

Solidarity

Issue No. 197 / July 2025

\$3/\$5

No to Albanese and Trump's bombs



BREAK THE

US ALLIANCE

NO ARMS FOR ISRAEL

TRUMP

Los Angeles' rebellion
against deportations

IRAN

Israel, imperialism and
the Iranian regime

INDIGENOUS

Remembering activist
Ray Peckham

Solidarity WHAT WE STAND FOR

Capitalism is a system of crisis and war

Capitalism is a system of competition, crisis, and war based on exploitation of workers, producing for profit not human needs. Although workers create society's wealth, they have no control over production or distribution. Through environmental degradation and climate change capitalism has become a threat to humanity's future and life on earth.

Workers power and socialism

The working class has the power to challenge the existing system and create a better world. We stand for socialism, a society based on democratically elected workers councils which would control and plan the economy to produce for human need. The authoritarian states like Russia and China are not socialist but forms of state capitalism where workers have no power.

What about elections and parliament?

Parliament, the army, the police and the courts are institutions of the capitalist state that maintain the dominance of the ruling class over the rest of society. The capitalist state cannot be taken over and used by the working class, it must be smashed. Workers need to create their own state based on workers councils.

While parliament can be a platform for socialists, real change doesn't come through parliament. It is won by mass action in strikes, protests and demonstrations.

We are internationalists

The struggle for socialism has no national boundaries. We oppose everything that turns workers from one country against those from another; we campaign for solidarity with workers in other countries.

We oppose borders and immigration controls, and welcome migrants and refugees.

We oppose imperialism and support all

genuine national liberation struggles. We oppose Australian nationalism.

Australia is an imperialist power established through genocide on stolen Indigenous land. We support the continuing struggles of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people for land, justice and self-determination.

Oppression and liberation

We oppose sexism, racism, homophobia and transphobia. We fight against all forms of discrimination and the oppression of women, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, migrants, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex people. We oppose discrimination against Muslims and people from the Middle East.

Linking up the struggles

We are active building movements for environmental and social change and economic equality. We are active in our unions and work to build the organisation and self-confidence of the rank and file. We work to bring activists together to strengthen each movement and build a common struggle against capitalism.

Educate, agitate, organise

Socialism cannot be introduced from above, by parliament or parties. The emancipation of the working class is the act of the working class itself.

Solidarity is an organisation of activists, anti-capitalists and revolutionary socialists committed to socialism from below. We are part of the International Socialist Tendency.

A democratic revolutionary party is necessary to deepen resistance to capitalism and to build a movement to overthrow the system. Solidarity members are beginning to build such a party out of today's struggles against the system.

SOLIDARITY MEETINGS AND BRANCHES

Sydney

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Meeting 6.30pm every Thursday
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Things they say

I say this to the unions... You don't get union members unless you get successful employers. It's the private sector that drives an economy.
Albanese reveals his pro-business priorities

Tonight, I can report to the world that the strikes were a spectacular military success. Iran's key nuclear enrichment facilities have been completely and totally obliterated.
Donald Trump's address to the nation on 21 June

The intelligence was very inconclusive. The intelligence says we don't know. It could've been very severe.
Trump on 25 June to reporters at the NATO summit

A wonderful day with incredible and caring Leaders.
Trump after a day of flattery and sucking up at the NATO summit, where he got his way on Europe boosting military spending

They may be going meat-free a couple of times a week and going back to tap water instead of purchasing bottles.
Leah Weckert, Coles chief executive, explaining how cost-of-living pressure is forcing families to cut back on groceries

It was the United States of America that saved Israel, and now it is going to be the United States of America that saves Bibi Netanyahu
Donald Trump interfering in the Israeli courts demanding they drop the criminal case against Netanyahu for corruption

Chasing the unobtainable and expensive magic pudding that net zero is will negatively impact our way of life for generations to come
Gina Rinehart, ignoring the impact of climate change on the way of life for generations to come

I like the old system better. You win a war, you stay there and you keep the oil... You stay and you keep the oil.
Donald Trump in 2011, about the 2003 US war on Iraq.

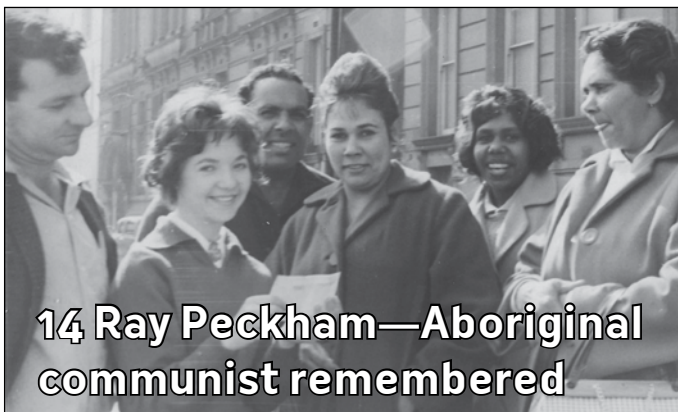
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Editorial committee of *The Aboriginal Worker*, newsletter auspiced by the BLF, 1963. Left to right: Jack Munday, Judy Munday, Ray Peckham, Ruby Langford-Ginibi, Mary Davis, Elizabeth Henry



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Killer cop now a 'motivational' speaker

ZACHARY ROLFE, the killer cop who shot dead 19-year-old Warlpiri man Kumanjayi Walker in the NT community of Yuendumu, is hoping to join the speaking circuit. Rolfe has been advertised by Platinum Speakers and Entertainers for paid gigs at \$5000 to \$10,000 an event.

According to the company Rolfe is a "Soldier policeman hero" who can deliver "motivational" and inspirational appearances, and is writing a book on his experience "navigating adversity with integrity and insight".

But investigations have revealed Rolfe's obscene racism and violence in text messages sent to other cops. He regularly used derogatory terms for Indigenous people calling them "coons" and "neanderthals" and bragged of having "smashed up" the Indigenous community of Borroloola.

But his new gig is not off to a great start. After Crikey exposed the new listing the company immediately removed it from its website. Rolfe's appearance at a "Frontline responders summit" in Sydney was cancelled after Indigenous activists called a protest outside.

Gas company greenwashing exposed

A MAJOR gas company lied to consumers by claiming its gas products were becoming renewable, as part of its "Love Gas" advertising campaign, according to the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC).

"The ads claimed that the gas that Australian Gas Networks supplies and distributes to households would be renewable within a generation," the ACCC says. But there is no basis for claiming that "renewable gas" alternatives such as hydrogen or biomethane are capable of replacing fossil fuels.

The ads were designed to convince consumers to stay connected to gas instead of switching to electrical cooking and heating. The greenwashing campaign comes as gas mining companies plan a surge of polluting new developments, including the North West Shelf project off WA, which will release the equivalent of ten years worth of Australia's annual emissions over its lifetime.

Trump review another reason to dump AUKUS



NEWS THAT the Trump administration is reviewing the AUKUS deal to ensure it is "aligned with the president's 'America first' agenda" has reignited attacks on the plan.

The US is supposed to sell Australia between three and five nuclear subs, the first of them in 2032. But the US is already short of submarines and construction is running well behind schedule. It is currently producing 1.2 submarines a year and needs to almost double this to 2.3 a year to produce enough boats. Elbridge Colby, US under-secretary of defence for policy who is running the 30-day review, has said he is "very sceptical" of AUKUS, saying it could put the US navy in a "weaker position".

But there's no reason to expect the US to cancel the deal so soon—because this is the kind of deal Trump likes. The Australian government has agreed to hand over \$4.5 billion up front to help US shipyards speed up production. But when the date for the first sale arrives in seven years' time, the US can back out and refuse to sell Australia any submarines.

The most likely outcome is that the Australian government will have to wait longer and pay even more than the current price tag of \$368 billion.

Former UK national security adviser Peter Ricketts told ABC's *Four Corners*, "these things will be more expensive and later than is currently expected".

Worse, the Trump administration looks set to use the Albanese government's enthusiasm for getting nuclear subs to pressure it for more military spending overall.

According to the *Financial Times*, "Several people familiar with the matter said the Aukus review was related to US efforts to get Australia to boost its defence spending, with one saying it was a 'negotiating tactic'."

The government should cancel the AUKUS deal now. But we're also in for a fight to stop Albanese wasting millions more on weapons and war.

Millionaires still dodging tax

NINETY-ONE MILLIONAIRES managed to avoid paying any tax in Australia in the 2022-23 year, data released by the tax office shows. All of them earned more than one million dollars in that year alone.

In total they used \$390 million of tax deductions in order to avoid handing over any money.

This included an average of \$690,815 each just for the cost of managing their tax affairs, which is an allowable tax deduction. Among them were 19 people who avoided tax by donating \$291 million between them to charities, an average of \$15.4 million each.

Bezos' Venice wedding flaunts sickening wealth

AMAZON BILLIONAIRE Jeff Bezos has taken a break from space tourism to lavish up to \$116 million on a three-day wedding in Venice to former TV reporter and mere millionaire Lauren Sanchez.

Bezos, the fourth richest person on the planet, arrived on his \$500 million mega-yacht.

About 90 private jets descended on the city as guests including Ivanka Trump and Jared Kushner, Bill Gates, Oprah Winfrey, Open AI's Sam Altman, Crown Prince Hussein of Jordan, most of the Kardashian-Jenner family and other celebrities including Leonardo DiCaprio arrived.

Venice's mayor was anxious to accept their money. But the billionaire faced a hostile reception from many locals and an array of protest groups.

As one activist put it, "as governments talk about hard choices and struggle to fund public services, Jeff Bezos can afford to shut down half a city for days on end just to get married".

