and of an ageing population.

China will incorporate regular assistance into its rural vitalisation strategy, focusing on households at risk of falling back into poverty and less-developed areas after the transition period ends, the report said.

It added that the government will promote development-oriented assistance to strengthen local capacity for self-sustaining growth while improving social security systems to safeguard basic livelihoods.

The report called for "longer-term policy support, more standardised assistance measures and more efficient management to consolidate poverty alleviation gains and steadily advance rural vitalisation."

Morning Star ✖



Global Briefs

GERMANY: Germany's Defence Minister Boris Pistorius and Baden-Wurttemberg Governor Cem Ozdemir have called for the opposition Alternative for Germany (AfD) party to be banned. The two establishment politicians claim that the far right ethnonationalist party poses a threat to Germany's constitutional order and democracy.

ZIMBABWE: Zimbabwe's capital Harare hosted the Zimbabwe Agricultural Show, where more than 640 exhibitors showcased innovations, with drone technology taking centre stage. Health care provision was one of the areas where drones could play a vital role, connecting remote clinics with district hospitals. Drones could allow for a rapid transport of blood samples and medicines – even blood for transfusions.

MEXICO: In 2027, universal access to health care services will be granted to all citizens, according to Mexico's government. President Claudia Sheinbaum said that the objective is that any citizen can attend any health institution and be guaranteed full and free coverage throughout the national system starting 1 January 2027. The exchange of services will begin with universal emergency care and continuity of treatment without financial constraints, guaranteeing immediate and equitable access.

ICELAND: The voters of Iceland have rejected EU membership. The 'no' vote won in last week's Icelandic referendum on resuming accession negotiations with the European Union (EU) by more than 5 points, with 52.8% against 47.2%.

LIBYA: Representatives from eastern and western Libya have signed a UN-sponsored agreement. The agreement commits the parties, the Government of National Unity in the west and the Central Command in the east, to holding presidential and legislative elections within a maximum of two years with the aim of advancing towards national unification. The country has been divided since 2014.

KYRGYZSTAN: The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) held a summit in Kyrgyzstan. The group is marking its 25th anniversary and brings together Russia, China, India, Pakistan, Iran, Belarus, and four Central Asian countries. The SCO has historically focused on economic issues, but has gained momentum in recent years under the leadership of Russia and China. The organisation has 10 members and 15 'dialogue partners,' including Turkey, Qatar, and Saudi Arabia.

EGYPT: Chinese President Xi Jinping visited Egypt to mark 70 years of diplomatic relations. Egypt was the first African and Arab country to establish diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China in 1956. Beyond the excellent bilateral relationship, China and Egypt coordinate on multilateral issues through the United Nations, the China-Arab States Cooperation Forum, the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation and since 2024, BRICS.

CUBA: The Astral sailboat operated by the Spanish NGO "Open Arms" arrived in Havana last week with 7 tons of humanitarian aid which included medical supplies, powdered milk, school supplies and other essential goods. At the moment the United States is blocking 7,000+ containers of medicines, food, resources for water, and energy from reaching Cuba.

NORTH AMERICA: Google Maps has begun displaying "Lake America" instead of "Lake Ontario" for users in the United States, following a controversial name change ordered by Trump amid escalating tensions between the USA and Canada. As it stands now, the body of water bordering Ontario and New York is labelled according to the user's location. US users will see "Lake America," Canadians will continue to see "Lake Ontario," while users elsewhere will see "Lake Ontario" ("Lake America").

US to take Venezuelan oil

President Donald Trump has announced that the US will use Venezuelan oil to replenish the Strategic National Reserves, which he said had been "virtually emptied" under the previous administration.

"One of the things I am going to do with the Venezuelan Oil is fill up the Strategic National Reserves which, because of Sleepy Joe Biden, has been virtually emptied," Trump wrote on social media.

"The 'topping out' process will begin very shortly, and is a Gift from Venezuela to the People of the United States. Thank you!" he added.

