

Solidarity

Issue No. 209 / July 2026

\$3/\$5

Spying for Israel, killing for Trump

US BASES OUT CLOSE PINE GAP



ONE NATION

How can we drive back racism and Hanson?

PALESTINE

Lessons from Vietnam for today's movement

ANTI-FASCISM

Workers' revolution and the Spanish civil war

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

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Meeting 6.30pm every Thursday
Kathleen Syme library and community
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Things they say

Businesses also tell me you can't sack people these days. They're on their phones, they don't work, they don't turn up, they actually are lazy, and businesses are tied to it. They've had enough.

Pauline Hanson shows her true colours at the Press Club

These bills are displayed as ridiculous or unnecessary, but here's our popular Premier and well-respected Leader of the Opposition voting for it. That does give validity to what we tried to do.

South Australian anti-abortion MP Sarah Game on her defeated bill attempting to restrict abortion

In America we speak English because that is the language of our founding—and for a thousand years, that has been the language of freedom.

Donald Trump speaking English

Of course it worked. Everything I does [sic] work. What I do works. Donald Trump about his renovation of the Lincoln memorial reflecting pool, which isn't working

And I guess my response to [Israel's right-wing politicians] would be: What is your exact proposal? You're a country of nine million people. You can't just kill your way out of solving every single national security problem that you have.

US Vice-President JD Vance after 73,000 dead in Gaza—and counting

If other countries have them [ballistic missile] it is a little bit unfair for them not to have some.

Trump backflips on Iran's ballistic missiles

Our objectives are clear. First, we're destroying Iran's missile capabilities... and their capacity to produce brand new ones.

Trump on 2 March about his objectives in Iran

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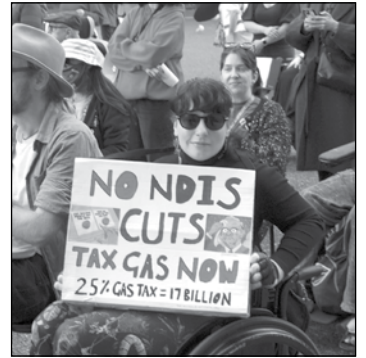


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INSIDE THE \$YSTEM

Albanese government funds F-35 parts manufacture

THE ALBANESE Labor government denies involvement in exporting weapons to Israel for its genocide in Gaza.

But last November, the government lent \$150 million to ASDAM, a subsidiary of one of Australia's largest private equity companies, CPE Capital, which owns five F-35 parts-makers.

The F-35 jet is one of the main weapons used by Israel in Gaza, Lebanon and beyond.

The National Reconstruction Fund Corporation (NRFC) made the loan, repayable with interest, to ASDAM to refinance its debt.

ASDAM owns Levett, Marang Precision, Quickstep, Rosebank and TAE Aerospace, with 15 sites around the country.

Levett has two sites in Elizabeth South (SA); Marang Precision is in Geelong (Vic) and Moorabbin (Vic); Quickstep is in Bankstown (NSW); Rosebank has its HQ plant in Bayswater (Vic), Airport West (Vic), Williamstown (NSW) and RAAF Amberley (Qld), Wingfield (SA); and TAE Aerospace is in Bundamba (Qld) as well as nearby RAAF Amberley (Qld), Banyo (Qld) Adelaide Airport (SA) and Hallam (Vic).

The minister responsible for the NRFC is Tim Ayres, a former secretary of the NSW branch of the Australian Manufacturing Workers Union (AMWU), a voting member of the Labor Party's national executive and key ally of Anthony Albanese.

Among NRFC board members are Glenn Thompson, the national president of the AMWU and Daniel Walton, former national secretary of the Australian Workers Union.

Tom Orsag

UN evidence shows Israel deliberately kills children



Above: Hind Rajab, a five-year-old girl murdered by Israel

UN INVESTIGATORS have provided graphic detailed evidence that Israel has deliberately killed children as part of its genocide in Gaza, as part of a 94-page report released in June.

The 20,179 children confirmed killed make up fully 30 per cent of the total death toll, the report by the International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory found.

Shockingly, they documented a consistent pattern of Israel's use of precision weapons to target children. Doctors working across numerous different hospitals recorded large numbers of children killed with single gunshot wounds to the head or upper body fired by snipers or from quadcopters.

In April 2024, a ten-month-old baby was shot in the head while his mother was breastfeeding him inside a tent. The investigation concluded that the quadcopter operator had a clear view of them before firing. This is just one of many cases documented in the report.

Similar killings have continued despite the so called "ceasefire" from October last year. Over 1000 Palestinians have been killed since it began, including at least 265 children.

In November last year a drone strike killed two brothers aged nine and ten while they were gathering firewood. Israel's justification that they had crossed the "yellow line" was baseless, the report said, since they were 300 metres from Israeli soldiers and the drone operator had a clear view of what they were doing.

Israel's deliberate targeting of hospitals and reproductive healthcare meant that by March this year 70 per cent of newborns were premature or underweight. It also produced a 300 per cent rise in miscarriages and meant women were more than three times more likely to die in childbirth by October 2024 than before October 2023.

The report concluded that Israel's treatment of children, both their direct targeting and indirect targeting through the blockade, destruction of hospitals and schools met the legal definition of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes—even naming specific military units it has recommended for prosecution. Predictably Israel has dismissed the findings and the mainstream media here barely bothered to cover them.

Cleanaway bosses' safety failures kill eight workers

EIGHT WORKERS at waste company Cleanaway have been killed on the job since mid-2022, including five in the past two years.

ACTU Secretary Sally McManus denounced the company as "the worst bosses in this country".

Another worker was recently left with permanent vision loss after being exposed to toxic chemicals.

"The bosses didn't even follow up to see if she was ok," McManus said. "It took three whole days for her to go to the hospital, at that point she could have died."

The Transport Workers Union is calling on health and safety regulator Comcare to prosecute the company over their failure to notify it of the incident as required under law. Cleanaway later refused to allow union officials to enter worksites to conduct safety checks until forced to by Comcare. The union says safety inspections exposed biological hazards including broken and spilt blood and urine samples, and inadequate emergency procedures.

But its CEO Mark Schubert still pocketed \$4.2 million last financial year, even after being docked 30 per cent of his bonus due to the company's safety record.

Major US military stockpile planned here

THE US will construct a major military stockpile in Victoria as part of planning for a potential war with China, in a further move to cement Australia's role as an operating base for the US military. The US marine corps weapons cache will be located at an Australian military base in Bandiana, near Wodonga.

It is spending \$42.4 million to build warehouses and offices and engaging 110 engineers, mechanics and material and safety specialists to manage the stockpile, which is designed to store combat-ready weapons, vehicles, ammunition and spare parts.

The US marines describe the plans as "critical forward provisioning" but the location of the stockpile in southeast Victoria suggests it is designed to sit beyond the range of Chinese missiles. US bases in islands closer to China such as Guam are now regarded as vulnerable to precision missile strikes.

Gas companies' \$27 billion windfall

GAS COMPANIES in Australia will grab an extra \$27 billion in revenue this year and next financial year due to a jump in export prices due to the war on Iran. Gas facilities in Qatar, one of the world's largest exporters, were damaged by Iranian missile strikes in March, creating a global shortage.

Total export income will rise to \$65 billion in the 2027 financial year, the government's official projection says. Yet this year the resource rent tax on gas will bring in just \$1.9 billion, far less than in other major exporting countries such as Norway and Qatar, and far lower than the total tax on both beer drinkers and visa applications.

EDITORIAL

Fighting racism and the far right—One Nation can be stopped

ONE NATION'S support may have dropped slightly after Pauline Hanson put her full agenda on show in her speech at the National Press Club.

But One Nation's rise has exposed a deep crisis in Australian politics.

The prospect of Victoria having a Liberal-One Nation coalition government after November's election is shocking.

At the Press Club Hanson spewed racist bile at Indigenous people, Muslims, multiculturalism and migrants in general. Her backing from billionaire Gina Rinehart puts the lie to any idea that One Nation is a party for workers doing it tough.

But that is no reason for complacency. While most of One Nation's support is coming from previous Liberal or National Party voters, Hanson's openly racist, anti-immigrant stance is pulling mainstream politics to the right.

And it is clear that Hanson is getting support from some working class Labor voters too. This threatens to entrench higher levels of racism within the working class, misdirecting workers' rage against migrants instead of against the bosses and the system.

Internationally, the far right has grown. Trump attracted support posing as a political outsider, capitalising on disillusionment with the Democrats. In Britain, the Labour Party's failures have resulted in Nigel Farage and his racist Reform UK leading in the polls.

The Liberals are already trying to outdo Hanson's racism. Leader Angus Taylor's response to Labor's budget declared that the Liberals would "put Australians first", announcing a vicious plan to cut welfare benefits to non-citizens, including permanent residents.

Tony Abbott, the newly installed national president of the Liberal Party, used to argue to put One Nation last. Now Abbott is open to preference deals with them. Taylor has also refused to rule out preferring One Nation.

The media is also increasingly treating Hanson as a legitimate political alternative and providing a platform for her racism.

Labor's failure

But the biggest blame lies with Labor. Firstly, Labor has helped Hanson by normalising racism. It has continued its anti-refugee policies, introducing deportation laws to send non-citizens to indefinite detention on Nauru. Labor has inflamed Islamophobia with its support for the genocide in Gaza. And it has conceded to Hanson's anti-



migrant racism about housing by claiming they are already making cuts to immigration.

Secondly, Labor has done nothing about the cost of living crisis that has left so many people struggling to pay the bills. Falling wages and rising inflation have been powerful drivers of support for One Nation. Labor's budget announced cuts to the NDIS while pouring billions of dollars into nuclear submarines and military spending. And Labor's changes to capital gains tax will do little for housing affordability and nothing to reduce sky-rocketing rents.

How we can fight back

The rise of One Nation has seen many unions respond by exposing its anti-worker policies. But just asking workers to "think again" isn't enough when people are angry at Labor's failures. We should campaign to "put One Nation last"—but we can't rely on an electoral solution.

It is going to take a strong anti-racist movement to combat One Nation. Broad anti-racist protests at One Nation events, declaring "Migrants are welcome, racists are not" can show there is opposition to her racist policies and help marginalise One Nation.