The couple were forced to move the venue for the main reception from a 16th century building in the city centre, after protest groups planned to block roads and flood the surrounding canals with inflatable crocodiles to stop guests from arriving.

They were forced to move to the more secure Arsenale, a historic shipyard complex surrounded by fortified walls.

It's no secret why Bezos can afford such a lavish display. Amazon delivery drivers aren't allowed to go to the bathroom to ensure they meet their schedules. Warehouse workers are pushed so hard 70 per cent say they have to regularly take unpaid time off work due to exhaustion or injury.

And Bezos is a serial tax evader who paid a tax rate of 1.1 per cent as he accumulated billions in wealth.

As activist groups declared in a huge banner, "If you can rent Venice for your wedding, you can pay more tax".

EDITORIAL

Albanese the US and Israel's partner in crime over bombing Iran

DONALD TRUMP'S bombing of Iran was a bloody extension of the genocide in Gaza and risked a major escalation of war across the Middle East. Yet Anthony Albanese was quick to offer Labor's full support.

The attack on Iran was an act of unbridled aggression driven by the determination of the US to give maximum support to Israel and entrench its own domination of the region.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu claimed Iran "could be a year" or "a few months" away from building a nuclear weapon. This was a re-run of the concocted claims about non-existent weapons of mass destruction used to justify war on Iraq in 2003.

But Albanese unequivocally backed Trump, "The world has long agreed that Iran cannot be allowed to get a nuclear weapon. And we support action to prevent that."

Albanese also claimed the bombing was "unilateral action taken by the United States", implying Australia wasn't involved. But he refused to answer questions about what role the Pine Gap spy base near Alice Springs played in the attack.

The facility is vital to gathering US satellite intelligence for the area covering the Middle East and Iran. The base consistently provides critical information for US and Israeli missile targeting.

Albanese likes to pretend that Australia "isn't a central player" in Israel's wars. But Australia is a key US ally and plays an important role backing Israel. It exports crucial parts for Israel's F-35 fighter jets as well as other weapons. Canberra-based Electro Optic Systems (EOS) has sold its R400 weapons system to Israel and company Droneshield's Dronegun MK4 weapons system is also in use by the Israeli military.

As *Solidarity* went to press there was news of a proposed 60 day ceasefire from Israel and the US. Hamas has long stated its willingness to free the remaining hostages in exchange for a final end to the war and Israel's withdrawal from Gaza. Israel is demanding that Hamas is disarmed, and its leaders deported.

Anything less than Israel's complete withdrawal will only set the scene for it to restart its killing after any ceasefire period, just as it has done before.

Backing US imperialism

Albanese has locked Labor into backing US imperialism and the drive to war, committing \$368 billion to buying



nuclear subs and expanding US bases across northern Australia.

Albanese will try to keep ducking the question of exactly what role Australia would play in any war with China. But the die is cast—Australia has become an integral part of the US imperialist machine. Under the AUKUS deal, naval base HMAS Stirling in Western Australia will effectively become a US submarine base from 2027.

Labor is spending almost \$1 billion establishing a domestic missile manufacturing hub in Newcastle that also opens in 2027.

The \$368 billion being spent on nuclear subs could fund a just transition to public-owned renewable power, could fund the NDIS, increase the dole and pay nurses and teachers a liveable wage.

Albanese has spent the time since his election win hosing down any hopes of real change. But the push for pro-business reform is gaining momentum.

Treasurer Jim Chalmers is holding an "economic reform roundtable" in August that's designed to find ways to boost productivity and deliver tax reform.

In a clear signal about the direction the government is heading, Chalmers says he wants "collaboration and compromise". Chalmers has invited Liberal Shadow Treasurer Ted O'Brien to attend, but not The Greens.

Meanwhile, Hannah Thomas, The Greens candidate who stood against

Photo: Fighting for sanctions on Israel is part of fighting Albanese's partnership with US imperialism
Photo: Matt Hrkac

Anthony Albanese, suffered facial injuries and may lose sight in one eye, after NSW police used anti-protest laws to attack a picket of SEC Plating, a company involved in the supply chain of parts for F-35 fighter jets.

Trump's bombing of Iran reveals that the fight for Palestine is a fight against the imperialist system. More people are horrified by the risk of war and disgusted by Albanese's ties to Trump. The growing disillusionment with Labor needs to be turned into active opposition.

Wharfies in France and Italy have used their industrial power to stop arms exports to Israel. In Los Angeles, thousands of ordinary people mobilised against deportations, surrounding workplaces like Home Depot to prevent ICE agents snatching undocumented migrants.

CFMEU workers in Brisbane showed how to fight when they walked off the job for 48 hours, following the High Court ruling in favour of Labor's Administration that controls their union.

Sanctions on Israel, closing Pine Gap, opposing AUKUS and the US alliance are part and parcel of the struggle against the system.

Linking the issues together and mobilising broader support from unions, religious and community groups is key to building a more powerful anti-imperialist movement with the power to impose sanctions and halt Albanese's growing militarism.

To end the horror in Gaza and fight for welfare not warfare we have to smash the system that builds the bombs.

.....
Trump's bombing of Iran reveals that the fight for Palestine is a fight against the imperialist system

Labor panders to big business with productivity push

By Adam Adelpour

TREASURER JIM Chalmers has declared “productivity” a centrepiece of the Labor government’s second term agenda.

Chalmers used his National Press Club speech in June to promote an upcoming economic round-table where 25 business, union and civil society groups will be brought together to discuss productivity, tax changes to deliver budget “sustainability”, and economic resilience.

Chalmers’ campaign about productivity is another indicator of the way Labor plans on pandering to big business instead of taking real action on the cost of living crisis.

Instead of using its huge majority to address inequality and improve workers’ lives, Chalmers wants to imitate the “economic reform” agenda of the Hawke and Keating Labor governments that drove down wages and delivered mass sackings.

The focus on productivity comes straight out of the wish list of big business lobby group the Business Council of Australia (BCA).

It has been beating the drum about “productivity” since well before the last election.

Back in 2023 its newly appointed chief Bran Black said his priority would be, “very much on the productivity levers that can be pulled across the board.”

For Black these “levers” include industrial relations, deregulation and tax reform: attacking workers’ rights, cutting taxes on business profits and reducing regulations like those that protect the environment.

When bosses and the BCA talk about “increasing productivity” they really mean generating more profits for themselves.

In June Bran Black said that the BCA, “would love to see company tax reduced”.

In the lead up to the summit the government has said it is considering new hand-outs for business including “tax incentives for new capital expenditure” and “streamlined major project approvals”.

In his National Press Club speech Jim Chalmers also pointed to planned government spending under the banner of Future Made in Australia as part of the productivity drive.

This includes a fortune for arms manufacturers from \$50 billion of



Above: Dockworkers in the US fighting automation, a way for bosses to boost productivity that comes at the expense of jobs

Photo: International Longshoremen’s Association

military spending.

What is productivity?

Productivity refers to the level of output the economy generates compared to its inputs—most importantly how much can be produced with a given amount of labour.

It can be increased through new labour-saving technology, for example robots or other machinery, but also through squeezing workers to work more intensely.

An example of how the push for productivity means increased work intensity is the widespread use of invasive software like Control.io. This is used for surveillance of employees who use computers and can track “active time” to generate a “productivity score”. This kind of software can record keystrokes and mouse movement, take screenshots, trace location, and even activate webcams and microphones.

In his National Press Club speech Jim Chalmers said that boosting productivity was about delivering “a better standard of living than we enjoy today.” This is rubbish.

Productivity increases often see companies sack workers, because they allow them to churn out the same level of production with less staff.

The productivity surge in 1990-91 during the Hawke-Keating years resulted in mass sackings and higher unemployment. The Australia Institute points out that: “firms instead sacked workers in their thousands and gave Australia an unemployment rate of 12 per cent by 1992. Productivity grew because there were fewer people working.”

Recent increases in productivity

have been going straight into corporate pockets, not to workers through higher wages.

According to analysis published by the Australia Institute, between 2000 and 2023 there was a 28 per cent increase in productivity while hourly wages went up just 10 per cent. In the ten years between 2012 and 2022 productivity economy-wide increased by 11 per cent but real wages fell by 0.2 per cent. As a result the wages share of GDP hit a new record low.

The jobs wipe-out in major super-market warehouses also shows what the reality of increased “productivity” can mean.

Both Woolworths and Coles have invested hundreds of millions in new automated warehouses to boost profits. Woolworths announced a wave of warehouse automation in 2020 saying it would mean 700 job cuts. Coles workers have faced a similar fate. Over 350 warehouse workers at Coles Smeaton Grange were disgracefully locked out for three months after they demanded better redundancy entitlements in the face of automation and warehouse closure in 2020.

Chalmers says Artificial Intelligence is another “key part of our productivity agenda” where there are “huge gains on offer” for business—dismissing union demands for “guardrails” through regulation to defend workers’ jobs.

Workers have no interest in boosting bosses’ profits or productivity. We need a bigger share of the profit workers already produce and relief from the cost of living crisis. But the only way to get that is to fight for it.

.....
The focus on productivity comes straight out of the wish list of the Business Council of Australia

High Court backs Labor's CFMEU takeover but it's not too late to fight

By Ian Rintoul

The High Court has unanimously dismissed the legal challenge to Labor's Administration of the CFMEU. But the legal decision does not make it right. It only confirms what CFMEU members and other unionists already knew—bad laws need to be broken.

The only option to fight Administration is an industrial and political campaign of rank-and-file resistance by CFMEU members and the building industry group of unions to win back membership control of the union.

That fight can't be put off any longer—waiting for the High Court decision has stalled the action needed to beat Administration for months.

