



Vanguard

For an Independent Australia and Socialism

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“So we must fly a rebel flag...”

by Alice M.

The 3rd December marks the 160th anniversary of the Eureka Stockade Rebellion that holds great significance for Australia’s working people, in particular the organised working class.

The 1854 armed uprising was more than a rebellion. For that time it was a revolution for freedom from oppression and exploitation, a call for genuine democracy for the people, and national independence from the domination of the British colonial ruling class.

The rebels’ demands carried the seeds for far-reaching fundamental change in Australia and the necessity for the working class to eventually become the masters of an independent Australia.

This was the beginning of social and political movements in Australia for a thorough-going change in class relations. It continues today.

The issues and demands around which the Eureka rebels united are still with us in a fundamental way.

Those early strivings for justice, a genuine democracy for ordinary people and independence for Australia have yet to be achieved. The many struggles and mass movements of the people today, flow towards the realisation of these demands.

Colonial oppression

The British colonial ruling class forcefully dispossessed Australia’s Aboriginal people in 1788, and violently suppressed the indigenous resistance to the occupation of their lands.

Aboriginal land was brutally stolen by the British colonial state and given away to the wealthy squatters from the British aristocracy and later to the newly arising ruling class of wealthy merchant bankers and industrial capitalists.

A heavy mining tax was imposed on the impoverished gold diggers whilst the wealthy squatters paid no taxes on the stolen land, from which they made their fortunes growing wheat, sheep and cattle.

By November 1854, the oppressed, and mainly poor gold diggers, most of



whom flocked from many corners of the world to Ballarat searching for gold to make a living, banded together, taking up arms to resist the harsh and unjust treatment by the colonial ruling class.

The Eureka rebellion was the first organised political class struggle and mass uprising in Australia by a newly emerging working class.

They demanded the abolition of mining licences and the right to vote for parliamentary representation through which they hoped the will of the people would prevail.

They called for Australia to become a republic, independent of Britain.

The Eureka rebellion laid the foundations for many future progressive political movements and workers’ struggles, and produced the militant trade union tradition of working class solidarity.

It gave birth to Australia’s working class fighting spirit against injustice, and the power of the collective and united action by the people.

This was the first sign of class struggle between the young, organised working class and British colonial capitalism, the ruling class in Australia at that time.

Eureka flag

For 160 years the Eureka flag has appeared above many battles uniting and giving hope and courage to working people.

The flag of blue and white appeared in 1856 battles for the 8 hour day, in the formation of unions in late 1880s, the 1891 shearers strike in Barcardine, Qld, and many countless struggles of working people.

power, Liberal or Labor.

The mining corporations, multinational monopolies and banks pay little tax, if any, whilst more of ordinary people’s taxes are being syphoned off from public health, education and welfare, to subsidise big business profits.

The ISDS in the TPP and other Free Trade Agreements will further erode what’s left of Australia’s sovereignty and independence, destroy jobs, workplace rights, our public health, education and the environment.

US imperialism and its multinational corporations have replaced the British colonial ruling class as the dominant class of monopoly capitalism in Australia.

Parliamentary democracy and the right to vote that Eureka rebels had fought for is being exposed as a farce where the real power still lies in the board rooms of big corporations.

The democratic and civil rights to protest, to fight for workers’ and union rights, are whittled away as more legal power and force is used by the bourgeois state.

The organised working class will fulfil the revolutionary aspirations of Eureka in 1854, and continue to struggle to resist capital’s onslaught, and finally take charge of the country and rule for the interests of working people.

The vision of the Eureka rebels will be achieved in an independent and socialist Australia.

To this day the Eureka flag is raised in many workplace, community and environmental struggles; in the struggles for democratic rights.

The passionate hopes and yearnings of Eureka rebels and their supporters, that the visionary demands they had fought for would bring real equality, fairness and a genuine democracy for the people, have yet to be realised in a thorough-going way.