Not all One Nation supporters are hardened racists. Naming and shaming One Nation's racism can split softer supporters from the extreme

Above: Rally against racism and the far right in Melbourne last year Photo: Louisa Billeter/Flickr

racists that are at the party's core.

The left also needs to take on and debunk One Nation's racist lies.

The housing crisis is not the result of immigration. Australia Institute research shows that over the past ten years, the population has increased by 16 per cent, but the number of dwellings increased by 19 per cent.

Protests against One Nation are going to be crucial. But these have to be linked to the fight against the mainstream racism of Labor and the Liberals and the cost of living crisis.

Every struggle for real wage increases points to a collective answer to Hanson and Labor—to fight together against the system. Teachers and school staff in Victoria have set an example of how to organise at a rank-and-file union level to push for a serious fight.

We need to raise demands for real alternatives to Labor's cuts. By scrapping the AUKUS submarines there would be more than enough money to build public housing and fully fund the NDIS.

Hanson is trying to scapegoat migrants and refugees for the problems created by capitalism. Labor is managing the capitalist system. Racism grows in the despair that the system creates. Hanson and the bosses use racism to divide and rule the working class. By fighting together we can fight racism, fight Hanson and in the process build a movement that can take on the capitalist system itself.

Pine Gap convergence targets ties with the US and Israel

HUNDREDS OF activists will join a protest convergence on the US spy base at Pine Gap near Alice Springs on 18-20 July.

Pine Gap plays a critical role in the US war machine, gathering surveillance data, internet and phone signals to target missile strikes. The US habitually sends Israel intelligence for the genocide in Gaza and wars in Lebanon and Iran. The demand to close Pine Gap is a key part of cutting ties with Israel. The fight for Palestine needs to link Albanese's complicity in the genocide to his growing militarism at home.

One Nation's ideas gaining a hearing in workplaces

By an MUA member

I WORK in a highly unionised workplace. The Maritime Union has a long history of collective struggle and solidarity with the oppressed. Yet even here One Nation's ideas are getting a hearing.

Workers who have never expressed support for One Nation before are sharing its content and calling for "Pauline for PM."

The Bondi massacre was a real turning point.

For the last two and half years, the Palestine movement has been relentlessly attacked in the media and by politicians. After the Harbour Bridge march, some of my workmates complained that there are too many "foreign" flags being flown, and asked why Australian flags aren't being flown instead.

After the Bondi attack, it was commonplace to blame the Palestine movement. Someone complained that "politicians let them into our country. Then they let them shut down our cities protesting their overseas wars on our streets."

This shows that anti-immigration sentiment is not really about the numbers coming in, but about which migrants are welcome.

Another worker spelled this out, saying that Greeks and Italians had been good for Australia, but Muslims are not.

These ideas have been egged on by Labor's despicable apologism for genocide, dehumanisation of Palestinians and Arabs, and dog whistling about "social cohesion" and "turning down the temperature".

Some on the left want to comfort themselves with the idea that these are workers who would have voted Liberal in the past anyway.

This is simply untrue. Decades of frustration with Labor, disdain for the Liberals, and alienation from The Greens means One Nation is a dangerous alternative for people without a political home.

Internal polling by Victorian Trades Hall Council showed approximately 30 per cent of people who work in container terminals in Melbourne prefer One Nation.

But there is no need to despair. I have had many other conversations with workers who hate Pauline Hanson, reject her racism and support



Above: The wave of Islamophobia and attacks on the Palestine movement after the Bondi attack have helped drive One Nation's support

.....
Polling showed 30 per cent of people who work in container terminals in Melbourne prefer One Nation

Palestinian liberation.

Unions and others on the left are now recognising One Nation as a serious threat.

But many are making another mistake—challenging Hanson's record on workers' rights without taking up her racism. This won't work. The bigotry needs to be tackled head on.

And unions won't have any credibility unless they also lead the fight for real solutions.

That means fighting Labor, breaking the anti-strike laws, fighting for above-inflation pay rises, and uniting the wider left in real campaigns to turn back decades of neoliberal attacks on our services and living standards.

Hanson's Press Club speech showed threat of Trumpism

ONE NATION has surged off the back of scapegoating immigration for the cost of living crisis.

This has been aided by Labor and the Liberals both linking immigration to the rising cost of housing.

Treasurer Jim Chalmers has rightly accused Liberal leader Angus Taylor of trying to "Out One Nation". But Labor is singing from the same song sheet.

Home Affairs Minister Tony Burke boasted last month on Sky News that "what we've been doing in migration is effectively bringing the numbers down", pointing to cuts to international student and working holiday visas. He promised "to make sure migration is tailored" to housing supply.

This has legitimised Pauline Hanson, allowing her to say she's been "consistent" in that, "For decades I've warned about the impacts of out-of-control mass immigration."

Her speech at the National Press Club laid out her full horrifying far right agenda and how she has embraced Donald Trump's politics. It showed the danger a bigger and more organised One Nation poses.

Predictably, she attacked multiculturalism and called for a "mono-culture", claiming there were already too many migrants here who don't share our "identity and culture". This was obvious code for saying there are too many non-European migrants.

This has given the far-right March for Australia group, which includes open fascists, the licence to call nationwide rallies on 30 August demanding "remigration"—in other words mass deportations.

Hanson also stirred up Islamophobia, claiming that the Muslim community harboured a major threat to the community.

She also blamed rising "energy costs" caused by renewable energy for the cost-of-living crisis—banging the drum for climate denial—and demanded the axing of SBS and gutting of the ABC.

And she launched a vicious attack on trans people, claiming "transgender ideology", or trans people's right to live as they choose, was being "imposed" in schools, workplaces and government authorities. She also opposed abortion rights, paid parental leave and government spending on childcare services.

Commentators have pointed to a dip in the polls for One Nation in the aftermath, as evidence this has cost them support. That's encouraging. But the party's poll surge has already given confidence to every racist and Trump supporter nationwide.

The major parties will respond by continuing to appease One Nation and adopting its policies.

We need to stand against One Nation's racism and far right agenda if we're going to drive them back.

Union campaign in Victoria wrong to avoid Hanson's racism

By James Supple

VICTORIA FACES the terrifying prospect of One Nation in government after November's state election. One Nation could either win the most seats itself or do well enough that the Liberals need their support to form government.

One Nation was on 27 per cent, ahead of Labor and the Liberals both on 26 per cent of the vote in a Redbridge poll published in early July.

Labor has been in power in Victoria for 12 years and faces accumulated bitterness about COVID-era lockdowns, corruption scandals and the cost-of-living crisis.

The Liberals and Nationals are also likely to lose seats to One Nation, especially in regional areas, which could make it harder for them to win government in their own right.

Premier Jacinta Allan has seized on this, warning of the risk of a "One Nation-led government" and arguing the Liberals won't be able to govern without their support.

But One Nation's surge is no longer simply a matter of Liberal and National voters moving further to the right. Allan has admitted the party "is taking a slice out of the Labor vote as well".

But rather than challenge Pauline Hanson's racism, Labor will only attack her support for cuts and anti-worker policies. Allan has called One Nation "a risk to working people and families".

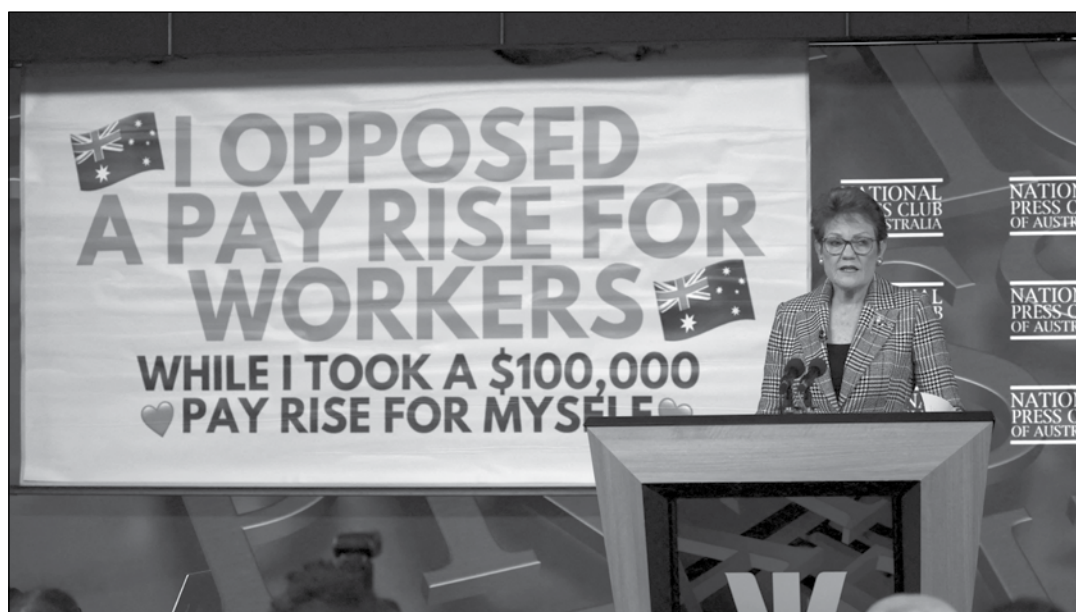
The union movement has adopted the same approach.

Victorian Trades Hall Secretary Luke Hilakari told *The Age*, "I'm looking at numbers that it could be 30 seats" for One Nation. Trades Hall is ramping up an electoral campaign to target the party, with Hilakari saying, "We're running against Pauline Hanson."

In March, following One Nation's gains in the South Australian election, Trades Hall prepared a briefing paper *Antidote* arguing that unions had a "vital role" in taking on One Nation and that, "The far-right's path to power leads through workers and their communities. Only unions can defeat them on that terrain."

Trades Hall is running events on "How to persuade One Nation leaning voters" and has titled its state election campaign launch "United against One Nation".

Pauline Hanson has consistently voted against protecting workers' rights. At the National Press Club she



Above: Getup skewered Pauline Hanson at the Press Club but chose not to target her racism

Photo: Reuters/Hollie Adams

said businesses needed more rights to sack people, declaring workers "are lazy and businesses are tired of it", and stood by her opposition to minimum wage increases.

She also called for cuts to health and education spending, opposed pay increases for childcare workers and questioned whether women need paid parental leave.