The Administration has used that time to tighten its grip on the union. It's issued a Strategic Plan for control of the union until 2028. It's placed the ACT branch under Administration and removed the ACT acting secretary, Michael Hiscox, for daring to criticise Administration stooge Zach Smith's proposal for greater national control of the CFMEU. And it's employing new organisers of "good character" in NSW.

Now we can expect that Administration will move even further to try to consolidate its control. Administrator Mark Irving issued a statement to declare that the decision, "paves the way for necessary reforms for the Union". He is now planning "a national purge of union organisers", according to the Nine papers.

We need to be clear that there is no way to work with the Administration. The June CFMEU delegates' meeting of Queensland-Northern Territory Branch carried a motion calling for Zach Smith to resign from his Administration positions. Every workplace and branch should carry that same resolution.

But most importantly, workplace and mass meetings need to be called immediately to show the Labor government that the CFMEU will fight and to plan an industrial campaign to beat Administration. The first step should be to call another national strike.

Administration can be beaten

The national strike action last year showed what kind of campaign could win. After the two national stopwork rallies in August and September, the bosses' *Financial Review* moaned that Labor's Administration "is not going



Above: CFMEU members in Brisbane walk off the job in protest the day after the High Court ruling
Photo: Solidarity

to plan" and admitted that it was "struggling to make headway".

The CFMEU is central to the economy, with big infrastructure projects in every state. Neither the government nor the bosses will want to see their projects held up by strikes. The CFMEU has enough industrial power itself to defeat Administration and stand up to the construction bosses. With support from the ETU,

the plumbers' union, the construction division of the AMWU and the MUA, a defiant industrial campaign has the power to force the Labor government to back down.

Labor and the bosses want a tame-cat union. But it's defiant industrial action that has kept building workers safe at work. It's industrial action that can keep the union strong and restore rank-and-file control.

Brisbane CFMEU members stop work in defiance after High Court rules

THOUSANDS OF angry Brisbane construction workers walked off the job on the day following the High Court decision, assembling outside the union's office, where they voted for a 48-hour strike. It was exactly the kind of response needed.

Workers paralysed the Cross River Rail, the 360 Queen Street project, the mega Brisbane Water-front development project and many other sites.

Mark, a scaffolder said, "This union was placed into Administration... apparently to flush out crime and corruption. Where is it? Where's our allegations, where's our trials, where's our court dates, where's our handcuffs? I see nothing".

"I'm angry that this union has been fucking taken off us", said Ashley, a Health and Safety Representative. "When injustice becomes law, resistance becomes duty".

Jade Ingham, the Assistant State Secretary sacked by the Administration takeover, said, "We've got to be patient. We've got to be disciplined", he said, and to a huge roar of approval, "We've got to be militant".

After the vote to strike was

taken, workers received a text message from the Administrator saying, "CFMEU members are urged to return to work. We ask all members to work with the Union to ensure that it is returned to democratic control as soon as possible". This text message was read out and received a derogatory laugh.

Administrator Mark Irving later declared the, "action this morning is likely to be unlawful industrial action".

The spirit of defiance in Brisbane shows the way forward. It is the willingness of the CFMEU to defy the anti-strike laws to fight for safety and better wages in construction that the Administration and the government want to break.

Mass stopwork action needs to spread nationally. Yet so far there is no discussion of this outside Queensland, and even there leading delegates have decided not to call further action.

But the action in Brisbane shows that construction workers have the power to overturn Administration and win back control of the union.

Mark Gillespie

.....
The CFMEU has enough industrial power itself to defeat Administration

Dockworkers in Europe stop weapons shipments to Israel

By Caitlin Boyce

DOCKWORKERS IN France and Italy have taken industrial action to stop weapons exports to Israel, showing the kind of action needed to stop the Gaza genocide.

On 4 June, French dockworkers in Marseille refused to load 14 tons of weapons parts destined for Israel, forcing a ZIM ship to depart without its cargo.

These parts were allegedly bound for Israel Military Industries, a subsidiary of Elbit Systems, one of Israel's largest arms manufacturers. Their union federation, the CGT (General Confederation of Labour) supported the action and called for an ban on weapons exports.

"We are very proud of this action led by our comrades, and which is part of the CGT's long internationalist tradition for peace," CGT secretary general Sophie Binet said.

This sparked similar action in Italy where the Genoa Port Workers' Collective, with the backing of the Unione Sindacale di Base (USB), picketed to prevent the same ZIM ship from docking. Protests were also organised against the ship at several other Italian ports.

The Italian dockers used the momentum of this victory to call a general strike on 20 June. Outside of the defence manufacturer Leonardo's facilities in Rome, Naples, Turin, Florence, and Catania they rallied together under the slogan "Lower the weapons, raise the wages".

The protest took aim at the Meloni government's complicity in the genocide through arms transfers, as well as rising defence spending. One USB member said the government's "war policies" do "nothing but impoverish an Italian population already burdened by inflation and low wages".

This builds on several years of organising. In November 2023 the European Dockworkers Council brought together 14 unions across 12 countries for a "day of action against war and for world peace". Later that same month, dockworkers in Barcelona announced a ban on handling any arms shipments to Israel. In December, Belgian transport workers did the same.

In October 2024, dockworkers from Greece's Port of Piraeus stopped a shipment of ammunition going to Israel. The Swedish Dockworkers



Above: CGT members in France rallying for Palestine
Photo: CGT

Union voted in February this year to stage a six-day boycott of all military cargo coming to and from Israel. In retaliation, the union's national deputy chair Erik Helgeson was sacked.

Workers at the Tangier Med port in Morocco also refused to work a Maersk ship suspected of transporting F-35 fighter jet parts to Israel in April, following mass protests against the ship.

These actions show the power of industrial bans and strikes to disrupt the Israeli war machine—and the importance of building opposition to the genocide in Gaza among unions and the working class. As one Palestinian trade unionist living in the UK recently wrote, "The task ahead is to ensure that such solidarity is not exceptional but woven into the fabric of our unions".

Union action key

Australian unions have adopted this strategy in past struggles to great success, both against apartheid in South Africa and the Vietnam War.

The Maritime Union of Australia supported a series of "Block the Boat" actions against ZIM shipping, a company heavily involved in importing and exporting military supplies from Israel, beginning in late 2023 at ports in Sydney, Fremantle and Melbourne. Union members agreed not to cross community blockades in a promising demonstration of solidarity and support for Palestine.

The scale of Israel's genocide in Gaza is now clearer than ever. Palestinians are being routinely gunned down at aid distribution sites whilst trying to access food. In the occupied West Bank, control over movement through lockdowns and checkpoints has intensified. Simultaneously, systematic raids, arrests, and expulsions continue, and a major fuel crisis is emerging.

There is a renewed opening to push for union action here, with a significant statement released by the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU) last month supporting sanctions against Israel and calling for the Australian government to end "all military trade (including parts and components) with Israel and working with other governments to ensure that Australian exports are not contributing to breaches of international law".

This has helped push other unions to take a stronger stand. The NSW nurses union's Committee of Delegates recently endorsed a statement calling for a "medical boycott of Israel" including cutting ties with Syqe Medical and Teva Pharmaceuticals.

The task at hand is to push for more union mobilisation for the protests for Palestine and action around workplace ties to Israel. This can help build towards unions taking industrial action for Palestine, and build the pressure for sanctions. We have to redouble our efforts to support unions taking up the fight for Palestine.

Workers in Italy rallied together under the slogan 'Lower the weapons, raise the wages'

UTS cuts ties with Technion in a win for Palestine campaigners

By Ali Al-lami

THE UNIVERSITY of Technology Sydney (UTS) has officially ended its Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Israeli Institute of Technology (Technion), following almost a year of consistent pressure and campaigning by students and staff.

Technion has been a core part of Israel's military and weapons development since 1948. It is deeply enmeshed with the Israeli arms industry, contributing to the ongoing genocide in Gaza through helping companies such as Elbit and Rafael develop military technology.

Technion helped develop the remote controlled D9 bulldozers used to demolish Palestinian homes in the occupied territories.

Since 2010, UTS had quietly maintained an MOU with Technion, facilitated by the Faculty of Science. The partnership involved student exchange programs, joint research, and use of UTS facilities. It was due for renewal in June 2025.

UTS Staff for Palestine obtained internal university documents through Freedom of Information that exposed the partnership in August 2024. Activists then began organising with a clear demand: cut ties with Technion.

The UTS Student Association (UTSSA), the UTS Palestine Society (Palsoc), and UTS Staff for Palestine all backed the campaign.

The UTS NTEU branch adopted a formal position of support for the Boycott Divestment and Sanctions campaign in September 2024, reiterating a demand UTS cut ties with Israel and citing the Technion link in particular.

This helped build momentum towards the national NTEU Council meeting where BDS became the formal position of the union.

Protests

Technion was a focus of a student and staff National Day of Action on 23 October 2024. Around 100 students and staff from Sydney Uni marched to join 60 others at UTS.

The protest stormed into the UTS Engineering building and occupied it for around 30 minutes, demanding the university cut ties with Technion. The building houses the office of Professor Michael Blumenstein, Technion Australia board member and UTS Pro Vice Chancellor (Business Creation



Above: Protesting UTS's ties with Technion in October last year Photo: Solidarity

and Major Facilities).

In December, UTS staff and students helped organise a protest at the Technion 100th Anniversary Dinner in Sydney.

Another National Day of Action on 26 March this year saw 70 staff and students protest at UTS.

Repression

The campaign for Palestine at UTS

has faced continual repression.

In October 2024, when a health science researcher tried to organise a seminar on "The Health Crisis in Gaza" the event was banned and the room booking cancelled due to a "risk assessment", with the staff member threatened with misconduct if he went ahead. Students responded by taking over the room to watch a Zoom meeting of the seminar at the scheduled time.