Earlier, Trump announced that Washington has secured "majority control" over more than 65 billion barrels of Venezuela's proven oil reserves, marking a sweeping expansion of US involvement in the South American country's energy sector.

The arrangement, which Trump said was reached through cooperation between US officials, Venezuela's interim leadership and private companies, would cover roughly one-fifth of Venezuela's proven reserves.

"At my direction, Secretary of State Marco Rubio, and Secretary of War Pete Hegseth, working closely

with Highly Respected Interim President of Venezuela, Delcy Rodríguez, and, through a partnership with private business, have secured majority US control of more than 65 BILLION BARRELS of proven Oil Reserves in Venezuela, at no cost to the American Taxpayer," Trump wrote.

The US president offered no details on the mechanism through which Washington would exercise that control, nor did he identify the companies or specific fields included in the arrangement.

Al Mayadeen ✖



Sydney Vigil

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Something to say? Write to the Editor!

editor@cpa.org.au

Cuba: crisis and the road to recovery

Vijay Prashad

For more than six decades, the United States has attempted to make the Cuban people pay for their decision to pursue an independent, socialist path. The latest phase of this economic war has targeted the island's most vulnerable artery: its energy supply.

Six months after Washington intensified pressure on countries and companies supplying oil to Cuba, the policy has not produced democracy or improved the lives of ordinary Cubans. It has produced darker homes, immobilised buses, interrupted hospitals, and greater difficulty in moving food from farms to cities.

The immediate task is to prevent a humanitarian disaster. The larger task is to replace coercion with sovereign cooperation and to help Cuba build an energy system that cannot again be strangled by a foreign power.

SEVEN MONTHS OF CRISIS

On 29 January 2026, US President Donald Trump issued an executive order establishing a mechanism for additional tariffs on goods from any country that directly or indirectly supplied oil to Cuba. Washington presented the measure as a defence of US national security. Its practical purpose was unmistakable: to force third countries to choose between a small, economically distressed Caribbean nation and access to the enormous US market.

The tariff actions authorised under this, and several other emergency orders were terminated on 20 February. The declared emergency remained in force, as did the wider sanctions system, threats against suppliers and uncertainty surrounding ships bound for Cuba.

The result has been described as an effective oil blockade: not necessarily a permanent line of US warships, but a system of secondary pressure capable of frightening governments, banks, insurers, shipping companies, and traders away from legitimate commerce with Cuba.

The blow fell on an economy already under extraordinary strain. Cuba had long depended on imported petroleum, particularly from Venezuela, while producing only part of its requirements. Venezuelan deliveries declined after the US attack on that country on 3 January 2026, Mexican supplies came under US pressure, and Cuba lacked the foreign exchange to buy sufficient fuel elsewhere. Ageing

thermal plants, delayed maintenance, hurricanes, inflation and the loss of tourism income compounded the damage.

Fuel scarcity spread through every part of social life. Technical failures in the fragile grid repeatedly became island-wide blackouts. Electricity cuts stopped water pumps, while refrigerators failed, spoiling scarce food and medicines. Families were forced to cook, study, and sleep in extreme heat without dependable power.

Transport was similarly paralysed. Fewer public buses operated, petrol stations closed or rationed supplies, and workers struggled to reach their jobs. When diesel is unavailable, crops cannot easily be harvested, and food cannot be transported from rural producers to urban consumers. Garbage collection and sanitation deteriorate. Ambulances, hospitals, and clinics must ration generator fuel, even as shortages of medicines and basic supplies grow. Flights were cancelled or rerouted because Cuban airports could not guarantee aviation fuel, further damaging tourism – one of the country's principal sources of hard currency.

The burden is unequal. Households with dollars can sometimes obtain food, transport, batteries or solar equipment; workers and pensioners dependent on pesos have far fewer options. Women carry much of the additional unpaid labour of finding food and water and caring for relatives. Rural communities, persons with disabilities and patients requiring refrigerated medicines face particular risks. The central victims of the US policy are all the Cuban people.