Unions have seized on these comments, pushing out clips from her speech across social media.

But they are ignoring her opposition to immigration, at most gently defending multiculturalism against Hanson's call for a "monoculture".

Victorian Labor's approach mirrors Anthony Albanese's effort to deal with One Nation at a federal level. GetUp is doing the same—dropping a banner during Hanson's Press Club speech highlighting her support for wage cuts but not her racism.

It's right to expose One Nation's anti-worker politics. But Labor is pushing anti-worker policies itself—refusing above inflation pay rises to teachers, council workers and health workers in Victoria and presiding over the cost-of-living crisis.

Workers who are fed up and looking for a protest vote won't come back to Labor.

Some in The Greens share a similar approach. Former Greens MP Max Chandler-Mather has argued that "attacking One Nation can be counter-productive and sometimes only serves to reinforce them as outsiders to the political system".

The left should instead focus on the anger about cost of living, housing and privatisation that is driving One Nation's support through "connecting with, and properly understanding peoples' material circumstances", he says.

Combating racism

Just abusing someone who's considering voting for One Nation, or sneering at them as stupid, won't win anyone over.

But focusing on economic concerns alone won't be enough to undermine the party. It's the combination of racism and anger at the cost of living that is powering their surge.

The far right globally from Donald Trump to Reform UK is riding a wave of racism, scapegoating refugees and immigrants for the failures of the system.

Pauline Hanson's rise in the polls began following the anti-immigration March for Australia rallies last year and was reinforced by the Islamophobia and smears against the Palestine movement following the antisemitic Bondi attack in December.

Anyone willing to support One Nation as a protest against the political system will be well aware of the party's racism. Many back them because of Hanson's anti-immigration stand—with 35 per cent of all voters saying One Nation is the party best able to handle immigration, the highest of any party.

To drive back One Nation we need to build a left that fights both over the cost of living and stands up to racism.

.....
It's the combination of racism and anger at the cost of living that is powering One Nation's surge

More arrests in Brisbane for defying Palestine slogan ban

By Mark Gillespie

A TOTAL of 31 people have now been arrested for defying the Queensland Crisafulli government's ban on pro-Palestine phrases.

Seven people were arrested at a spirited "Six words for a free Palestine" rally on 14 June attended by around 300 people.

Among those arrested was Indigenous activist Sam Woripa Watson, who was recently detained by Israeli forces as part of the Global Sumud Flotilla.

Sam told the crowd: "So when I say 'From the river to the sea, Palestine should be free', I mean I have seen first-hand what the occupation does, and I have seen that it should not be allowed to continue."

Under Queensland's laws, Sam's words are deemed antisemitic hate speech. Other people at the rally were arrested for either uttering banned phrases or displaying placards containing them. One person was held overnight because it was their second arrest.

Another flotilla participant, grandmother Helen O'Sullivan, was arrested over the phrase on 30 June outside the Brisbane Magistrates Court at a rally to support previous arrestees.

Previously 22 people were arrested during a weekend of defiance in April. One activist was also arrested at a student protest on the day the law was introduced.

Another person was arrested at a protest against the arms company Boeing for holding a placard reading, "From the river to the sea, Brisbane will be free of Boeing." Police also raided a house and charged someone for displaying a banner that read, "From the river to the sea, come and get us Crisafulli."

Potentially, all those arrested could be jailed for up to two years if found guilty.

So far, all of those charged have been arrested for using the banned phrase "From the river to the sea" rather than the also banned "Globalise the Intifada".

Not challenging the use of this phrase, however, avoids the political argument about its meaning and effectively concedes that it is problematic.

Grace Tame has been attacked and ostracised for using "Globalise the Intifada" at a rally in Sydney. We should be coming to her defence.

As *Solidarity* goes to press, lawyers



Above: The "Six words for a free Palestine" rally in Brisbane where another seven people were arrested Photo: Solidarity

are planning a High Court challenge to Crisafulli's laws, arguing that they infringe on the implied constitutional right to free political communication.

Hopefully, this legal challenge will overturn the laws, but as dis-

missed CFMEU officials can attest, the High Court does not always deliver justice.

The campaign against these laws on the streets must not only continue but be stepped up.

One Nation's rise fuels far right's attack on abortion rights

ONE NATION has joined forces with other bigots to attack abortion.

In June, there were anti-abortion proposals raised in three Australian parliaments. In Queensland, Katter's Australian Party unsuccessfully attempted to prevent nurses and midwives from prescribing abortion pills.

In South Australia, Family First MP Sarah Game introduced a bill to effectively ban abortion from 25 weeks except when necessary to save a mother's life. It succeeded in the upper house due to One Nation's newly elected MPs. While the lower house overwhelmingly defeated it, both Labor Premier Peter Malinauskas and the Liberal Opposition leader voted for it.

In NSW, Libertarian MP John Ruddick wants to outlaw sex-selection abortions, using racism to link the almost non-existent practice to migrant communities. One Nation MP Barnaby Joyce spoke at a rally supporting him.

How much of a threat is this?

A poll in March showed that 62 per cent in Australia support access to abortion unequivocally (including half of One Nation supporters) and a further 25 per cent in limited circumstances. But anti-abortion groups aim to chip away at abortion laws and to

prevent any extension of access.

One Nation's sexism mirrors other far right parties, who promote traditional family values and a return to state and church control of women's fertility.

A ban on abortion is highly unlikely. But One Nation's will mean a more organised far right that will keep pushing on the issue.

In the 1990s Hanson appeared to be pro-abortion and One Nation adopted anti-abortion policy only in 2020. The issue is unlikely to win votes. The party's polling declined after Hanson's Press Club speech where she proposed restricting abortion and opposed maternity leave and child care services.

But abortion is a touchstone issue for the far right and some of the activists and supporters she wants to attract, including those influenced by Trump. Some high-profile defectors from the Coalition to One Nation are anti-abortion, including Cory Bernardi, Bernie Finn and Barnaby Joyce.

Pro-choice struggles have won laws that enable most women to access abortion safely. But problems of access remain. Pro-choice activists must remain vigilant against anti-abortion campaigners and the far right.

Judy McVey

Potentially, all those arrested could be jailed for up to two years if found guilty

Pressure grows for strike action after Victorian teachers revolt

By James Supple

VICTORIAN TEACHERS and education support staff overwhelmingly rejected their proposed pay deal in June, in a rank-and-file rebellion against pay cuts, unbearable conditions in schools and their own union leadership.

Now momentum is building to call another strike, with 32 sub-branches backing a motion to strike on 4 August.

A decisive 57.7 per cent voted “no” to the agreement, despite the Australian Education Union (AEU) leadership arguing it was a great deal.

But as Fight the Crisis activist Lucy Honan put it, the agreement contained “a real pay cut disguised as a pay rise, and inadequate changes in terms of conditions”.

“There was nothing to deal with the crisis of overwork and ballooning class sizes that are driving more and more teachers into burnout and out of the profession.”

Teachers have seen their pay go backwards by 11 per cent after inflation since their last agreement.

Instead of the union’s demand for a 35 per cent pay increase over three years to catch up, the government’s offer would still have left teachers earning less than in 2020 in real terms.

Education Support staff were offered even lower pay rises.

The “vote No” campaign was led by rank-and-file group Fight the Crisis.

The group circulated material on social media and gathered public pledges to vote no from union members at 132 schools across the state.

“Throughout the campaign Fight the Crisis members were emailing and calling schools, trying to get in touch with union reps to have a conversation about why they should vote no, and what needs to come next,” Lucy said.

“Those relationships are going to be key in now pushing for strike action.

“As people who are working in schools, we know how bad it is and how much needs to change, and how disappointing it is to hear such narrow ambitions from our leadership.

“So it was popular in and of itself to argue that we should keep expectations high about what we can



Fight the Crisis councillors after the success of the No vote Photo: Fight the Crisis

achieve—that we should get above inflation pay, that we should have class sizes that are manageable, that our workload shouldn’t make us literally lose the plot.

“Fight the Crisis came out of two threads. One was long term rank-and-file work in different formations. But the huge burst of energy and leadership has been people involved in Teachers and School Staff for Palestine.

“We ran in the union elections to build our profile and got about 37 per cent of the vote for executive positions, but only ten branch council positions out of about 120.”

Organise for more strikes

Teachers staged an electrifying 24-hour strike at the end of March, with up to 40,000 marching in Melbourne. But after that the union leadership called off further action and argued to accept the offer from Jacinta Allan’s Labor government.

As Lucy explained, “Despite the No vote, when AEU Council met, they dug in to defend passivity and inaction.

“Fight the Crisis councillors proposed a motion to immediately start preparing for strike action. That motion was defeated.

“Instead the leadership pushed through a motion to run a survey of members until 17 July.”

But in the face of the groundswell

for action, AEU Branch President Justin Mullaly has suggested the union could now call a strike in July.

An extraordinary council meeting has been called for 17 July to consider the results of the survey and discuss next steps.

Fight the Crisis is organising among the union’s rank-and-file to push for further strike action.

The group has called on AEU members to pass motions at union sub-branch meetings for a 24-hour strike on 4 August.

The Fight the Crisis motion also calls on regional AEU meetings to call the strike action themselves if the council meeting refuses to.

“With the Victorian state election coming up in November, and health workers also having recently taken strike action, the government will be desperate to settle the dispute rather than face escalating industrial action up to the election.

“What the AEU is able to win will potentially have flow-on effects in Victoria and around the country.”

One Nation is feeding off the bitterness about Labor’s failure to address the cost-of-living crisis. A successful union fightback for pay rises is the way to show there is an alternative.

The Victorian teachers are showing the kind of rank-and-file organisation and socialist politics inside the unions that are needed to win this.



Follow Fight the Crisis on Instagram at the QR code or visit their website at fightthecrisis.wordpress.com

Inquest hears how police shot Aubrey Donahue

By Angus Dermody

A CORONIAL inquest into the police killing of Muluridji man Aubrey Donahue has heard disturbing evidence about the moments leading up to the shooting.

While official findings are months away, what came out at the hearings in Cairns last month paints a damning picture of police violence and the racism of the system.