Yet in April this year under the same risk assessment management allowed Israel-is, an organisation set up to promote the Israeli Defense Forces, to bring former Israeli soldiers onto UTS to speak.

Students were told a speakout against this would be considered an unauthorised protest under campus policy and students could be issued with move on orders. The protest went ahead regardless.

The win at UTS follows campaigns that have successfully ended student exchange partnerships with the Hebrew University at University of WA, Ben Gurion University at Curtin Uni, and the Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design at Sydney Uni.

We need to keep fighting to end all university ties with Israel. This kind of campaigning can help broaden support for Palestine on university campuses, and build support for wider demands for Anthony Albanese to cut ties with Israel.

Vivid exposed for links with Airbnb and Israel's apartheid

THE CAMPAIGN demanding Vivid cut ties with Airbnb has focused attention on the company's collaboration with illegal Israeli settlements and Israel's illegal occupation of Palestinian land.

Dozens of artists backed the call for Vivid to drop its Airbnb sponsorship, sharing statements on Instagram to their thousands of followers.

All up 36 artists and acts signed an open letter to drop the Airbnb sponsorship.

On top of this, 24 acts, artists and writers withdrew from Vivid in protest.

When the campaign began, few knew that Airbnb was listed by the international Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement as

a pressure target. It is also on the UN database of companies linked to illegal Israeli settlements in the West Bank.

Now thousands of fans and artists across the music scene are angry about Vivid and the NSW government's decision to partner with a company that supports Israel's system of apartheid. It shows that there are links with Israel's genocide almost everywhere—including in Sydney's largest music and arts festival, Vivid.

The Vivid campaign shows how the fight to cut institutional ties in our workplaces, universities and local communities can deepen the awareness about Israel's crimes and build the fight to end them.

Since 2010, UTS had maintained a partnership with Technion involving exchange programs, joint research, and use of UTS facilities

Striking mental health workers put Victorian Labor on notice

By Tom Fiebig

UP TO 500 public mental health workers across Victoria held a state-wide strike on 17 June, demanding that Victorian Premier Jacinta Allan deliver fair pay and urgent reform to the state's overwhelmed mental health system.

Organised by the Health and Community Services Union (HACSU), workers travelled from across Victoria to rally outside Trades Hall before marching to Parliament House.

The latest offer from the Labor State Government is "appalling and disrespectful", Karolyn, an occupational therapist lead, told *Solidarity*.

"They're offering us (OTs and social workers) 15 per cent over four years while nurses—in the same role—are being offered 28 per cent."

In addition to fair wages, the workers are demanding safer staffing levels and increased government funding—as well as more action to implement the recommendations of the 2021 Royal Commission into Victoria's mental health system.

Occupational therapists, mental health nurses, social workers, lived experience workers, and admin staff from inpatient units, aged care facilities, emergency teams, and community outreach services all joined the strike.

Workers from the different disciplines addressed the rally. One nurse warned that the government's position, "threatens to tear the heart out of our mental health system".

Victoria's director of lived experience delivered one of the most powerful speeches, saying: "This government wants our hope without our power, our trauma in brochures and our pain in press conferences, our stories without our leadership, our labour without fair pay."

One group carried a banner reading "772 too many," referencing last year's suicide rate in Victoria.

The strike followed 11 months of negotiations between HACSU and the State Labor Government.

A previous offer was rejected in late 2024, and an earlier statewide strike in April brought only minor concessions.

HACSU State Secretary Paul Healy explained: "Mental health workers have had it. It's clear this government doesn't value the critical work they do and have no real appetite



Above: Mental health workers on strike in Melbourne
Photo: Solidarity

for reforming the system. Our members will not stop fighting for each other, consumers and their families to deliver an equitable system for all. The government needs to stop trying to split our workforces with disrespectful offers or they'll face a reckoning".

The Allan Government says there is no more money for mental health due to the state's debt levels. It wants to cut spending on public sector workers.

The union needs to step up the strike action to win.

Victorian teachers start to fight the school underfunding crisis

HUNDREDS OF enraged teacher unionists rallied outside Victorian Education Minister Ben Carroll's office after school on 19 June, demanding the Labor government reverse its cut to public schools.

With major fanfare, the state and federal Labor governments made a major pre-election declaration to fully fund every public school to 100 per cent of the school resource standard. Despite rank-and-file members' demands to see the actual agreements, and details about when schools would see the money, the AEU rolled out a federal election campaign uncritically celebrating Labor's commitment to full funding.

But cabinet-in-confidence documents reveal that the Victorian Labor government had already decided to delay its funding increases until 2031. This means the Federal government will also delay its increases, resulting in \$2.4 billion less funding than they committed to.

The Victorian Budget in May confirmed the cuts. The public schools EBA expires in December and there is no money for any increases to the wages of the worst paid teachers in Australia.

The funding shortfall for Victo-

rian public schools could easily be met by prioritising education over the Allan government's \$1.6 billion to "back in Victoria's new bail laws", which includes more than 300 prison guards for children's prisons, each paid an \$8000 sign-on bonus. It could also easily be paid for from the \$9.7 billion unallocated "contingency fund".

AEU members are more than ready to strike for the wages and conditions that would relieve the crisis in public schools.

But the leadership are so anxious to abide by the suffocating anti-strike laws that they block any motions that suggest members should be preparing for strike action, for fear they might make us look like we aren't bargaining in "good faith".

But good faith from the government is well and truly out the window. Members need to keep strengthening our rank-and-file networks. We need to use our strike pledges and sub-branch and regional meetings to assert our "red lines" and discuss the kinds of defiant action we will need. When it comes to calling, and calling off, strike action, members need to be in control.

Lucy Honan

In addition to fair wages, the workers are demanding safer staffing levels and increased government funding

Albanese fails to act as deaths in custody and imprisonment surge

By Angus Dermody

ON 27 May, Kumanjayi White, a 24-year-old Warlpiri man, was killed by off-duty police in Coles in Alice Springs.

At least 598 Aboriginal people have died in custody since the 1991 Royal Commission and there were more tragic deaths in June.

At Darwin airport on 7 June, racist police took an Elder from Wadeye in the NT into “protective custody”, claiming he was drunk. He obviously required care and was finally taken to hospital where he died.

In Parklea prison in Sydney, inmates staged protests on 28 June after the death of Wayne Green, a 41-year-old Aboriginal man. Cellmates report he had been unwell for days prior but was also refused care, before being taken to Westmead hospital.

The protest led to a lock-down in the facility and negotiations between prisoner delegates and management.

Law and order crackdown

Around two-thirds of the prisoners in Parklea are on remand—denied bail and awaiting trial.

New, harsh laws expanding the “presumption against bail” are a key part of a racist “law and order” crack down by state and territory governments driving an explosion in Aboriginal prison numbers.

In the NT, the number of unsentenced prisoners is up 33 per cent since the Country Liberal Party (CLP) took power in August last year. Prisoners are often kept in police watch-houses in conditions an Alice Springs Supreme Court Justice Judith Kelly described in April as “inhuman”.

Kelly said women on remand were being held almost 20 to a cell, with only two toilets “and a water bubbler filled with vomit”.

If the NT was a country, its incarceration rate would be the second highest in the world, behind only El Salvador. Eight-eight per cent of adults and 100 per cent of juveniles in prison are Aboriginal.

In Queensland, Liberal Premier David Crisafulli’s “adult crime, adult time” laws have been criticised by the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Torture as “incompatible with basic child rights”. Crisafulli’s reply was to tell the UN, “You don’t control me, and I don’t answer to you”.

Both NSW Labor Premier Chris



Above: Rally demanding Justice for Kumanjayi White in Sydney
Photo: Solidarity

Minns and NT Country Liberal Chief Minister Lia Finocchiaro have fronted press conferences bragging about big increases in prison numbers—both adults and children—and promised more.

In June, the NT government launched further shocking attacks, announcing a plan to give guns to “public safety officers” in public housing and on buses, at the same time as new signs go up on public transport banning travel in “dirty or stained clothes”.

Fightback

Despite the media bravado, Finocchiaro is under fire.

Strong calls for justice from Kumanjayi White’s family have been a lightning rod for opposition to the CLP’s punitive agenda. Thousands of people across the country have joined protests for justice, supporting family demands for an independent investigation and immediate release of CCTV footage.

The Human Rights Commission, Land Councils, trade unions, legal services and many other organisations are also supporting the family, demanding an end to police investigating police.

Even Labor’s Indigenous Affairs Minister Malarndirri McCarthy has said an independent investigation is warranted, citing lack of trust between Aboriginal communities and the police.

Albanese is under increasing pressure to act—both in the White case and the broader crises of incarceration and deaths in custody. There has been a 32 per cent increase in Indigenous prison numbers since Albanese took power—from 12,820 in May 2022 to 16,876 in

June this year.

When pushed on this crisis, he says the justice system “is run by states and territories”.

This cuts no ice with Aboriginal people who have suffered under attacks from the Federal government.

Ned Jampijinpa Hargraves, the grandfather of Kumanjayi White, released an open letter to Albanese to mark the anniversary of NT Intervention, launched by the Howard government on 21 June 2007 with the support of Labor:

“Canberra used its power to take away all our rights, our jobs and our assets with the NT Intervention 18 years ago today. Our communities were devastated and we have not recovered.

“Now we demand action from Canberra to see that our rights are restored and we are protected from the racist CLP government”.

The Central Land Council is demanding Albanese withhold funding from the NT government until the NT sets up an independent body to investigate police.