PEACE, SOVEREIGNTY, RECONSTRUCTION

The way out must begin with an immediate humanitarian energy arrangement. Cuba requires predictable deliveries, not occasional cargoes dependent on political permission. The United Nations, together with willing Latin American and Caribbean governments, should establish a monitored fuel corridor. Shipments could be earmarked for power generation, hospitals, water and sanitation, food production, public transport, and disaster preparedness.

An exemption is meaningless if banks do not process payments, insurers do not cover vessels, and shipping companies fear punishment. Participating governments should provide payment guarantees, insurance and legal protection for humanitarian suppliers. The United States should issue durable, general



Solar project in Cuba. Photo: International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA)/ courtesy of Union Electrica – flickr.com (CC BY-NC-ND 2.0)

defending Cuba's right to purchase energy is part of defending a democratic international order

licences rather than case-by-case waivers.

Second, emergency relief must open the door to negotiated de-escalation. Washington and Havana should begin structured talks, supported where useful by CARICOM, CELAC, Mexico, and other trusted intermediaries. The principle must be reciprocity without coercion. The United States should suspend measures that punish third-country trade and set out a verifiable timetable for lifting sanctions.

Negotiation cannot mean demanding regime change as the price of allowing a population to meet its elementary needs. Nor should humanitarian necessities be held hostage to every unresolved dispute between the two governments.

Cuba has already begun to diversify its suppliers and energy system. Contracts with several producers, joint purchasing with Caribbean partners and regional storage reserves could reduce costs and cushion sudden interruptions. Technical cooperation could help stabilise old generating equipment

while new capacity is built. Over the medium term, the most durable answer lies in renewable and decentralised energy.

Cuba has abundant sunlight and significant potential for solar power, biomass and carefully located wind generation. Rooftop solar systems on clinics, schools, farms and apartment buildings, coupled with batteries, would reduce demand on the national grid. Community microgrids could keep water pumps, refrigeration and communications operating when a major plant fails. Bagasse, left-over material from the sugar industry, and agricultural residues can contribute to generation if projects are managed sustainably.

Renewables must not become a slogan that ignores material constraints: projects need finance, spare parts, trained technicians, batteries, and recycling systems.

For countries of the Global South, Cuba's predicament is not a distant bilateral quarrel. Secondary sanctions and tariff threats establish the dangerous principle that a powerful state may dictate the

lawful trading partners of every other nation. Defending Cuba's right to purchase energy is therefore part of defending a democratic international order.

The Global South should oppose extraterritorial coercion, support humanitarian supplies and renewable-energy cooperation, and work with other states to insulate legitimate trade from unilateral sanctions.

The Cuban people have survived six decades of pressure through social organisation, international solidarity and remarkable endurance. Endurance, however, should not be romanticised. No people should be required to live indefinitely without reliable electricity, transport, food or medicine to prove their commitment to sovereignty.

The just exit is neither capitulation nor isolation. It is the lifting of collective punishment and international cooperation based on equality. That path can bring the lights back on while preserving Cuba's right to determine its own future.

Globetrotter ✳

Cuban women defend dignity, independence

Ronald Suárez Rivas

Cuba's dignity, independence and sovereignty have been defended by its women. This was affirmed in Pinar del Río by the General Secretary of the Federation of Cuban Women (FMC), Teresa Amarelle Boué, on the occasion of the organisation's 66th anniversary.

These 66 years signify that Cuban women have ceased to be spectators and have become protagonists of their own history.

Amarelle Boué also recalled that the triumph of the Revolution and the emergence of the FMC (Federation of Cuban Women) meant that millions of women had the opportunity to study, work, improve themselves, research, produce, and lead in all areas of the economic, political, social, and cultural life of the country.

"We are the majority in sectors such as education, health, science, and the judicial system," she said, adding that "there is an increasingly greater female presence in the

non-state sector, in agricultural production cooperatives, and in access to leadership positions."

Cuba has the second-highest percentage of women in its Parliament in the world.

Amarelle Boué also addressed the main challenges facing the organisation, in a context marked by the intensification of the US blockade, which severely impacts the lives of the Cuban people.