Muluridji man Aubrey Donahue was shot dead by police on 25 March 2023 in Mareeba in Far North Queensland. He had locked himself in a bathroom with his partner and was threatening self-harm when officers attached to Queensland's Special Emergency Response Team (SERT) stormed in with assault rifles and shot him in the head.

The police officer who fatally shot Aubrey initially refused to appear, and had to be issued with a warrant for his arrest to finally do so.

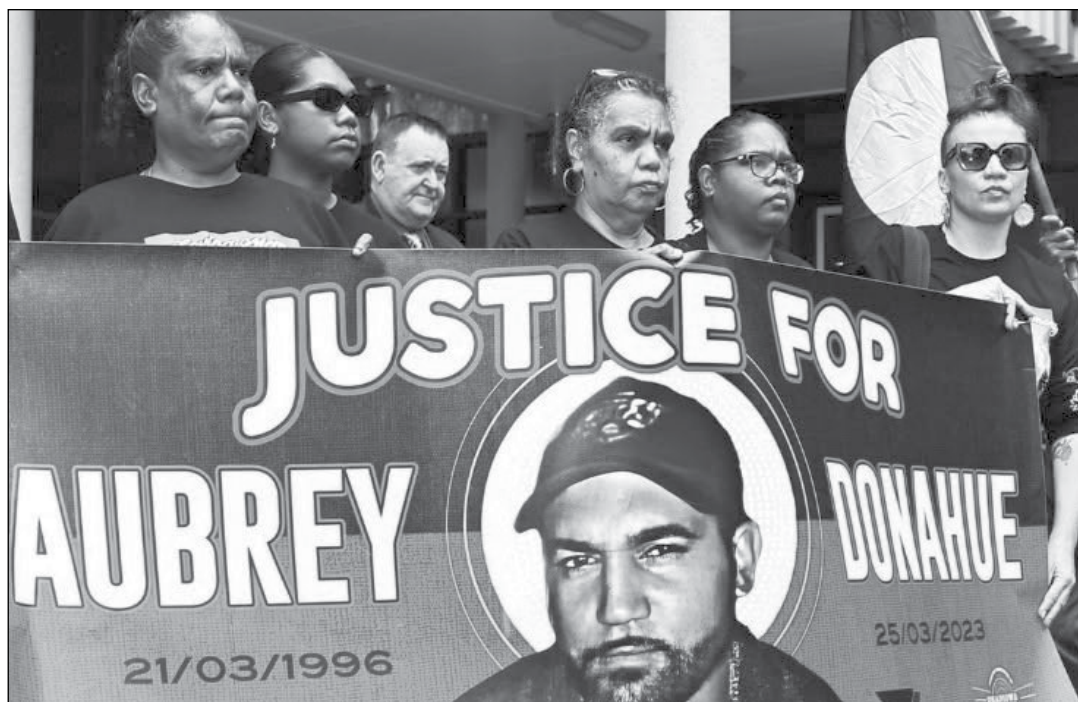
Indigenous activist Lizzie Jarrett, who travelled to the inquest from Sydney, told *Solidarity*, "This officer was also involved in the Lindt cafe siege in Sydney. So he'd had lots of experience dealing with hostages. This was a trained officer."

The officer claimed that before he fatally shot Aubrey a flashbang device was deployed and another officer breached the door, and that he saw Aubrey turn towards him with a knife and, allegedly fearing for his own life, told Aubrey twice to "drop the knife" before shooting him. Absurdly, he said that all this took place in just one second.

"Aubrey's partner's evidence from day one was that she never heard a police officer say anything. She said they'd had domestic violence problems in the past. But on that day, she felt no fear for her life, only that Aubrey was going to take his own life," Lizzie said.

None of the other officers who were there recalled hearing the words "drop the knife"; only that something was shouted into the bathroom before Aubrey was shot. Even the killer cop admitted that, having used a flashbang device, he would expect that "no one would be able to hear basically anything".

Nor can the words be heard on the only audio recording of the shooting, taken from the bodycam of the negotiator outside the building. There was



Above: Family and supporters of Aubrey Donahue outside the Cairns Magistrates Court
Photo: Justice for Aubrey

no bodycam footage from any of the officers inside, as SERT officers did not wear them at the time.

Charges

Despite all of this, evidence from the inquest suggested that police concluded that there was insufficient evidence to pursue criminal charges against officers before they had interviewed any of the officers involved. They "made the decision from witnessing only one body worn camera recording", Lizzie said.

Just two days after the shooting, the President of Queensland's police union claimed in a statement that "All police involved in this matter performed professionally, responsibly and with great restraint."

"The main thing the family were asking repeatedly to every officer that was there that day", on the day of the shooting "was why no family member was called. They could have had his mother on a phone," Lizzie said.

On a previous occasion where Aubrey had taken his partner and hid in a ceiling cavity, "The police got in contact with his mother, and she helped de-escalate the situation and helped her son come down and be able to deal with whatever consequences would come from his actions."

The inquest also heard that a number of reports regarding Aubrey's mental health were effectively ignored. Aubrey was on parole at the time of his death and had told a case manager

that he was struggling with his mental health and agreed to attend counselling. But no referral was made for him.

Aubrey's mother contacted corrective services the month before his death to raise concerns about his wellbeing, and again just two days before. During the inquest, the regional manager for Queensland Corrective Services said that families did not often raising such concerns, and that it should be taken "quite seriously". But corrective services made just two attempts to call Aubrey, and despite those attempts failing, never tried to visit him at home.

Aubrey's family and friends attended the court each day of the hearings, and held a rally the day after it ended.

Lizzie said, "The family's hoping, once the transcripts [of evidence] come and you can see the failures that ended up costing a young man's life, that there is a push for a re-investigation", and charges against police.

In May, police announced there would be no charges over the killing of Kumanjaya White by an off-duty police prosecutor in an Alice Springs supermarket in 2025. A coronial inquest will begin in April next year.

In a statement, Kumanjaya White's grandfather and Warlpiri elder Ned Hargraves said that "Our family has gone through too much—just too much trauma. And now you're making us go through another coronial inquest. The whole system needs to change."

The officer who shot Aubrey refused to appear, and had to be issued with a warrant for his arrest to finally do so

West Papuans speak out against massive government land grab for agribusiness

MAEVE LARKINS spoke to two members of Yayasan Pusaka Bentala Rakyat, an activist group in West Papua, about the Indonesian government's National Strategic Project (PSN) in Merauke, in the south of West Papua. The project is deforesting up to three million hectares of Indigenous land to establish agricultural estates growing rice, sugar cane, corn, palm oil and livestock.

Indonesia has occupied West Papua since 1969, taking control of mining resources and bringing in hundreds of thousands of transmigrants from Java.

In the first half of this year, over 30 Papuans have been killed by the Indonesian military and police, adding to a death toll at least 100,000 since Indonesia took control. West Papuans continue to fight for independence.

Papuan opposition to the PSN is the focus of the documentary, *Pig Feast: Colonialism in our time*. To protect the interviewees' identities, we have anonymised them as "A" and "B".

How has the PSN impacted Indigenous Papuan communities?

A: The PSN has been devastating in Merauke. It threatens our community, especially our ancestral lands. Most of us are relying on these lands, because we got our food and water from the forest.

We rely on our rituals, but when the PSN started to destroy the forests, we have lost them. And, when they are lost, people lose their culture, and they lose their identity.

B: The PSN is not just an infrastructure, food security, or energy project. It is part of a long-running project of the Indonesian government to transform Indigenous land in West Papua into an extractive industrial zone.

What sort of repression do opponents of the PSN face?

A: There have already been many protests by Indigenous communities against the PSN, for example, in Sorong, Manokwari, and Boven Digoel.

We've also tried to take our protests to the House of Representatives.

If we stand against the project, we are called separatists, and we are intimidated by the military and by the private companies themselves.

I've just visited Mama Yasinta's family. They told me that the Indone-



An image from the documentary *Pig Feast*, which exposes the impact of land clearing for the National Strategic Project in Merauke, West Papua

sian army is now demanding identification from them so they can frame Mama Yasinta as supporting the PSN.

[Yasinta Moiwend, known as "Mama Yasinta", is an Indigenous Papuan activist who appeared in the documentary *Pig Feast* and who has campaigned against the PSN since 2024. In May, she was reportedly abducted, threatened and taken to Jakarta, where she appears to have been coerced into filing a police report against the documentary's director Dhandy Laksono and Indigenous lawyer John Teddy Wakum, for allegedly using footage of her without permission. Posts from her social media account since the abduction demand the film screenings of *Pig Feast* are stopped. Her family, friends and lawyers have been unable to get in touch with her directly.-ML]

The military has set up a military post in the village of Anam for the construction of a 135km road. Another Papuan activist from the movie is being reported to the police for blocking access to his ancestral lands.

B: There are already 83,000 military and police stationed in West Papua—one soldier for every 103 Papuans. They claim they need to be there to combat armed separatists; but they also admit that there are only around 1500 guerrillas with just over 350 firearms between them across the entire province.

The Australian government trains the Indonesian military and police, and provides support to Indonesia's government. What message do you have for Australians about this?

A: We really need Australians' support. There has to be a campaign from the Australian community on West Papua, and which pushes their government to stop supporting the private companies that are investing in West Papua.

Australian companies are supporting sugar cane plantations in Merauke. And, the Australian government trains the military who act as the security of the plantations, and the PSN.

What is the importance of solidarity, from Indonesians and internationally?

A: Before *Pig Feast*, it was only very small groups in Indonesia that were aware of the PSN. There have now been over 1500 screenings of *Pig Feast* across Indonesia, and 13 million views on YouTube.

This has been really important, to get more support and spread awareness, and to break through propaganda from the Indonesian government.

Unfortunately, many Indonesians are still very racist. They are told that Papuans are "uncivilised" people, and so they believe the government when they say "development" is the only way to bring "civilisation" to the Papuans.

B: Papuans want our rights respected, but this isn't happening. We are similar to Aboriginal people. When we lose our land, our forests, we lose our identity. We believe that if we lose our ancestral lands, we are no longer Papuan.

We need support and solidarity, not only from Indonesia, but across the world.

Mexican teachers strike amid lavish World Cup spending

By Maeve Larkins

TENS OF thousands of teachers across Mexico have been waging a militant campaign for decent wages, adequate pensions and better public education funding amid the ongoing World Cup.