Albanese could make funding conditional on reforms in all states that would free Aboriginal people. He could support rights to land and culture and urgently fund the housing, employment and social services required to address underlying causes of incarceration.

The momentum built up around the campaign for justice for Kumanjayi White needs to escalate into a fight that can push back the law and order offensive and put Aboriginal rights back on the agenda.

.....
There has been a 32 per cent increase in Indigenous prison numbers since Albanese took power

LA rebellion takes on deportations and Trump regime

By Maeve Larkins

LOS ANGELES has risen up in rebellion against Donald Trump and a brutal effort to round up undocumented migrants for deportation.

The protests began on 6 June, when ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement) agents launched a 30-day operation aimed at kidnapping undocumented migrants from workplaces across the city.

They began by raiding Home Depot stores and the fashion district. "The response from our side was swift. Activists and nearby community members began an immediate protest," immigrant rights activist and Marx21 member Victor Fernandez explained. Protests marched from the site of the initial raid at Home Depot on the federal detention centre where those arrested were being held, blocking ICE agents inside the building.

For several days ICE raids across the city faced ongoing protests. "Some neighborhoods looked like warzones as the LAPD used their 'less-lethal' stun grenades and tear gas against protesters", Marx 21 reported.

Tens of thousands took to the streets, clashing with ICE and the LAPD. Trump responded by sending in 4000 National Guard troops as well as 700 Marines, threatening to use the Insurrection Act and claiming that LA had been, "invaded and occupied by illegal aliens and criminals."

But Juan Jose Gutierrez of the Full Immigrants Rights Coalition told *Socialist Worker*, "The vast majority of people protesting are US citizens who are the children of migrants. They are sick and tired of the abuse, the racism and elitist policies. That is why people are on the streets."

Grassroots networks involving unionists and community activists have organised alert systems involving roaming patrols of activists, so that when ICE is spotted in an area there can be a swift response.

David Huerta, President of SEIU California—one of the state's largest unions representing nearly a million public sector workers—was beaten and arrested during one of the first community mobilisations, responding as part of a community defence coalition against the raids.

Workers' resistance to ICE also came through other channels. As Marx21 reported, "the community held protests outside the AC hotel in



Pasadena. Ice agents were not only staying but demanding hotel workers present identity documents based on racial profiling alone.

"The protest managed to boot Ice out of one Pasadena hotel."

LA has a huge migrant population, with around one in three residents foreign born, and around one million undocumented migrants, the majority of them living in the US for over a decade.

Undocumented migrants make a large part of California's workforce. In sectors like agriculture and construction, undocumented migrants account for over a quarter of the workforce.

Deportation agenda

"The reason the raids are increasing now is because Trump's deportation agenda is not working. They haven't been able to deport as many people as they promised", Marx21's Clare Fester said.

Trump said during the election he would deport 15-20 million undocumented migrants. His approval rating has sunk as his sweeping tariffs threaten to worsen the economic crisis facing ordinary Americans.

Trump hopes to use anti-migrant racism to distract from his failings and rally support from his racist support base. At the end of May, Trump's administration tripled its daily deportation target to 3000. It also instructed ICE to stop prioritising criminals and instead to target workplaces where undocumented migrants are known to seek jobs.

Above: Hundreds of thousands hit the streets of Los Angeles during the nationwide "No Kings" protest
Photo: Luke Harold/
Flickr

During one raid on a garment factory in LA, ICE agents, dressed in full military garb and masks to conceal their identities, lined up 30 migrant workers against a wall and interrogated them. Detainees have been bussed to Federal Detention Centres, some later to be flown on to Guantanamo Bay, where a detention centre is being built to house 30,000 detainees.

But Trump's targeting of migrants who have lived and worked in the US for years is far less popular than his promises to go after criminals during the election.

Polling shows that while 68 per cent "broadly favoured" deportations, it is just 41 per cent when it comes to undocumented migrants who have been residents for years, have jobs, and no criminal record.

The protests in LA quickly sparked solidarity across the US. A nationwide "No Kings" day of action saw over 2000 protests nationwide. Hundreds of thousands took to the streets of LA, up to 100,000 in Philadelphia and 200,000 in New York. One estimate said five million joined the protests across the US.

These protests have killed the idea that Trump's regime can't be fought. Hundreds of undocumented migrants have been saved from detention, ICE vehicles have been torched and riot cops have been forced to retreat.

The fight against Trump is deepening, showing in real time that mass protest can cripple his regime. It's the kind of fightback we need to take on our own rulers here.

For several days ICE raids across the city faced ongoing protests

Trump's Iran bombing another face of 'America First' imperialism

By James Supple

TRUMP'S BOMBING of Iran was another nail in the coffin of the supposed "rules-based international order". The war was an open act of imperialist aggression by Israel and the US. And it was blatantly illegal under international law.

Israel claimed a pre-emptive right to self-defence on the basis of Iran's nuclear program. But Iran isn't even trying to build a nuclear bomb, according to US intelligence assessments.

The rules-based order has only ever been an instrument of US power, and the US has continually flouted it anyway, such as its illegal invasion of Iraq in 2003. But Trump's approach far more nakedly uses US power to boost its imperialist interests.

His "America first" policy has seen the US lean on supposed friends such as Canada, Mexico and Panama to gain advantage for US companies. He uses tariffs as a way to bully rivals and allies alike from China to Europe.

His strikes on Iran show he's prepared to use military force to impose US imperialist interests as well.

Trump also had a success at the NATO summit in June, with all the NATO allies except Spain agreeing to lift military spending to 5 per cent of GDP.

Europe bent the knee to Trump and US power, with the NATO chief Mark Rutte messaging him to say, "Congratulations and thank you for your decisive action in Iran, that was truly extraordinary", and declaring he was getting "another big success" with Europe's commitment to increase military spending.

This appeasement of Trump by the US's NATO allies came after he said he wouldn't defend Europe unless they paid more of the share of NATO's costs. Trump's dressing down of Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and threat to cut off US military aid against Russia added to their fears.

The end result is a win for Trump, who hopes to reduce the economic burden of the US's military commitment to Europe.

The tensions between the imperialist powers make the world a much more dangerous place, generating more potential military conflict and the chance that it spirals out of control.

Trump's decision to bomb Iran directly ran the risk of retaliation



Above: Europe rolls out the red carpet as part of efforts to bow down to Trump at the NATO summit
Photo: Daniel Torok / White House

against US targets that could have seen US troops killed, triggering escalating US attacks on Iran.

Trump posed as a peace candidate during his run for president last year. A section of his MAGA support base is also hostile to US involvement in another ongoing Middle Eastern war.

Trump supporter and far right media personality Tucker Carlson savaged Republican Senator Ted Cruz in an interview over his support for military action aimed at regime change in Iran.

Even Trump probably understands that a full-scale US war against Iran, putting US troops on the ground, would end in disaster. Invading Iran would be even more costly than the failed US invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq after 2001.

This shows the limits to US power, and explains why Trump bombed Iran but quickly announced a ceasefire two days later.

Israel the watchdog

Israeli President Benjamin Netanyahu is celebrating the fact that the US seized the opportunity to deliver Iran a decisive blow.

Israel told the US it would attack by June whether or not it had US support, according to the *Washington Post*. But the US has also unequivocally backed Israel's genocide in Gaza and its war in Lebanon.

This is the same bloody collaboration that has existed between Israel

and the US for decades.

The US arms Israel as an attack dog for US interests, that is willing to discipline any state in the region that threatens US dominance. While the US has lifted sanctions on Syria, Israel has occupied parts of Syria and zealously bombed military bases and missile launchers that could have threatened the US and Israel.

The US control over Israel and its capacity to stop the genocide in Gaza was graphically on display when Trump demanded Israel halt the bombing of Iran. He fumed to reporters that "they don't know what the fuck they're doing" and told Netanyahu to turn around planes en route to bomb Iran.

Trump has shifted the imperialist balance of power to the US's advantage in the Middle East and in Europe. The US will hope to extend the Abraham Accords with the Arab states to entrench Israel as an accepted power in the region. Trump also hopes the US military will be freer to concentrate on China.

But Israel and the US's unrestrained brutality in Gaza, Lebanon and Iran means the bitterness felt by the working class and oppressed across the region is greater than ever. The power of Iran's working class could be seen in the 1979 uprising that toppled the Shah. The revolutions in 2011 struck fear into the hearts of Arab dictators. It is that power that holds the hope of settling accounts with Israel and US imperialism.

.....
Bombing Iran directly ran the risk of retaliation against US targets that could have triggered escalation

US AND ISRAELI ONSLAUGHT AIMS TO PUNISH IRAN'S DEFIANCE

Iran's regime poses a challenge to US dominance of the Middle East, but is not a genuine alternative to imperialism, writes **James Supple**

A CEASEFIRE on Iran after 12 days of brutal US and Israeli bombing is still holding.

Over 600 people were left dead, the Iranian government said, after Israel targeted residential apartment towers and densely populated areas in the capital Tehran.

But with Trump demanding Iran deliver an "unconditional surrender" and capitulate to US demands over its nuclear program, the underlying tensions are unresolved.

Shamefully the Australian government backed both Israel's attacks and the US bombing. Foreign Minister Penny Wong labelled "Iran's nuclear and ballistic missile program" as "a threat to international peace and security", while Anthony Albanese declared, "The world has long agreed Iran cannot be allowed to get a nuclear weapon, and we support action to prevent that."

Most Western governments did the same, with Germany's Chancellor Friedrich Merz even praising Israel's attacks as, "the dirty work Israel is doing for all of us".

This slavish support for Trump is more sickening warmongering from world leaders. Israel has spent 18 months butchering Palestinians and already has at least 90 nuclear warheads.