"We must pay special attention to vulnerable individuals and families and contribute,

together with the relevant institutions, to finding solutions; we must focus particularly on our young women who are not in school or work. It is essential to continue working for gender equality and the prevention of violence," she emphasised.

Granma ✳

Argentina: double defeat for Milei

Julian Bokser

Javier Milei’s government recently suffered a double defeat. The first occurred in the streets, with massive protests against his plan to liberalise land purchases by foreigners. The second took place in the halls of the Argentine Congress, where he failed to secure enough votes to pass the bill as presented. Both defeats point to the same thing: a power project that is beginning to show the limits of its strength.

The bill that the ruling party sought to impose, under the name ‘Law on the Inviolability of Private Property,’ was neither an isolated initiative nor a simple regulatory adjustment. It was part of a broader series of attacks on national sovereignty, establishing mechanisms to accelerate the foreign ownership of land, facilitating external control over strategic resources, and clearing the way for Argentine territory, its common goods, and its decision-making authority over them to become increasingly subordinate to interests outside the country.

Thousands of people took to the streets to protest the bill. The government responded as it always does when the people organise, with tear gas and rubber bullets, leaving people injured and detained.

The repression was not an isolated excess. It is a method. Every time austerity measures encounter resistance, the state reveals its most violent face in an attempt to discipline those it cannot convince.

What’s beginning to crumble is power and the ability to persuade. In the streets, one can feel the weariness in the face of economic austerity that punishes the popular majority while benefiting a handful of concentrated sectors. These austerity measures

are neither a technical whim nor a deviation from a well-intentioned plan.

They are the form that, in Argentina, a broader strategy of the international New Right takes to subjugate the peoples of the Global South: lowering wages, handing over natural resources, dismantling rights, and calling this plunder ‘modernisation.’

Milei does not manage this strategy from an autonomous position, he carries it out as an unconditional ally of a hyper-imperialism that is currently in a phase of decline. For that reason, it is all the more dangerous. It needs to seize what remains of the Global South to sustain an order that can no longer guarantee well-being, not even in its own centres.

In Congress, the other front, the government also failed to achieve its goals. Attempts to buy parliamentary support – to forge majorities through the offer of positions, promises, and pressure – fell short. It had to back down. First, on the core provisions of the misnamed ‘Law on the Inviolability of Private Property.’ Then with the reform of the Fire Management Act, resigning itself to a scaled-back version. Two setbacks that expose the fragility of a project once believed to be unbeatable.

The mobilisation against foreign land ownership revealed something deeper than mere opposition to a specific law. It revealed a breaking point in the ruling class’s ability to build consensus around a social order that benefits only itself. That consensus, which for months seemed solid, began to crack. It remains to be seen how the anger that became visible in the rain, surrounding Congress, will be channelled into organised action.

Tricontinental Institute (edited for space) ★



Trans scapegoats

As the neoliberal order continues to fail people, we see a resurgence of far-right rhetoric and the empowerment of fascist parties across the imperial core.

The rise of fascism inevitably assigns a scapegoat, demonised and blamed for the failure of the capitalist system.

Transgender rights have suffered significant blows over the past few years as the far right preys on a public often ignorant about trans people. This allows the far-right to spread fear about an ‘enemy’ who is both mysterious and foreign.

In the US a litany of bills have been passed through state legislature denying trans women access to public spaces and community groups, removing educational materials and books which contain trans or gay content from school libraries, denying access to medication and medical care, and criminalising trans people and trans performers from being in a space where children could attend.

In Florida “aiding and abetting” young people through a transition carries a maximum sentence of five years coupled with up to \$100,000 per violation.

In Australia the push against trans people has been less successful but has still had results. The Queensland government has blocked access to puberty blockers for people under the age of 18, saying that the medical practice was under review until 2031. This was done under the guise of protecting children from experimental treatments, when the reality is that puberty blocking medications have been used and studied since the 1980s with minimal risks.

In April 2025 the UK Supreme Court ruled that the legal definition of a woman would be based on “biological sex.” The practical effect of this is to deny trans people protections when using single sex spaces, using workplace employment laws, or fighting against discrimination.