Co-host Mexico wants to project a glossy image that hides a reality of immense social inequality. The wealthiest 1 per cent own 40 per cent of the country's wealth, while almost 30 per cent of Mexicans live in poverty.

The social-democratic government headed by President Claudia Sheinbaum has spent at least \$3 billion on infrastructure for the World Cup and allowed a glut of real estate speculation to cash in on the spike in tourism. Meanwhile, Sheinbaum has been telling teachers that "there is no money" to meet their demands.

The striking teachers, from the dissident union the CNTE, responded, "If there's no solution, the ball won't roll."

Sheinbaum offered the teachers an insulting 9 per cent wage increase in May, with no changes to the pension system for public sector workers.

Sergio, a striking teacher, said: "We demand a salary increase, improved health service conditions, an increase in the education budget and the dismantling of the promotion and admission mechanisms within the system. But, above all, the central demand is the repeal of the 2007 LISTE Law, which is a reform that transformed the retirement and pension system for state employees."

As it currently stands, teachers and other public servants receive a pension paid according to their individual contributions to huge investment funds, like Australia's superannuation system.

This replaced a system where retired teachers received a fixed amount. The result is that Mexican teachers retire later, and with pensions below the minimum wage.

Sheinbaum pledged to repeal this system during her 2024 election campaign.

The CNTE is demanding a wage increase of 100 per cent, a "solidarity-based" and publicly-run pension system, and a reversal of the 2012 education reforms which brought in competitive exams and performance-based metrics for teachers.

Protests began in late May. Across the country, teachers set up protest



Above: Mexican teachers during the strike Photo: La Izquierda Diario Mexico

camps in central squares and parks, blockaded railways and highways, and occupied offices of the State Education Secretariat. Police used batons and tear gas to disperse them. Sixteen teachers were hospitalised after police used live fire to break up a barricade in Oaxaca.

Festival for the rich

The CNTE launched an indefinite general strike in June. Around 12,000 teachers marched through Mexico City, setting up a protest camp near the Zocalo, the city's main public square. This is where Sheinbaum was planning a free "fan festival" for the World Cup, with huge screens to broadcast the games, as ticket prices escaped the budgets of most working-class Mexicans.

For many Mexicans, the football tournament feels like they "threw a party at our house and didn't invite us," a phrase which has been going viral on social media. Striking teachers have toppled statues of "football giants" set up for the World Cup and warned Sheinbaum that strikes would continue into the tournament.

The World Cup is also being used by co-host Donald Trump to push his racist, imperialist agenda. A Somalian referee was denied entry to the US due to "suspected links to terrorist organisations." The US also denied visas to several support staff from the Iranian national football team.

Trump was even able to overturn a one-game red-card suspension for an American player with a phone call

to FIFA's president. Last year, FIFA invented a "peace prize" so they could award it to Trump.

In Mexico, protester Luis Antonio Rosales Narvaez said, "We're not against the ball game... [but] they should be investing in education... not giving the city a makeover."

Sheinbaum responded by deploying over 100,000 police, National Guard, and soldiers across several major cities to prevent any disruption to the World Cup. Violent skirmishes between police and strikers saw one teacher lose an eye and several others seriously injured.

The striking teachers have been joined by retired judges and magistrates, who were demanding severance pay and adequate pensions. Families of missing persons have plastered the city in posters of some of the over 130,000 missing people, likely murdered by criminal gangs or corrupt police and military.

On the opening night of the World Cup, over 50,000 teachers and their allies marched toward Mexico City's major stadium, the Estadio Azteca before clashing with the riot police. Major roads and boulevards in the capital were blocked off. The Zocalo encampment was able to hold out for an immense 19 days across June.

Teachers agreed to dismantle the protest camp after the government agreed to boost schools funding but have pledged to keep fighting. Their militancy is an example of the kind of action that will be needed to take on the Labor government here.

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For many Mexicans, the football tournament feels like they "threw a party at our house and didn't invite us"

Trump humbled as Iran deal shows US and Israel's failure

By David Glanz

THE US and Iran were again exchanging missile attacks as Solidarity went to press, as tensions over the agreement to end the war continued.

Trump and Israel started the war but it's Iran that has largely dictated the terms of the outcome.

The US might have the most powerful military in the world, but it's Donald Trump who has been humiliated.

Gone is Trump's talk of "unconditional surrender", regime change or ending Iran's ballistic missile capability.

The deal is humiliating, too, for Benjamin Netanyahu in Israel, who has failed in his aim of toppling Iran's government. And it's a slap in the face for Anthony Albanese, among the first world leaders to endorse the US-Israeli attack in February.

As American bluster has faded in the face of Iranian resistance, Trump made ending Iran's supposed plans for nuclear weapons his bottom line—even though he claimed a year ago to have obliterated Iran's nuclear stockpile.

Trump regularly denounces the agreement between Iran and President Barack Obama in 2015, which saw 97 per cent of Iran's nuclear stockpile sent to Russia. This time, Iran keeps its enriched uranium.

Its only concession is agreeing to "down-blend" (dilute) the stockpile, and to reaffirm that it has no intention of building a nuclear weapon.

Another blow

Traffic through the Strait of Hormuz began to resume after both sides initially lifted their blockade.

But Iran is determined to maintain control of the Strait, continually targeting ships that attempt to transit without using its approved route.

The agreement leaves open the possibility that Iran and Oman will impose tolls on shipping through the Strait after 60 days—but the US still opposes this.

Trump also made a series of other concessions, conceding that the US will eventually lift all sanctions against Iran. Trump has agreed to a \$US300 billion reconstruction fund for Iran, although he wants the Gulf states to pick up the bill.

Iran will also be able to access all its funds in frozen bank accounts abroad if the agreement is fully imple-



Donald Trump with Benjamin Netanyahu in the White House Photo: White House/Daniel Torok

mented, worth at least \$100 billion.

Talks on a final agreement are supposed to be wrapped up in 60 days but it's widely expected they will drag on much longer.

Lebanon

The agreement faces other challenges. Probably the biggest is the role of Israel. The memorandum said that there would be an end to war "on all fronts", committing the US to ending Israel's attacks on Lebanon.

Trump forced Israel to stop bombing buildings in Lebanon's capital Beirut and insisted that Netanyahu would do what the US wants saying he "knows who the boss is".

Vice President JD Vance issued a series of warnings to Israel declaring, "If I was in the cabinet of the Israeli government, I might not be attacking the only powerful ally that I have anywhere left in the entire world." This shows the US is capable of restraining Israel if it chooses.

But Israeli Defence Minister Israel Katz has insisted that Israel's occupation in southern Lebanon would continue.

The US has also brokered an agreement between the Lebanese government and Israel that stipulates Israel will only withdraw if Hezbollah disarms. Hezbollah, excluded from negotiations, rejects the agreement.

Trump, however, knows that it's Iran that demonstrated "the art of the deal". Meeting with other G7 leaders in France, he publicly exploded with

frustration, threatening to bomb Iran if it broke the agreement.

He started the war in February, boasting that it would be won in days.

The US killed Iran's Supreme Leader, and has unleashed death and destruction on Iranians already suffering under the theocratic regime.

On the opening day of the war, US missiles hit a primary school in Minab, killing more than 150 people. As many as 6000 Iranians died during the war.

But Iranian missile attacks on the Gulf states, including US bases, and the global economic chaos caused by the closure of the strait, shifted the balance of power in Iran's favour.

Iran has stared down the US and won concessions for Hezbollah in Lebanon. This shows that Israel and the US are not all powerful. But the war has again exposed the complicity of the Arab states, with the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia launching attacks on Iran and Jordan defending Israel through downing Iranian missiles.

Freedom for Palestine is going to rely on mass uprisings of workers and the poor, to bring down these collaborationist governments and end the imperialist domination of the region.

The US empire is in decline. But a declining empire, especially one armed to the teeth, can also be vicious. Trump is now threatening Cuba. His Board of Peace is overseeing genocide and occupation in Gaza.

The need to build a movement against US imperialism and its allies in Tel Aviv and Canberra remains urgent.

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Iran has stared down the US and won concessions for Hezbollah in Lebanon

ANTI-IMPERIALISM AND THE PALESTINE MOVEMENT: LESSONS FROM VIETNAM

Julie Monteiro looks at the how anti-imperialist politics and a focus on building working class support were key to the success of the movement against the Vietnam War

THE GENOCIDE in Gaza has produced support for Palestine at a scale never seen before. People have mobilised in their hundreds of thousands in response.

We are at a point now where the rallies are smaller and people seem more fearful of being repressed for speaking up about Palestine. How do we reignite the fight to cut ties and our government’s complicity?

The Vietnam War movement is talked about to this day as a militant and fierce struggle against the Australian government’s conscription of young men to fight the war.

The high point of this was the Moratoriums.

The first Moratorium in May 1970 drew about 200,000 people onto the streets, rallying behind the slogan “Stop work to stop the war”. The Moratoriums were more than just street marches, they were also strikes. They were held on weekdays and between half and two-thirds of the marchers were workers, who either had to strike or leave work to attend.

Five thousand Melbourne Uni staff and students marched from the campus to join the first Moratorium, over a third of the number of students enrolled full-time at the uni.

But this could not have happened without the previous five years of organising led by students and left-wing unions.

Two more Moratoriums followed. They showed how strike action could paralyse society through stopping business as usual to demand an end to the war. This struck a deep fear in the government that unless troops were withdrawn, strike action could become more widespread. In December 1971 the Liberal Prime Minister announced all Australian troops would be withdrawn from Vietnam.

This holds lessons for today’s movement for Palestine.

The Australian Government supports Israel today for a similar reason to why it sent troops to fight alongside US soldiers in Vietnam. Australia sees support for US imperialism as a way of ensuring Australian domination of the local region and advancing its broader imperialist interests.

Its backing for Israel is not mainly a result of Zionism but its support for US imperialism.

Albanese backed Trump’s bombing of Iran and provides intelligence to the US and Israel through Pine Gap. This is why we need to build anti-war and anti-imperialist politics within the Palestine movement, to not simply show solidarity with Palestine but to break Australia’s support for US imperialism.

It wasn’t inevitable that there would be mass opposition to the Vietnam War or conscription—it had to be built through consistent campaigning.