It is a rogue state unleashing unrestrained military aggression across the whole region as it continues to bomb Lebanon, Syria and Yemen and steps up its genocide in Gaza and the West Bank. Yet it continues to be armed and backed by the West.

In March, US director of national intelligence Tulsi Gabbard admitted that US intelligence officials had concluded Iran was not working to build a nuclear bomb and had never restarted a nuclear weapons project dismantled in 2003.

Trump says he wants negotiations with Iran for a deal over its nuclear program. Yet he tore up the previ-

ous agreement, signed under Barack Obama's administration, in 2018. Instead Trump sought to impose what he called "maximum pressure" on Iran, through sanctions designed to cripple its economy and punish the population in the hope the regime would fall.

Trump admitted on social media after Israel began bombing that he had "told" Iran there would be a massive military strike if it didn't give in to his demands.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has been pushing for years for military strikes against Iranian nuclear sites.

Yet Israel's attack has gone far beyond targeting nuclear facilities. It also assassinated a swathe of senior Iranian military leaders, including the head of its armed forces Mohammad Bagheri and the leader of its elite Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps Hossein Salami.

Covert Mossad operations attempted to cripple Iranian air defences so that Israel could bomb targets at will. Israel also targeted ballistic missile facilities in an effort to reduce Iran's capacity to respond.

It also hit regime targets including Iranian national television studios and the Evin prison.

The attack on Iran shows how Israel's aggression serves the interests of US imperialism. Israel is again acting as an attack dog for US interests.

This is the barbaric relationship between the US and Israel that has played out in the latest round of Israeli aggression: Israel extends its control over historic Palestine, assisting the US to entrench its place as the major imperialist power in the region.

Imperialist control

The US and Israel set out to inflict as much damage on Iran as possible. This was designed to humble a state that challenges the dominance of US

The US has never forgiven Iran for the revolution in 1979 that removed one of its most loyal servants, the Shah

power in the Middle East. Iran's size and population mean it has always been a significant regional power.

But the US has never forgiven Iran for the revolution in 1979 that removed one of the US's most loyal servants, the Shah of Iran.

The Shah rose to power through a coup in 1953 organised by US and British intelligence services, overthrowing the elected government of Mohammad Mosaddegh, which had nationalised the oil industry previously controlled by Western companies.

The Shah's regime was central to US efforts to control the region's oil supplies, hosting the CIA's Middle East headquarters.

After he was overthrown, the US backed an Iraqi invasion in 1980 and supported Iraq in the devastating eight-year war between Iraq and Iran that killed a million people.

The latest war is a continuation of decades of imperialist savagery designed to force Iran into submission.

The US has imposed economic sanctions that have driven much of the population into poverty, preventing Iran from exporting oil or trading with other countries, and producing mass unemployment and inflation of around 40 per cent.

Axis of resistance

The Iranian government lends support to what it calls an "axis of resistance" to Israel and US imperialism across the region.

But despite the courage of resistance organisations such as Hamas and Hezbollah their approach of armed struggle has been unable to defeat the Israeli military that is armed and backed by US imperialism.

Since October 2023, Israel has launched wars all across the region, repeatedly bombing Gaza, Lebanon, Syria, Yemen and Iran. It seized control of more territory in Syria fol-

lowing the fall of the Assad regime in December and significantly weakened Iranian influence through dealing blows to its proxies like Hezbollah in Lebanon.

However, Iran's dictatorial rulers have been careful to avoid an all-out confrontation with Israel themselves.

Israel's bombing caused serious damage but did not strike any decisive blow. Iran's capacity to strike targets inside Israel, however, has been limited. It caused damage to residential areas in Tel Aviv and Haifa and successfully struck some targets but Israel, with support once again from the US, intercepted most of its missiles.

Iran's nuclear program has been set back but not obliterated. An initial assessment from the US Defense Intelligence Agency concluded that it was capable of repairing it within months.

Some at least of Iran's stockpile of 400 kilograms of uranium enriched to 60 per cent, which could be converted to weapons grade through further processing, was probably moved and remains intact.

But it is clear that Iran's axis of resistance is not the force that can break US imperialism in the Middle East. A serious challenge to Israel and US imperialism requires mass struggle from below across the region. It requires toppling the corrupt rulers of the Arab states including Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Jordan, who have failed to lift a finger to oppose Israel all through the genocide in Gaza.

The Egyptian government has just used its police and security forces to block the Global March to Gaza, which aimed to deliver aid to the starving and besieged Palestinian population.

The working class has the power not just to bring down these regimes and to win real democratic control of society but to end Israel's apartheid state. Workers' strike action could impose a blockade on oil, gas and other trade and ban Israeli shipping.

There was a glimpse of this possibility during the Arab revolutions in 2011. Workers played a key role in forcing the Egyptian dictator Hosni Mubarak from power. The revolution opened the Rafah gate to Gaza. But the Egyptian army regrouped and seized power in 2014.

In Iran in 1979 it was also the working class, most importantly the oil workers, that dealt the death blow to the repressive Western-backed regime of the Shah. It is mass revolutionary struggle that holds the key to transforming the Middle East.



Above: Damage from Israeli bombing in Tehran

US bombing won't bring democracy in Iran

IRAN TODAY is a religious dictatorship where Shiite Islamic clerics hold ultimate power. The Islamic regime consolidated power after 1979 through a counter-revolution against the Iranian working class movement and the left.

Behind its religious facade Iran is a capitalist country where clerics and supporters of the regime have amassed great fortunes through control of major industries.

The number of millionaires has increased to around 250,000 while over 30 per cent of the population live in poverty. A decade ago then President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad claimed that just 300 people controlled 60 per cent of the country's wealth.

Trade unions and protests are illegal. In 2022 tens of thousands took to the streets as part of the "woman, life, freedom" protests against laws that demand women wear the hijab. The regime killed more than 500 people and arrested 22,000 protesters.

There is deep opposition to the regime that has produced continuous waves of protest.

Netanyahu and Trump have justified the war on Iran through appeals for regime change.

But the bombing does nothing to help the fight for democracy in Iran.

It only strengthens the regime, allowing it to present itself as defending the nation and its people from the death raining down from the skies. And it gives them an excuse to step up the arrests and imprisonment of opposition figures, branding them

agents of foreign powers.

Some who have supported protests against the regime in the past have swung back behind the regime. Football legend Ali Daei, who backed the woman, life, freedom movement declared, "I prefer to die rather than be a traitor," siding with the regime against foreigners making war on Iran.

US sanctions and the threat of war through the 1990s only strengthened Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein against internal opposition. The Iran-Iraq war in the 1980s also entrenched Iranian clerical rule. Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Khomeini called it a "godsend" for the opportunity it presented to consolidate his power.

Many opponents of the Iranian government have spoken out against the bombing. Four Kurdish women's activists issued a statement against the war from inside Evin prison arguing, "Our liberation... from the dictatorship ruling the country is possible through the struggle of the masses and by resorting to social forces—not by clinging to foreign powers or placing hopes in them".

A group of six trade unions released another statement opposing the war, saying, "The workers and toilers of this country are justifiably outraged and fed up with the rule of the Islamic Republic", but they "hold no illusions that the United States and Israel intend to bring us freedom, equality, or justice".

Opposing US and Israeli bombing is vital to supporting the struggle against the regime inside Iran.

VALE RAY PECKHAM: ABORIGINAL SOCIALIST WHO CHANGED HISTORY

Paddy Gibson, Wendy Bowles and John Nolan look at the life of legendary working class Aboriginal activist Ray Peckham, and the lessons from his victories for Aboriginal rights

RAYMOND EDWARD Peckham (Uncle Ray) died on 6 June in Dubbo, aged 95. Uncle Ray was one of the most important Aboriginal leaders of the 20th Century. He was a committed Marxist and trade unionist and a long-term member of the Communist Party of Australia (CPA).

Ray travelled extensively during the 1950s and 1960s, visiting Aboriginal reserves and missions across NSW to organise against oppression.

Aboriginal people in this period lived under the draconian NSW Aborigines Protection Act, facing segregation, police violence and extreme poverty on the fringes of society.

Ray took the demands of his people into the trade union movement, winning support to abolish racist laws and recognise rights to land and self-determination.

His philosophy and rich life history hold vital lessons for the struggle today.

Ray believed that Aboriginal people and non-Indigenous workers shared a common struggle against a capitalist system based on exploitation, war and racism.

It was the common experiences of exploitation that created opportunities to use the collective power of trade union organisation to fight back.

“The unions were like our boondi or nulla nulla [fighting stick]”, Ray explained.

“That’s what we need back today, for the young people to understand that we are all working-class people, we have power in the union to fight the system.”

Segregation and solidarity

Ray grew up on the Talbragar Reserve outside of Dubbo in the 1930s, under the dictatorial power of the Aborigines Protection Board (later Welfare Board).

His early schooling was on the Reserve, after the nearby Brockle-

hurst Public School refused entry to Aboriginal children. But this segregation was challenged by a growing movement.

The Great Depression created hardship and repression across society. Black and white workers influenced by socialist politics, both living on the margins, started to stand together for change.

Ray’s father Tom Peckham was active in the Unemployed Workers’ Movement organised by CPA members and was well respected by socialists in the Dubbo Labor Party branch.

Tom’s comrades opposed school segregation and won the NSW Labor Party to a position in support of full citizenship rights at the 1935 state conference.

Ray eventually shifted to Dubbo Public School, where an attempt at segregation was defeated.

“We were all working class kids,” he explained, “they couldn’t break the unity of the workers.”

Tom was a member of the Aborigines Progressive Association (APA) and travelled to Sydney for the famous Day of Mourning protest on 26 January 1938.