There has also been a push to ban trans people from single sex spaces here, but it was unsuccessful in the Supreme Court. Roxanne Tickle won a court case after she was removed from a female only dating site based on the site’s owner deciding her profile photo didn’t look biologically female.

This court case has emboldened anti-trans activists and has been picked up by the far right.

Recently in Western Australia the state government blocked a trans woman, whose gender is legally female, from transferring to a women’s prison despite acknowledging that she has experienced multiple sexual and physical assaults.

Even if you accept the argument that single sex spaces should be defined by biological characteristics the question then becomes how do we enforce this law?

Biological sex is defined as a combination of physical characteristics, chromosomal, and hormonal indicators, none of which can be easily checked. The argument relies on a public being able to instantly tell somebody’s sex assigned at birth by sight, creating a witch hunt that reduces women to their physical presentation.

This means that people who don’t present as traditionally feminine will now experience increased harassment and risks of violence from people emboldened by these laws to police others based on how well someone adheres to their personal view of what womanhood looks like.

This is a purposeful isolation of a group of people based on the perceived affront they pose to others, while trying to carry out ordinary daily activities like using the bathroom or trying to participate in local sport.

Transgender vilification is from the same fascist play book as other scapegoating. It doesn’t have any answers to the economic struggles people face and instead obscures the oppression by the capitalist class. It demonises a minority group who pose no public safety risk, but who suffer harassment, violence, and mental health risks at incredibly high rates.

As communists we must stand alongside the people the capitalist class uses as wedges for the working class, we must have compassion and care for the most vulnerable among us, and we cannot let the far right fearmonger their way into power.

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'Gaza has ignited a revolution'

Addressing the Second Jewish Anti-Zionist Congress via video link from Palermo, UN Special Rapporteur Francesca Albanese argued that the genocide in Gaza has evolved into far more than Israel's war against the Palestinian people.

Instead, she said, it has become the clearest expression of a global political and ideological system that has normalised Palestinian dispossession while exposing the failures of international law, democratic institutions and the post-war international order itself.

DESTRUCTION OF PALESTINIANS

Describing Palestine as both "a revealer" and "a mirror," Albanese urged participants to view the current moment not only through the lens of Israel's actions but through the responses – or silence – of governments, institutions and societies across the world.

"We are now in the third year of the genocide," Albanese said, arguing that the violence imposed on Palestinians could no longer be understood as the responsibility of Israel alone.

Today, she contended, Israel operates with the ideological, political, and military support of a broad international network that extends well beyond its traditional Western allies.

"There is hardly a corner of the world untouched by Zionism as a political ideology," she said, pointing to the role played not only by Western governments and private institutions but also by Arab states and religious organisations that have helped normalise and disseminate the ideology internationally.

While acknowledging that Zionism has carried different meanings throughout its history, Albanese argued that its contemporary political expression had become inseparable from the ongoing destruction of Palestinian life.

"I think we should all be able to agree on one point," she said. "Today, more than ever, Zionism has become predicated upon the destruction of the Palestinian people and the seizure of what little remains of their homeland."

For Albanese, the consequences extend well beyond Palestine itself. Zionism, she argued, has evolved

into an ideology that increasingly destabilises the broader region.

"Today, Zionism is no longer only about the destruction of Palestinians," she said. "It has become an ideology contributing to the destruction of entire societies across West Asia."

THE WORLD'S MIRROR

Throughout her address, Albanese returned repeatedly to the idea that Palestine has fundamentally altered how the world understands itself.

"Palestine has become a revealer," she said before listing what the Palestinian struggle has exposed: "the Nakba... the colonial nature of the Zionist project... apartheid... and genocide – which is still ongoing."

Yet Palestine, she argued, has not merely revealed the structures underpinning Israeli policies. It has also become "a mirror," reflecting the moral choices made by individuals, governments and international institutions.

"I have often said that Palestine has also become a mirror," Albanese explained, "a mirror reflecting who we are – as individuals, as societies and as states."