At the start the war was popular in Australia. When conscription was announced most people supported it as necessary to fight the spread of communism in the region, and many young men enthusiastically registered for National Service.

There was only a small minority who opposed conscription and Australia’s involvement in Vietnam. Organisations like the Youth Campaign Against Conscription was set up at the University of Sydney and spread to other campuses across the country, as well as Save Our Sons, initiated by mothers who were opposed to the conscription of their sons for the slaughter in Vietnam.

There were also individuals who publicly refused conscription to Vietnam on a moral basis, and some were imprisoned for doing so.

There was also early opposition to the Vietnam War in the more left-wing unions. The Waterside

Backing for Israel is not mainly a result of Zionism but Australia's support for US imperialism

Workers Federation staged a 24-hour strike in Sydney in opposition to the introduction of conscription. The Seamen’s Union later refused to crew the Boonaroo, which was chartered by the federal government to transport stores and equipment to Vietnam.

However, other unions failed to support this action and the seafarers were forced to back down. At this stage the anti-war movement was too small to support workers’ industrial action in the face of opposition from senior union officials.

Ebbs and flows

The movement went through lulls where the struggle was lower.

One of these was after the defeat of the Labor Party in the federal election of 1966, after it ran on a platform of opposition to the Liberals’ conscription for the war in Vietnam.

While the loss had a demoralising effect on the wider movement, it also showed that electoral campaigning would not end the war in the immediate future. As a result, more organisations focused on mobilising against the war on the streets.

In the year following the elections, student activists in the Labor Club at Monash Uni felt the anti-war movement had run out of ideas—so they decided they would collect funds for the Vietnamese National Liberation Front (or the Viet Cong). This really set things off.

The media, the Liberal government and the Labor opposition all condemned the action, calling it treason as it meant supporting the enemy. The Monash Vice-Chancellor banned the collection and the student council called a student general meeting to dissociate the Monash student body from it.

But when 1000 students turned up to the meeting a majority voted to defend the Labor club’s right to collect

the funds and opposed the ban on fundraising.

The government moved to outlaw any aid to the NLF, but this repressive move galvanised the anti-war campaign. The decision to raise funds for the NLF forced the movement to confront the issue of whether it was just fighting for Australian troops out of Vietnam or whether it supported the Vietnamese resistance against US imperialism. This helped deepen the politics of the movement and shift the whole campaign to the left.

There are parallels with the question of supporting Palestinian resistance today. The insistence that the Hamas attack on 7 October was terrorism has been used by the government and media to justify Israel's genocide in Gaza as part of its "right to defend itself".

Supporting Palestinians' right to resist, and pointing the finger at Israel's occupation as the source of the problem, makes it clear why Israel and its Western imperialist supporters are responsible.

The antisemitic Bondi attack has been weaponised to smear the Palestine movement. The Queensland government has banned Palestine slogans "From the river to the sea" and "Globalise the Intifada" as hate speech. The NSW and Victorian governments want to follow.

The Palestine movement has to defend both these slogans and refuse to be scared into silence or to concede that the movement is in any way to blame for antisemitism.

Dealing with repression

The Vietnam War movement also faced serious repression. It was made illegal under Commonwealth law to advocate refusing to register for the draft. In Melbourne students started a campaign of defiance, handing out "Don't register" leaflets in the CBD.

The student militancy pushed academics and left-wing politicians including deputy Labor leader Jim Cairns to join them. Eventually more than 500 people were handing out illegal leaflets and over 100 were arrested. Brewery workers threatened strike action in solidarity. This defeated the ban on leafleting and saw more people publicly advocate defying the draft.

The Palestine movement has to stand up to repression, too.

We need to cut all the ties with Israel, from weapons research in our universities to our government allowing the supply of F-35 fighter jet parts. This requires working class



Above: Anti-imperialist politics that rejects the idea Palestinian resistance is terrorism is vital for the movement
Photo: Matt Hrkac

support and an effort to build towards the kind of strike action seen in the Moratoriums, despite far lower levels of union strength and the current anti-strike laws.

The first step towards this is for the Palestine movement to orient to workers and trade unions. There's a lot of pessimism in the movement that the unions are too conservative and unwilling to fight for Palestine.

But at the start of 2024 there were rank-and-file groups for Palestine across the union movement. But too often sections of the Palestine movement have simply denounced the unions instead of seizing on opportunities to deepen union support and the involvement of rank-and-file union members.

The Maritime Union respected a community picket at Webb Dock in Melbourne in early 2024 preventing work on Israeli-owned ZIM ships, with union members refusing to cross the picket line for four days.

Even after workers lost their legal right to refuse to work under health and safety laws, they still refused to get on a company bus to break the picket.

But when workers were stood down and the union asked for the picket to end, they were heckled by many activists, destroying the credibility of the Palestine movement with the MUA.

Palestine activists were effectively demanding that maritime workers lose pay and risk their jobs. When it was clear they weren't willing to do so activists denounced them, instead of recognising that the action could succeed only if the Palestine move-

ment worked to build more union support.

Last year there was a large mobilisation of unionists for a Palestine rally in Melbourne in August, backed by the Victorian Trades Hall Council.

Some 2000 workers marched from Trades Hall to join the main rally. But rather than welcoming this as a step in the right direction, the rally co-chairs publicly attacked the Trades Hall secretary for not doing enough. As a result Trades Hall has distanced itself from the Palestine rallies.

But this doesn't mean that the prospect of taking the fight for Palestine into the unions is lost.

There is increasing anger at the cost of living and the failure of wages to keep pace, alongside Labor's budget cuts to the NDIS.

At the same time, Labor has committed an extra \$53 billion to military spending alongside plans for \$368 billion for nuclear submarines. This shows how support for US imperialism and war comes at the expense of services and workers' living standards.

It is crucial that we build an anti-imperialist politics within the movement that sees the need to take on the Australia government's own militarism, which drives its support for Trump and Israel.

Alongside this, the movement needs to a commitment to drawing in organised workers to protest actions and working towards industrial action to refuse to load Israeli ships, boycott Israeli universities, and cause a crisis for the government—following the example of how the anti-Vietnam War movement organised to "stop work to stop the war".

CAMPUS COMPLICITY AND THE REPRESSION OF PALESTINE PROTEST

A Palestinian student from the West Bank spoke at the symposium on Palestine and political expression at Sydney Uni in June. We print part of their speech below.

ON 4 June, Israeli forces arrested four young women students from Birzeit University in the West Bank.

One of them, Natalie Abu Dayyeh, is 20 years-old, a journalism student. She also plays football for Palestine’s national team. The same week, Israeli police in Jerusalem detained a second national team player, Rand Halawani, also 20. Their football association says this is not an accident; it is a pattern of targeting Palestinian athletes.

The day before, occupation forces stormed the campus of Al-Quds University in Abu Dis. And the following week, Israeli bulldozers demolished the family home of another Birzeit student, Mays Sultan, in occupied Jerusalem, after more than a decade of court battles, on a single day’s notice. The same demolition flattened a shop that was the livelihood of four families. And then the authorities handed the family a fine of ten thousand shekels to help pay for the destruction of their own home.

A few weeks before that, in the Umm al-Khair village near Hebron, Palestinian children stood in front of Israeli soldiers and protested just to be allowed to walk to their school.

Academic freedom for Palestinians, begins with a much smaller question: Can you get to class? Can you reach your university without being stopped at a checkpoint? Can you study without soldiers raiding campus? Can you graduate without being arrested?

The attack on Palestine and the attack on free speech at Australian universities are not two issues. They are the one project—a project that shields institutions complicit in oppression, and punishes the people who expose them.

Scholasticide

The destruction of Gaza’s education system has been so total that UN

experts called it scholasticide. Not collateral damage—the deliberate, systematic destruction of an education system.

All 19 universities in Gaza have been severely damaged or completely destroyed. More than 80 per cent of university buildings are gone. The Palestinian Education Ministry has counted more than 100 academics killed, and roughly 90,000 higher-education students who can no longer study.

Dr Sufian Tayeh was the president of the Islamic University of Gaza, a physicist, UNESCO’s chair for physical and astrophysical sciences in Palestine, ranked in 2021 among the top 2 per cent of researchers in the world. He was born in Jabalia refugee camp and rose to the very top of global science from one of the most besieged places on earth. On 2 December 2023, an Israeli airstrike killed him and his family in their home.

Dr Refaat Alareer taught English literature at the same university. He was a poet who co-founded a project called “We Are Not Numbers”, which paired young writers in Gaza with mentors so the world would see faces, not statistics. Before he was killed, he received calls and messages telling him to stop writing.

He kept writing. He wrote a poem, anticipating his own death, called *If I Must Die*. It has since been read aloud at events on every continent. On 6 December 2023, an airstrike killed him along with his brother, his sister, and four of their children.

At the Islamic University of Gaza, the bombing destroyed its central library and laboratories. It burned more than 200,000 books. It erased 16,000 master’s and doctoral theses.

Why target the universities, the professors, the books?

After decades of military rule and

.....
All 19 universities in Gaza have been severely damaged or completely destroyed

occupation, Palestine has one of the lowest illiteracy rates in the world, around 2 per cent. The global illiteracy rate is about 13 per cent.

Education is one of the ways Palestinians have refused to disappear.

Complicit with Israel

Israeli universities however are not bystanders to the occupation. The Technion helped develop the remote-controlled D9 bulldozer that flattens Palestinian homes. The Hebrew University runs a program that trains military intelligence officers. And Bezalel, an art and design academy, opened an emergency workshop during this genocide to repair the uniforms of Israeli soldiers, sewing labels into them that read “With love from Bezalel.”

Israeli universities do not sit beside the occupation. They are built into it.

Sydney university is complicit.

Firstly it has exchange programs with Israeli institutions, advertising programs with images of occupied Jerusalem under the words “Experience Israel”, sending students to campuses that host soldiers, and into accommodation in illegal settlements.

Secondly there’s weapons research. Inside the Sydney Nanoscience Hub sits the Jericho Smart Sensing Laboratory, developing nanotechnology for military aircraft and satellites. The University takes research money from the US Office of Naval Research, the US Army Research Office, and US intelligence research agencies and from a joint US–Australian Defence program where, by the government’s own rules, the research must be on a topic the military designates. There is a live project with the weapons contractor L3Harris.