Ray was deeply inspired by Dubbo-based APA activists Pearl Gibbs and Bill Ferguson and worked all his life to realise their vision of freedom and justice.

Joining the movement

In 1950, Ray shifted to Sydney, where Pearl Gibbs was also living temporarily. He often recounted the way that Pearl threw him headfirst into the struggle:

“She said, ‘I’ve been waiting for one of you bastards to come down here and give me a hand!’ and the first thing she did was take me down to Sussex street and the Trades and Labour Council”.

“The strongest unions were com-

Ray believed that Aboriginal people and non-Indigenous workers shared a common struggle

munist led, they became our power-base for the Aboriginal movement”.

In 1951, these unions affiliated to a new organisation, the Aboriginal Rights Council (ARC).

Ray was selected to travel as an ARC delegate to the World Youth Festival in East Berlin, in the Soviet Bloc.

The Welfare Board wouldn’t approve his passport. “That’s when the trade unions came on the scene,” Ray explained:

“The Waterside Workers’ Union, the Seamen’s Union... They contacted the government and said ‘If Mr Peckham doesn’t leave this harbour, then not only is this ship not leaving the harbour, no ships will be leaving from anywhere in Australia until he gets his passport.’ Four hours it took. And we were on our way.”

On his return, Ray joined the CPA and began organising a Youth Carnival for Peace and Freedom in Sydney in 1952.

All levels of government tried to stop the Carnival going ahead, denying access to sporting fields, venues and transport. Foreign delegates were banned. Ray told a Miners’ Federation radio program:

“The Menzies Government is throwing an iron curtain around Australia. They are frightened that the people of Australia will find that the youth of foreign countries are not enemies”.

Despite this Cold War repression, the Carnival was a huge success. The ARC organised large-scale Aboriginal participation, with a sports and culture day at La Perouse providing a strong show of unity against racism.

The Tribune reported that 30,000 people filled the Domain for a closing demonstration, following “a march led by Ray Peckham and four other Aborigines”.

Ray worked on building sites and joined the Builders’ Labourers Federation (BLF), after Pearl introduced him

to BLF organiser Jack Munday.

Munday was part of a new left-wing leadership growing in influence, encouraging a militant, anti-racist culture in the union.

Ray recounted a dispute on the State Office Block where BLF material was printed in more than 20 languages. “Black and white, New Australians, it didn’t matter who you were... unity gave us power”.

Back in Dubbo for a spell in 1959, Ray was arrested and charged under the Aborigines Protection Act for enjoying a beer at the pub.

Breaking the Protection Act

Ray was active in the Aboriginal-Australian Fellowship, formed in 1956, to challenge the tyranny of the Aborigines Welfare Board. The Fellowship helped initiate the Federal Council for the Advancement of Aborigines (FCAA), later FCAATSI.

Ray attended his first federal conference in 1960. This is where he took on a role traveling out to missions and reserves across NSW to expose shocking conditions and organise communities.

Ray often made these trips with his partner Helen Hambly, a white supporter, and Dick Hunter, an Aboriginal man from Broome, both members of the Fellowship and the CPA.

In Coonamble in 1960, Ray, Dick and Helen made their first real breakthrough, defeating an attempt by racist Council members to deny Aboriginal people access to land in town to build housing.

This was just one of many struggles where Aboriginal people secured better housing, including at Coomaditchie near Port Kembla and Moree, where an organising drive forced construction of new houses on reserves and established Stanley Village.

At Purfleet Mission on the mid-North Coast, residents started a rent strike against the Welfare Board in 1960. Ray explained that “babies were dying from diphtheria and that sort of thing”, due to the flooding of pit toilets and shocking conditions.

In response to the strike, the AWB took court action to evict strike leader Horry Saunders and his family. Ray travelled to Purfleet and told Horry, “the best thing you can do is come to Sydney with me, we will get the weight of the Trade Unions behind us.”

Ray and Horry spoke to thousands of unionised workers across the building, maritime, mining and power



Above: Ray addresses a Sydney rally before the 1967 referendum

industries in early 1961, collecting money and moving resolutions for the abolition of the Board.

Fred Patterson, a communist barrister, represented Horry in the NSW Supreme Court and won the case. “We showed they could be beaten and they were on their way to being abolished”, said Ray.

He wrote in the *Tribune* that widespread union support proved, “the strength of working people can help us Aborigines crack through the curse of the colour bar”.

All this pressure forced reforms to the NSW Protection Act in 1963. Aboriginal people could now legally drink alcohol. Powers to confine Aboriginal people to reserves and to control their wages were also repealed.

Despite this change in law, targeted campaigning was needed to force some pubs to lift the colour bar.

“We would get the Liquor Trades Union to put a ban on the pub,” said Ray, “force them to change that way, with a black ban.”

In 1965, Ray organised two trade union delegations to Walgett to help local leaders end continuing practices of segregation. They used sit-in tactics to force the issue, first at the Luxury

Picture Theatre and then the Oasis hotel.

Ray won early support for Land Rights in the union movement. He carried a resolution at a meeting of 600 trade union delegates at the Labour Council in Sydney in July 1963 demanding the NSW government, “grant land ownership of Aboriginal reserves under their own control”.

Two months later, he was a part of a FCAATSI union committee that lobbied the ACTU Congress to adopt a position for Land Rights nationwide.

When NT Aboriginal stock-workers went on strike in 1966 to demand equal pay and return of land, Ray hosted strike leaders, toured unionised work-sites in Sydney to raise funds and led demonstrations in solidarity.

Ray was also a regular speaker at demonstrations against the Vietnam war in the mid-1960s and was arrested at an anti-war sit-in. He always argued that the struggle for Aboriginal rights was part of the worldwide movement against racism and imperialism.

Ray collected many thousands of signatures on worksites in support of the 1967 Referendum and was proud when 90 per cent of Australians voted, “Yes for Aborigines”.

But he always argued against the widespread misconception that the Referendum won equal rights:

“We still don’t have full citizens rights today”, he said. “The NT Intervention [introduced in 2007] is basically word for word the old Aborigines Welfare Board policy. We haven’t won yet”.

Ray left Sydney in 1969, following splits in FCAATSI and the CPA and the end of his relationship with Helen Hambly. But he had completed the task set down by his elders in the APA—the Welfare Board was abolished in the same year.

Ray travelled around Australia working, before settling in Dubbo in the 1990s.

He was on the front line again campaigning in his old age, joining the fight to save Australia Hall, site of the historic Day of Mourning, and resisting coal seam gas development in the Pilliga forest, amongst other battles.

Ray’s life of activism embodied the transformative power that working-class solidarity can bring to the struggle against racism and for Aboriginal rights. He left an amazing legacy we all must carry forward. Paddy, Wendy and John have written a biography with Uncle Ray that they hope to publish soon.

INTERVIEW WITH AUTHOR PHIL MARFLEET PALESTINE'S STRUGGLE FOR FREEDOM

Phil Marfleet's new book is a must read for everyone who's taken action for Palestine. He spoke to *Socialist Worker's* Arthur Townend about why

How has the question of Palestinian liberation changed since 7 October 2023?

There's been an enormous increase in awareness around the situation for Palestinians. At the start of this century, for the first time there was talk of "Global Palestine". Since 7 October, this has become much more general for several reasons.

First is the savagery of the Israeli assault on Gaza, which has prompted shock, enormous anger and solidarity with the Palestinians worldwide.

The movement in solidarity with the Palestinians must be one of the greatest mass movements of the 21st century at a global level.

Secondly, the sense of anger and disgust at the complicity of the leaders of Israel's Western allies. The United States, Britain and various European states continue to provide the Israelis with arms and support. The third factor is the recognition of Palestinian steadfastness and fortitude.

The events of the last 18 months have led to a much greater understanding over what the Palestinians have had to deal with over the course of 70 years.

There's a recognition of Palestinian resistance, not merely of the armed struggle, but the resistance of everyday life. This infuriates Israel because it signals that the Palestinians have not been removed from their historic homeland—they are still undefeated.

You explore how imperialism has shaped the Middle East and Israel and how that continues today.

The roots of the Palestinian predicament lie in the policies of British colonialism in the early years of the 20th century.

For the British, Palestine was a key base in the Middle East. Particularly after the First World War, the Allied states had become almost entirely dependent on oil from the Middle East.

The British were determined not

merely to hang on to those resources in the areas in which they had control, but to extend their influence.

After the Balfour Declaration in 1917 the British mobilised all their experiences as an imperial power—in India, Africa, Australia and elsewhere—to subordinate the Palestinians.

So the Zionist settler movement learned an enormous amount from the British. There is this "sophisticated", but declining, imperial power, and Israel emerges in this context, learning methods of control.

The British colonial administration in Palestine becomes a type of school of repression for the leaders of the Zionist movement.

As the institutions of the Zionist settler movement develop, they mobilise the strategies and techniques of Britain as a colonial power, which are of course extremely repressive and violent.

For example, during the great Palestinian Intifada of 1936-39, the British arrested over half a million Palestinians. It amounted to almost 40 per cent of the entire population of Palestine arrested at one time or another.

At the same time, the British were arming and training key components of Zionist militias.

After the Second World War, Palestinians find themselves in different imperial environments.

British colonialism had exhausted itself, so amid Britain's retreat from Palestine the world is shaped by the two major imperial powers, the US and the Soviet Union.

The US was determined to shape a "New World Order". For that, it had to control the world's key energy resources, which were found in the Gulf.

Now it's not true that the Americans supported Israel from day one. They saw the rise of the Arab national movement across the region, and they were not certain that an alliance with

The ability of Palestinians to keep the basic structures of their society intact is infuriating for the Israelis

Israel would serve them best. But it wasn't long before the US was persuaded that Israel could act as a stable, loyal ally in an important region.