Drawing one of the speech's most striking historical parallels, Albanese argued that comparisons with the Holocaust should not be understood as competitions over suffering but as a way of understanding how atrocities become internationalised through the participation – or acquiescence – of others.

"There is one comparison with the Holocaust that I believe can and must be made," she said. "This genocide, like the Holocaust, possesses a transnational dimension. It is sustained not only by those who commit it directly but also by those who enable it."

For Albanese, the tragedy of Gaza lies not only in the crimes themselves but in the fact that they are unfolding within an international legal system specifically designed to prevent such atrocities.

Instead of preventing genocide, she argued, many governments have chosen to facilitate it by rendering Palestinians invisible while normalising their dehumanisation.

Yet even amid that failure, Albanese insisted that Palestine



Palestinian rally, Boorloo/Perth, May 2026.

has generated an unprecedented political awakening.

"A minority of humanity now sees what many others still refuse – or are unable – to see," she said before rejecting the idea that meaningful political change requires majority support.

"Revolutions are never made by majorities," Albanese argued. "They are usually made by ten per cent of society."

Looking at the global solidarity movement that has emerged over the past two years, she concluded, "Today, we are more than ten per cent."

For that reason, she said, "Palestine has ignited a global revolution."

FROM INTERNATIONAL LAW TO NATIONAL ACTION

While much of Albanese's work has centred on international law, she cautioned against viewing legal mechanisms as sufficient on their own.

"International law provides us with a roadmap," she said, emphasising that it clearly requires Israel to end its occupation, dismantle apartheid, halt the genocide and hold accountable not only those directly responsible for these crimes but also those who have profited from them.

Yet law without ethics, she warned, remains powerless.

"Without ethics, it becomes powerless," Albanese said, pointing to the growing gap between overwhelming legal evidence and

the unwillingness of many governments to act.

That disconnect, she argued, explains why civil society has become indispensable in enforcing international norms that political leaders refuse to uphold.

For Albanese, the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement represents one of the clearest examples of that principle in practice.

Rather than viewing BDS simply as a protest campaign, she described it as "a practical method for implementing international law through collective action" and "an expression of integrity."

Her own work, she explained, has focused primarily on accountability, insisting that those responsible for crimes against Palestinians – as well as those enabling them – must ultimately face justice.

"The violations themselves must end," she said, adding that the increasing attacks on investigators, judges, prosecutors and human rights defenders demonstrate how threatening accountability has become to those invested in maintaining impunity.

But Albanese also urged supporters of Palestine to engage more directly with electoral politics.

"For many, politics has become a business," she observed. "For honest people, politics is a sacrifice."

"We must reclaim it," she continued. "We must restore democracy to its true purpose."

At the same time, she warned against what she called "political purism," arguing that movements often waste energy speaking only to those who already agree with them.

"We need to abandon political

purism," Albanese said. "Too often we speak only to those who already agree with us."

Instead, she urged activists to reach those who remain undecided because "if they cannot see Palestine, they cannot act in its defence."

As her remarks drew to a close, Albanese rejected the widespread feeling that public mobilisation has failed to produce meaningful change.

Many people, she acknowledged, ask whether years of demonstrations have accomplished anything.

Her answer was unequivocal.

"If nothing were changing, there would not be so much repression," Albanese said, arguing that the growing criminalisation of activists, investigators and international legal institutions reflects precisely the effectiveness of the solidarity movement.

"Our pressure works," she said. "It makes governments uncomfortable. It makes those profiting from genocide nervous."

Concluding on a personal note, Albanese thanked anti-Zionist Israeli activist Ronnie Barkan for his persistence in ensuring she could participate remotely despite numerous obstacles.

"If everyone in this room possessed the perseverance that Ronnie Barkan showed in making sure I could participate in this Congress," she said with a smile, "Palestine would already be free."

"So be like Ronnie," Albanese concluded. "Persevere."

Thinking Palestine ✨

Zionism has become predicated upon the destruction of the Palestinian people and the seizure of their homeland



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