Sydney University has a “special relationship” with Thales, the arms company that partners with the Israeli

weapons-maker Elbit on drone production. Elbit's drones fly over Gaza. Thales funds PhD students here and until last year, Thales Australia's own chairperson, Belinda Hutchinson, was the Chancellor of Sydney University.

Over five years, Australia approved around 350 defence export permits to Israel. Government deny supplying Israel, but they always use the same careful word: Australia doesn't sell weapons "directly".

Francesca Albanese, the UN Special Rapporteur, describes this kind of arms-length, multi-country supply chain as "the economy of genocide". This is the what university research feeds into. And it is being done in our name, with our fees, every day.

Repression

On 5 May, this University sent two students a formal Notice of Complaint over a protest poster. The offending content? Handala, a barefoot Palestinian child, hands clasped behind his back. Created by the cartoonist Najj al-Ali, Handala is one of the most beloved images in Palestinian culture: the refugee child who refuses to grow up until he can go home.

The University suggested Handala might be antisemitic.

The University has adopted a new definition of antisemitism along with 38 other Australian universities that treats criticism of Israel as racist. It brought in an anti-protest Campus Access Policy. It is building an infrastructure of political management designed to make the next silencing easier than the last.

Everyone should fear that. Because once a university accepts that political speech can be switched off whenever it gets controversial, that switch never stays on. Today it is Palestine. Tomorrow it is whatever embarrasses power next.

The campus crackdown is backed up by the state. In February this year, when Israeli President Isaac Herzog visited Sydney, the NSW government introduced some of the harshest anti-protest powers in the country. Police pepper-sprayed a peaceful crowd. They dragged away Muslim men who were praying.

The crackdown in the street and the crackdown on campus are the same crackdown.

Our universities celebrate critical thinking until students think critically about the university's complicity.

They celebrate ethical leadership until students demand it be consistent.

They defend free expression until the expression is solidarity with



Above: Students at Sydney Uni protesting management repression of support for Palestine Photo: Solidarity students

Palestine.

That contradiction is now impossible to hide.

So what do we actually do? We must organise to cut the ties.

Boycotts helped end apartheid in South Africa. Australian unions refused to unload South African ships and weapons cargo, even when a Prime Minister threatened to jail them. And when Nelson Mandela walked free, he came to Australia to thank Australian workers directly. He said their solidarity gave his people strength and hope.

Israel knows boycotts work. Its university presidents have built a dedicated task force to stop the spread of academic boycotts because they know boycotts threaten Israel's scientific future and its economy.

Trinity College Dublin, the first university in the West to comprehensively cut ties, voted in June 2025 to fully divest from Israeli companies, end collaborations with Israeli institutions, and stop facilitating exchanges with them. Ghent University in Belgium cut academic ties with every Israeli university. Universities across Spain and Ireland have moved to divest or suspend their ties.

Israel's own reporting admits academic boycotts rose 66 per cent in a single year led by the US, Belgium, Spain and England.

And in Australia, we have also had wins. Sydney University ended its exchange with Bezalel, the art school that sewed uniforms for the IDF. And that victory matters beyond this cam-

pus, because the last surviving Bezalel partnership in the country now sits at UNSW.

UTS let its Technion partnership lapse and refused to renew it. Curtin ended its tie with Ben-Gurion University. University of Western Australia ended its tie with the Hebrew University.

Collective action does not transform an institution overnight, but it can make complicity politically expensive. And that is how every wall eventually comes down.

Universities should be a place where hard political questions can be asked, where power can be challenged, where solidarity is possible.

I think of Dr Ahmed Abu Shaban, Dean of Agriculture at Al-Azhar University in Gaza, who spoke at our forum on education as resistance. He told us how many times his faculty has been bombed and how many times they have rebuilt it.

So we need to cut the ties, both with Israeli universities and with the weapons companies, and build links with Palestinian universities, instead of with the institutions destroying them. And defend the right to speak, to argue, to think.

The struggle for Palestine and the struggle for free speech are bound together.

People have the right to challenge injustice whether it wears the soldier's uniform in Gaza, or the letterhead of an administrator in Sydney.

The answer to both cannot be silence.

FIGHTING FASCISM: LESSONS FROM THE SPANISH CIVIL WAR

Workers in Spain rose up to stop a fascist coup 90 years ago, sparking the civil war. This put revolution on the agenda—but holding it back led to defeat, argues **Peter Robinson**

THE SPANISH Civil War still resonates through the decades. It provides an inspirational example of the heroism, creativity and self-organisation of workers. Everything was possible.

When the English writer George Orwell arrived in Barcelona in December 1936 he wrote, “It was the first time that I had been in a town where the working class was in the saddle. Practically every building of any size had been seized by the workers and was draped with red flags or with the red and black flags of the anarchists; every wall was scrawled with the hammer and sickle and with the initials of the revolutionary parties.”

The Spanish Civil War is usually portrayed as a battle between fascism on one side and democracy on the other. But this was a workers’ revolution whose crushing led directly to defeat for the republic and decades of fascist rule in the Spanish state. The questions it posed are still fundamental to our movement: how best to fight fascism; our attitude to the state and how to fight for socialism.

The anti-fascist forces combined liberal republicans, social democrats, communists, revolutionary socialists and anarchists, and they all battled to increase their own political, ideological and military influence.

The global depression following the 1929 Wall Street Crash produced political polarisation. Many workers moved to the left, galvanised by the example of the Russian Revolution. Ruling classes, desperate to defend their own interests, often resorted to brutal repression.

Fascism’s rise seemed unstoppable. In Germany Europe’s best organised labour movement had failed to stop Hitler. Instead of calling for working class unity against fascism, the German Communist Party accused social democrats of being “social fascists” for propping up capitalism. The labour movement was split with

catastrophic consequences.

Alliances

By the mid-1930s, with the Second World War on the horizon, Communist Parties, directed by Moscow, backflipped. Now they sought to make broad alliances in order to create a bulwark against the threat of German invasion. Russian leader Stalin was desperate to ally with capitalist imperial powers, especially Britain and France. Communist Parties were encouraged to enter alliances with not just social democrats but also capitalist parties that opposed fascism. This appealed to many, but in practice maintaining unity meant the interests of the working class became secondary.

In 1936 democracy in Spain was only five years old. Spain was backward economically—industrial capitalism had developed mainly in just a few cities. Big business, the church, army and landowners looked with fear at the rights and social reforms workers were demanding.

The popular front government was elected in February. Alongside the Communists the reformist Socialist Party was a key component. Their power base came from the moderate trade union, the General Union of Workers (UGT) which claimed up to 1.5 million members.

But the popular front was dominated by middle class republican parties. Previous republican governments had instituted some moderate land reforms and made concessions to the regional aspirations of Catalonia, although not the Basque Country. Ultimately, however, their aim was to strengthen Spanish capitalism.

Nevertheless, workers celebrated the popular front victory, immediately raising demands for reforms and organising strikes. Within months, sections of the ruling class acted decisively. The army rose up and tried to overthrow the republican government.

.....
This was a workers’ revolution whose crushing led to defeat for the republic and decades of fascist rule
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The man who came to lead the fascists was General Francisco Franco who was head of the Spanish Army of Africa based in Morocco.

What Franco had not anticipated was a spontaneous revolutionary anti-fascist uprising. When the government refused to distribute weapons, the trade unions called a general strike and workers stormed military barracks in order to arm themselves. They managed to repel the army, and in the process took control of several major cities.

The hastily organised volunteer militia units commandeered trucks and left the cities to prevent the rebel advance.

In the political vacuum, neighbourhood workers’ committees organised healthcare, food, transportation and public safety. In the areas they controlled, workers took over the factories and much of the land. In Barcelona, for example, 80 per cent of industry was collectivised and in eastern Aragon up to 400 agricultural collectives were established.

In a state previously dominated by the repressive Catholic church, women gained new freedoms. Women now participated actively in politics by joining workplace cooperatives, anti-fascist committees and armed militias. They fought alongside their male comrades at the front. Other gains included information on birth control and limited legalisation of abortion.

The main organisation pushing the revolution forward was the National Confederation of Labour (CNT). The anarcho-sindicalist trade union was deeply rooted in the working class, especially in Barcelona, with about one million members.

The anarchists steadfastly rejected political parties and standing for elections. For them, revolution meant controlling the streets, factories and land, not political institutions. Nevertheless it supported the popular front government and an anarchist was

even appointed minister for health and welfare the following November. This disoriented their rank and file—were they for revolution or stability?

In Barcelona, Lluís Companys, head of the Catalan regional government, met CNT leaders less than a week after the attempted military coup. He told them, “Today you are masters of the city and of Catalonia... You have conquered and everything is in your power; if you do not need or want me as president of Catalonia, tell me now.”

Debated

The CNT regional committee then debated whether to take power. They voted against. It would mean substituting one form of dictatorship for another, they argued, and they were not prepared to take on dictatorial powers. The Russian revolutionary Leon Trotsky’s verdict was damning:

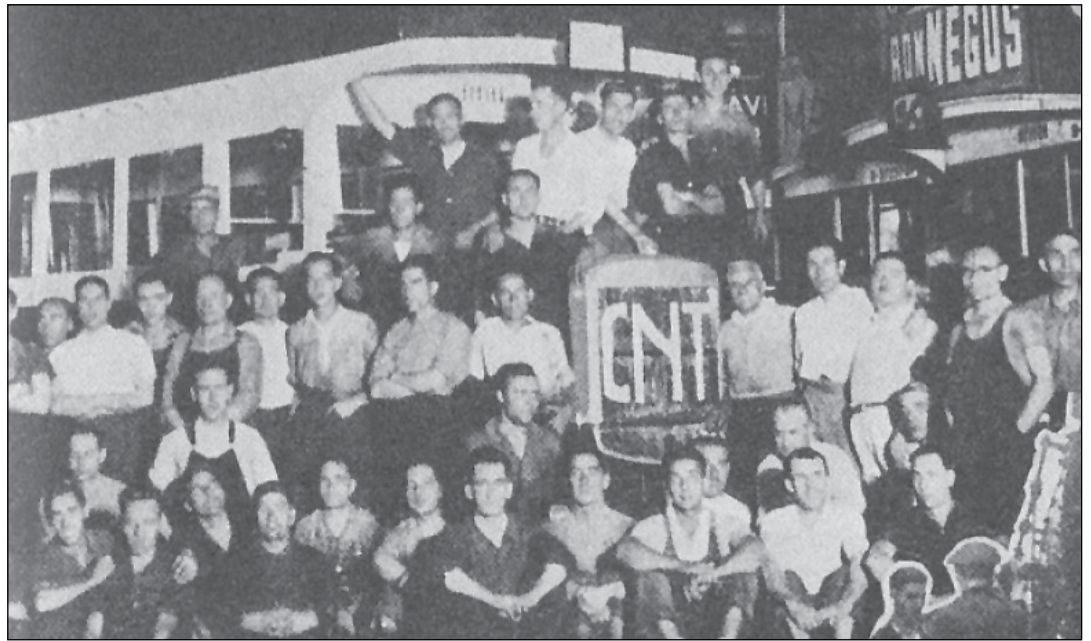
“To renounce the conquest of power is voluntarily to leave the power with those who wield it, the exploiters. The essence of every revolution consisted and consists in putting a new class in power, thus enabling it to realise its own program in life. It is impossible to wage war and to reject victory.”