For Independence and Socialism

The ruling class of British colonialists and wealthy capitalists running Australia in the 19th Century have today been replaced by the local and foreign monopoly corporations and banks.

The Business Council of Australia, the mouthpiece of 100 biggest foreign and local corporations dictates the neo-liberal economic policies and agenda to whichever parliamentary party is in

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Which bank? US dictates to Australia not to join the AIIB

by Max O.

The Abbott Coalition government's decision not to join the Chinese initiated Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), launched in late October, demonstrates once again the United States' dominance over Australia. It took just a call and nod from US Secretary of State, John Kerry and President Barack Obama to stop Australia from participating in China's new regional infrastructure investment bank.

No doubt the AIIB presents a considerable challenge to US global financial supremacy. This dominance is maintained through institutions such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank (WB) and the Asian Development Bank (ADB).

The IMF, WB and ADB serve the wishes of the US, European and Japanese multinationals and consequently must stymie potential financial rivals.

These banks enforce structural adjustment policies on countries who receive their loans, which in effect are economic and political conditions that lead to impoverishment of the general population and economic collapse.



This then leads into the vicious cycle of more loans and indebtedness for the recipient country.

Compradors obey orders from the US

Initially treasurer Hockey and trade minister Robb approved of joining up to the AIIB and apparently it had cabinet approval.

This represented the desire of local sources of finance capital to participate in and profit from infrastructure development within the region.

However Foreign Minister (or Minister for the United States in

Australia) Julie Bishop put paid to this and used the cabinet's national security committee to reverse the decision on joining this new bank.

A number of reasons were put forward as arguments against the AIIB: Its code of practice and transparency aren't up to international standards; infrastructure projects financed, such as ports in the Asian Pacific region, would augment Chinese military capabilities.

None of these came close to the truth. Despite all the professions of support for level playing fields, market mechanisms and the free flow of capital, the neo-liberal ideologues of US imperialism want strict controls on how, where and by whom capital is to be invested.

This is the financial equivalent of the old military and political concept of "spheres of influence", the struggle over the division of which has always been a feature of imperialism.

21 Asian countries, including ASEAN nations, are the founding members of the US\$100 billion AIIB.

Most of the start-up capitalisation of US\$50 billion will come from China. This will make the AIIB about two thirds the size of the US\$175 billion Asian Development Bank, a Japanese-US predator financial institution.

The blocking move by the US against China's new financial initiative has scored some success with Japan, South Korea, Indonesia and now Australia not joining.

However it can't stop the inexorable tide that is building up for financial freedom from the clutches of the Eagle Empire.

Alternatives spring up to oppose the US

The BRICS nations (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) as recently as July this year founded two new banks with a combined initial capital of US\$150 billion: the New Development Bank whose task will be to finance infrastructure and sustainable economic developments and the Contingent Reserve Bank who

will offer support to those members in financial difficulties.

The manoeuvrings of US imperialism against the AIIB must be seen in the light of America's overall strategy of global domination.

It uses the 'Asia Pivot' military strategy and the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP) trading pact to undermine and eventually control China and so maintain its hegemony in the Asia Pacific region.

Likewise it uses the IMF and the WB to influence investment and economic policies of weak nations which amounts to US and European corporations financially looting these countries.

In addition the US has no hesitation in wielding its military might to secure economic and strategic resources whether it be in the Middle East (Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya and Syria) or Europe (Georgia, Ukraine and other former Soviet bloc nations).

The ruling class in Australia is firmly bolted onto the fortunes of US imperialism.

The AIIB being declared out of bounds for Australia, our involvement in the US military 'Asia Pivot' and the TPP are for USA's strategic benefit not ours.

Australian economic centres of activity, whether they be banking, finance, mining, service industry and what's left of manufacturing etc are directed and overseen by predominately US capital. The political, economic, cultural and military domination of Australia by the US, places the nation in the ranks of client states that America manipulates around the globe to maintain its supremacy.