In places like Egypt and Iraq, radical nationalism came to the fore, so by the 1960s Israel was the safest bet for the US. Particularly after the Six Day War in 1967, the US poured arms and money into Israel. And since then, Israel has become integral to the American perspective of controlling energy resources in the Middle East.

Today, the US has become self-sufficient in oil and gas. But it is focused on the Middle East because China depends on the Gulf for its energy resources.

So due to inter-imperialist rivalry with China, the US remains determined to dominate the Gulf and the wider Middle East.

The book references Sumud, the Palestinian idea of steadfastness. How does that idea shape Palestinian identity today?

I don't think the Palestinian experience is unique. Ever since there's been colonialism, there has been mass resistance.

Resistance to British, to French, to other colonialisms has been extremely persistent.

Under British rule in Ireland, resistance went on for two, three hundred years until Ireland achieved independence. In India, there was at least a century of highly organised resistance before India won independence from British rule.

In Vietnam, resistance to first the French and then the Americans and their allies went on for decades.

But what gives the Palestinians special importance is that they have not only been resisting a single imperialist power or colonial occupation.

Since the foundation of Israel, the Palestinians have resisted an array of imperial powers, willing to support Israel's techniques of modern warfare.

This makes the Palestinian experience unique.

They've resisted invasions of Palestinian camps in places like Lebanon, in Syria, and of course in Gaza which used to be part of sovereign Egypt. They've had to cope with all manner of Israeli offensives backed by various Western forces.

Through all this, Palestinians have maintained a coherent level of resistance.

This has involved appeals to Arab governments, to international organisations such as the United Nations. It's involved guerrilla warfare.

But increasingly, it's involved a type of everyday resistance which is embedded in the lives of people.

Particularly in the West Bank and Gaza, simply being present and maintaining the basics of everyday life is a key element of what the Palestinians call steadfastness—Sumud.

The ability of Palestinians to keep the basic structures of their society intact is infuriating for the Israelis.

It is particularly infuriating for the leaders of extreme Zionism, including Binyamin Netanyahu and those of his ministers associated with settlements.

Through this, Palestinian persistence has been based around the idea of Exist, Resist, Return. And Sumud is embedded in that idea of resistance.

It has become a very important part of being Palestinian and remains an important part of Palestinian struggle.

You say the history of Israel is portrayed as a “miracle” with “the effect of concealing traumatic events”.

What is the effect of uncovering the history of events such as the Nakba?

Quite a lot of Israeli literature talks about 1948, the Nakba, as being a miraculous development.

This story of miracles relies on the idea that hundreds of thousands of Palestinians packed up their belongings and left their homes and their lands.

This idea of miracles is a key element in the perpetuation of myths, actual falsehoods, about 1948.

The reality is that the Nakba was a sustained, violent, and purposeful attempt at ethnic cleansing to remove the Palestinian population.

After the Nakba, the mass displacement and atomisation of Palestinians meant it was a long time before Palestinian researchers and others were able to reflect meaningfully on what happened.

In 1948, Zionist militias seized key cultural resources of Palestinian society, libraries, archives, the resources of schools and colleges.



Above: Protesting against the genocide in Gaza
Photo: Leo Bild

The Zionists eradicated the documentation that could demonstrate the existence of a meaningful Palestinian society before 1948.

It was a very long time before Palestinian researchers were able to collect Palestinian oral histories.

They looked at what had actually happened before and during the Nakba. Far from the miracle of Palestinians disappearing from the scene, there had been this systematic, calculated and extremely violent assault on Palestinian society.

This assault pushed Palestinians across the borders of Lebanon, Syria, Jordan and Egypt.

You trace the development of Palestinian resistance, from the general strike and guerrilla strategies to Hamas. What are the lessons for today?

One of the key purposes of the book is to make accessible the history of Palestinian resistance. We shouldn't see the Palestinian struggle as an isolated one.

The Arab regimes have been complicit in the repression of the Palestinians. A key feature of Palestinian resistance has been the way it has stimulated movements of resistance throughout other Arab states.

Perhaps the most important example is in neighbouring Egypt. Time and again the Palestinian struggle has stirred resistance against the various pro-Western dictatorships in Egypt.

Activists in Egypt maintain that it was Palestinian struggles that built their own confidence to resist in

Egypt from the 1990s onwards, particularly against Hosni Mubarak's regime. The Mubarak regime was critical to Western influence in the region.

One of the key achievements of Palestinian resistance is the build-up of solidarity in Egypt between 2000-10. The revolutionary upheaval in Egypt in 2011, which overthrew Mubarak, was intimately related to the Palestinian intifadas.

So we shouldn't separate Palestinian resistance from mass struggles in other parts of the Arab world. Mass struggles and revolutionary upheavals in the Arab world are of crucial importance to the struggle for liberation.

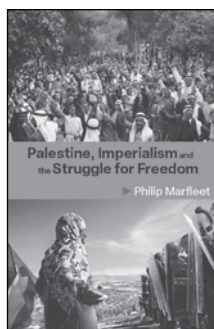
And global solidarity is also vitally important. One of the developments in the last 20 years has been the movement for Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) which comes from the Palestinians themselves.

And Palestinians have learned from the experience of the solidarity movement against apartheid South Africa. This movement has become increasingly important, and it's something that all of us can get behind.

But the liberation of Palestine depends above all on revolutionary movements in the Arab states like those the Palestinian intifadas have helped to inspire.

As we saw in 2011, struggles for social justice in states such as Egypt mobilise millions of workers with the power to remove regimes complicit in supporting Israel.

They also provide an example to all the people of the region of direct democracy—the alternative to dictatorships and to Israel's military occupation.



Palestine, imperialism and the struggle for freedom
By Phil Marfleet
Available from Solidarity for \$25

GAZA A KILLING FIELD AS ISRAEL STEPS UP GENOCIDE

By Luke Ottavi

ISRAEL IS unleashing horror after horror in Gaza in the wake of its ruthless bombing of Iran.

Israeli soldiers have admitted that the army is intentionally shooting Palestinians lining up at aid distribution sites.

The “commanders ordered troops to shoot at crowds to drive them away or disperse them, even though it was clear they posed no threat”, *Haaretz* reported.

At least 583 Palestinians had been killed at Gaza Humanitarian Foundation (GHF) aid sites since late May as *Solidarity* went to press, often with more than 50 killed in a single day. “It’s a killing field”, one soldier said.

Ahmed Halawa, a Palestinian in Gaza who spoke to *Al Jazeera*, described how Israeli tanks and drones fired on aid seekers “even as we were fleeing”.

The GHF is a joint Israeli-US project that is now the main source of the inadequate amount of food let in for Gaza’s starving population.

The level of devastation and starvation in Gaza is apocalyptic.

Israel’s denial of aid since March has put all of Gaza’s 2.1 million people at risk of famine, with over three quarters at “catastrophic” or “emergency” levels of food deprivation according to the World Health Organisation. Israel has killed well over 55,000 Palestinians since October 2023.

Another two infants have died as a direct result of Israel’s refusal to allow baby formula into Gaza, with hundreds more at imminent risk of death.

The United Nations human rights office has denounced the weaponisation of aid as a war crime, while UNRWA has condemned the GHF as an “abomination that humiliates and degrades desperate people”.

Netanyahu is forcibly starving Palestinians as a way of pressuring the population to move south, as Israel extends its military occupation.

There is just one GHF distribution site near the centre of Gaza near the Netzarim corridor that bisects the



Above: Palestinians living amid the rubble in Jabalia, Gaza Photo: Imago / Alamy Stock Photo

strip—known to Palestinians as a corridor of death—and three GHF sites in the south in Rafah. Previously the UN ran around 400 separate distribution centres.

Netanyahu has openly declared his support for Trump’s plan to ethnically cleanse and take complete control of Gaza.

There is again talk of a ceasefire in Gaza, but Netanyahu is refusing to guarantee a permanent end to the war and the withdrawal of Israeli troops, demanding that Hamas lay down its arms and its leadership leave the strip. Hamas has refused to accept such extreme demands, making an agreement unlikely.

Twenty Israeli soldiers were killed in June by Hamas and other resistance fighters, the deadliest month for the IDF since the genocide began in October 2023.

Even in the face of mass starvation and bombardment, Israel has been unable to completely eradicate the resistance.

Growing movement

The movement for Palestine continues to escalate internationally, with massive demonstrations across Europe in response to the worsening genocide and the Israeli and US war on Iran.

In June, 350,000 marched in London, 150,000 at The Hague, and over 100,000 in Brussels. Another 150,000 marched in Paris after French MP Rima Hassan was detained by Israel aboard the *Maldeen* ship trying to deliver aid for Gaza.

Thousands of protesters from over 32 countries, many from trade unions and Palestine solidarity groups, joined the Global March for Gaza, planning to set out from Arish in Egypt to try to deliver aid to Rafah. Instead Egypt’s dictator Abdel Fattah el-Sisi sent in riot police to detain and deport hundreds, preventing them from reaching the border.

French and Italian dockworkers have refused to load shipments of weapons for Israel, and Italian trade unions held a general strike with many marching under the banner “lower the weapons, raise the wages.”

Pressure is also growing on Anthony Albanese to act against Israel, after he was forced to impose individual sanctions on two far right Israeli Ministers, Bezalel Smotrich and Itamar Ben-Gvir.

We need to keep fighting to demand sanctions that put real pressure on Israel to end its genocide, through banning weapons exports and trade. Mass protests and union action can help force an end to the horror.

Netanyahu is forcibly starving Palestinians as preparation for expelling them from Gaza altogether

Solidarity