The other important group was the Workers Party of Marxist Unification (Poum), a small, recently formed revolutionary socialist party. It was led by Andreu Nin, a former member of the Communist Party (CP), who had been expelled from Russia as a member of the Left Opposition to Stalin.

Nin had links with Trotsky, but Trotsky criticised the Poum heavily from his exile in Mexico, particularly for signing the popular front pact in early 1936 and entering the Catalan government the following September. The Poum argued to build an alternative revolutionary power based on workers’, peasants’ and fighters’ committees and the construction of a red army modelled on the one Trotsky led in defending the Russian Revolution.

But with about 3000 to 5000 militants, it was small and, fearing isolation, ended up tailing the CNT, propping up the crumbling republican state instead of fighting for a revolutionary alternative.

The CP had 20,000 to 30,000 members at the outbreak of the war. Now it was arguing that the revolution was a distraction and radical actions would only alienate moderates, the middle class, and business who they were desperate to stop going over to the fascist side. One CP official wrote that socialisation and collectivisation were “not only not desirable but absolutely impermissible”.



Above: Workers at a collectivised bus factory in Barcelona in 1936 with the first bus built under workers' control
Photo: Wikimedia Commons

Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Portugal and Russia all signed a Non-Intervention Agreement, supported by the US. They agreed not to supply arms or personnel to either side. Nevertheless, Germany and Italy immediately flouted the agreement by shipping weapons, aircraft and thousands of troops to bolster the fascists.

Russia was the only country to provide arms to the republic. Controlling the distribution of these weapons greatly increased the Communist Party’s influence in Spain.

War and revolution

The outcome depended on the type of warfare they used. Was it to be an orthodox or revolutionary war?

Trotsky wrote at the time, “A civil war is waged, as everyone knows, not only with military but also with political weapons... To accomplish this it is only necessary to advance the program of the revolution.”

Franco controlled about 50 per cent of the land. A revolutionary war could have included a program of land redistribution to win the peasants over. Commitments to regional independence for Catalonia and the Basque Country could have ensured the adherence of wavering supporters there.

Another option was to grant independence to Morocco, which Franco was using as a base of operations. This was discounted for fear of alarming the imperial powers, particularly France, which controlled neighbouring Algeria.

Instead the Communist Party insisted on centralising the army and repressing the revolutionary struggle in order to keep the capitalist republican forces onside. In May 1937 in

Barcelona they sought to disarm the militias in order to decapitate the revolution and consolidate their own power. At this time perhaps four fifths of Barcelona was in the hands of anarchist and Poum militias.

After six days of street fighting the CNT, fearing undermining anti-fascist unity, convinced their members to disarm. The Poum was outlawed and Nin, along with scores of his comrades, was tortured and then murdered. Hundreds more filled republican jails. Many of the gains of the revolution were reversed. Collectivised estates and factories under workers’ control were returned to individual owners or taken over by the state and churches reopened.

Three years of war brought carnage with around 100,000 executions by the fascists and post-war repression that claimed the lives of tens of thousands more. Around half a million refugees fled to France and were interned in terrible conditions. There followed 36 years of fascist rule. The church regained its former power and women were thrown back into the home with their freedoms ripped from them.

The republican government’s refusal to wage revolutionary war led to a terrible defeat for the working class. This was ensured by the counter-revolutionary actions of the CP and the ideological shortcomings of the anarchists.

Far right and fascist parties are on the rise again, with France’s National Rally, the AfD in Germany and Reform UK all leading in the polls and now One Nation’s surge here. We all owe it to the heroes of the Spanish Revolution to learn from their struggle.

DISABLED PEOPLE'S LIVES IGNORED AS LABOR SLASHES NDIS

By Luke Ottavi

Despite blanket opposition to the NDIS cuts from disabled people and disability advocacy groups, Labor is determined to push ahead with its devastating plan to cut \$38.1 billion from the scheme and kick 240,000 disabled people off it within five years.

The Senate inquiry into Labor's proposed legislation to radically overhaul the NDIS has been extended until 14 August, delaying the passage of the bill. The Greens refused to pass Labor's capital gains and negative gearing tax changes unless Labor allowed the inquiry to hear more evidence about the impacts on disabled people.

Although disabled people were originally given just two weeks' notice there were 4000 submissions to the inquiry, with the committee admitting that "NDIS participants and their loved ones are experiencing real distress regarding their understanding of the proposed changes".

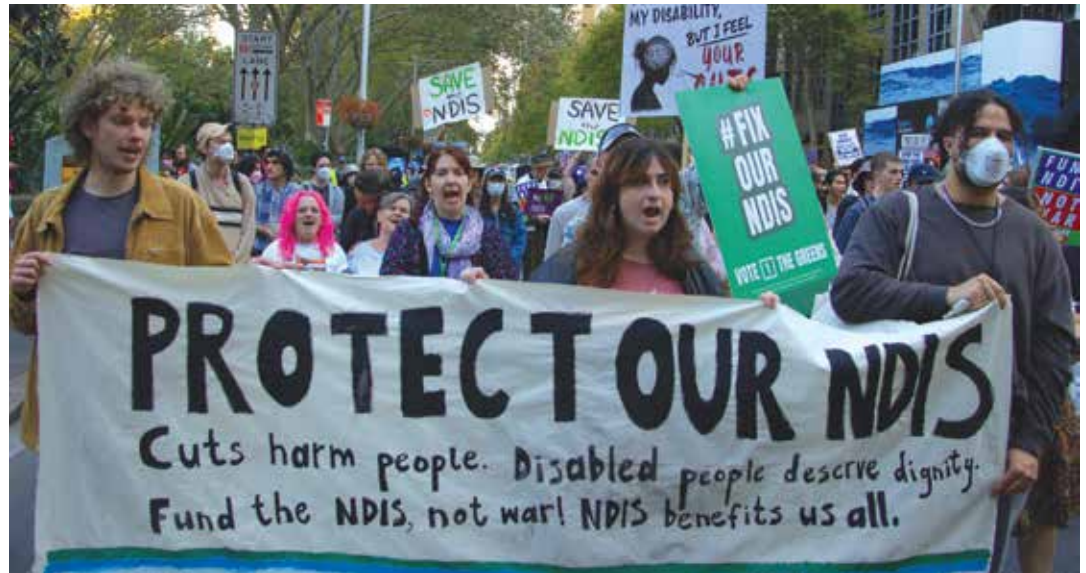
Labor and the Minister for Disability and the NDIS Mark Butler have justified the cuts by saying that the scheme is rife with fraud and the growth in costs of the NDIS are "unsustainable".

But Treasury modelling shows that just \$900 million (2.4 per cent) of Labor's proposed \$38.1 billion in cuts over the next four years will come from cracking down on fraud.

Instead the ABC reports that, "60 per cent of those overall savings would come from the cutting of participant community participation and therapy budgets (\$13.2 billion over four years) and tightening access to the scheme through a new functional capacity test (\$9.3 billion)."

This includes cutting \$7000 in social and community participation funding for every NDIS participant.

Disability activist, actress and author Hannah Diviney, who has cerebral palsy and is an NDIS participant, told the inquiry that "without social and community participation funding, I can't attend crucial therapies that are important for my health, wellbeing and the maintenance of the skills



Above: Rally against the NDIS in Sydney in May just before Labor's budget
Photo: Solidarity

and strength I do have, [or] attend appointments independently without support from my parents, both of whom are in the workforce".

Alternative supports

Labor also wants to introduce a new eligibility test designed to prevent people from accessing the scheme who supposedly have "low and moderate support needs". States and territories are supposed to provide alternative supports for those diverted from the NDIS.

But state and territory disability ministers told the inquiry in a joint statement that "there is a significant risk that people with disability will end up in hospitals or other settings that are inappropriate and unable to meet their needs or have no access to services at all.

"States and territories are not in a position, and have made no agreement, to deliver like-for-like services to people who are exited from the NDIS."

The federal and state governments have agreed to spend a pitiful \$2 billion a year on these alternative "foundational supports" for hundreds of thousands of people, including autism support for children through Thriving Kids.

Disabled people are already not

receiving enough support through the NDIS. The inquiry heard from a participant with spina bifida who needs incontinence products. He was told that he should ask companies to give him free samples as the NDIS would only fund him for half of what he needs.

Hannah Diviney closed her testimony to the inquiry by saying, "When disabled people die as a direct result of this bill, and they will, their blood will be on your hands.

"How do I know people will die? Because you will have made it impossible for them to live in so many ways."

Fund NDIS not war

Labor has found plenty of money for nuclear submarines and weapons, increasing the military budget by \$53 billion over the next decade to a staggering total of \$887 billion.

Labor is not interested in the effects the NDIS cuts will have on disabled people's lives. Its priorities are on preparing for war on China and cutting the budget deficit.

National rallies against the NDIS cuts are planned for the weekend of 1 August through the Greens-initiated Protect our NDIS Alliance. We need to fight Labor's cuts and demand it fund welfare not warfare.

Just \$900 million (2.4 per cent) of Labor's proposed cuts come from cracking down on fraud