Nevertheless imperial empires do not last forever and China's advance into what was once US imperialism's stamping ground indicates America's inevitable decline.

Of greater importance though in defeating US domination is the mobilisation of the world's peoples in liberating their countries and forging ahead with the task of building socialism.

Vanguard final issue

This is the final issue of *Vanguard* for 2014. *Vanguard* will not be published as a printed newspaper next year.

Vanguard articles will continue to appear on the internet at www.cpaml.org together with downloads of leaflets, booklets and other material of interest to our readers. www.cpaml.org is updated regularly to provide readers with timely news and analysis of national and international struggles. Your comments and feedback are always welcome and will assist the further development of the website.

The decision to go fully online has been made in recognition of the fact that most young people use the internet as their primary source of news and communication. Computers and tablets are commonly used in schools and by workers in many workplaces, while libraries, councils and clubs conduct basic computer training for older people and others in their communities.

While another factor has been the ever-rising cost of production, with postage particularly expensive even with bulk mailing, the release of human resources will allow us to devote more time to deepening and extending our tasks, both theoretical and practical.

Naturally, there will still be substantial costs. Readers are urged to support this initiative by continuing their donations to Vanguard, P.O. Box 196, Fitzroy, Victoria 3065.

Your contributed articles, comments and criticisms are all welcomed and carefully considered.

To stay in touch with *Vanguard* and the position of the Communist Party of Australia (Marxist-Leninist) bookmark the website:

www.cpaml.org

Editorial

Now is the time....

With this issue we bring to a close the regular publication of *Vanguard* as the Party newspaper. We are doing this in the year following its 50th anniversary. We are doing this mindful of the importance attached by Lenin to the role of a Party newspaper as a collective organiser. We are doing this reluctantly, but with optimism about the sustainability of revolutionary organisation and opportunities afforded by the Internet and social media.

Transitioning through new media

In his day Lenin and the Bolsheviks communicated through Party newspapers, agitational leaflets, books, posters and soapbox oratory. Each of these had its advantages as well as its limitations. We believe that there will be some disadvantage for us in no longer having a monthly print paper, but that the immediacy and accessibility of an online presence can compensate, and in time, outweigh any negative fall-out. Just as it was in Lenin's time, the crucially important task is to build the working class's leading organisation, an organisation that is proletarian in ideology, in its political line, and its demographic representation.

A working class party

For that reason, with this final issue, we appeal to members to cast aside any hesitation that might prevent them from disclosing, among trusted friends and workmates or community activists, their support for the CPA (M-L). In appropriate circumstances, membership can be divulged as the beginning of a process of approaching sympathetic persons to actively support and join the Party. For the same reason, we appeal to non-Party members and readers of *Vanguard* to cast aside any hesitation in putting themselves forward as potential members and associates of the CPA (M-L).

This is not to suggest that basic organisational principles be abandoned. The Party is a working class party. Its membership has to come mainly from the working class. Because it is a party that is always under the surveillance of the state, and to protect members as far as possible from harassment by the state and by right wing activists, its membership is largely secret. To be sustainable under conditions of intense attack, it needs to be like an iceberg – partly visible, but mostly hidden.

Circumstances in each workplace, community organisation or neighbourhood will determine when and where it is appropriate and to whom it is appropriate to extend trust and take into confidence.

Unions and the Party

People involved in unions have to carry on the vital and necessary struggle for improvement of wages and conditions. But we need people who can look beyond that, who can see the bigger picture, who can push the boundaries and encourage a spirit of defiance and rebellion.

We need people who can try and steer the union and its members towards anti-imperialist independence and socialism, whilst recognising that unions cannot be vehicles for revolution as they are bound in a hundred and one ways to operate within the "due processes of the law". Such comrades would see the Party, through its policies and publications and the way it organises itself, as striving towards leadership of a revolutionary movement. Such comrades would feel a responsibility for making sure the online and occasional print publications of the Party are available around the union office, and where appropriate, distributed to other officials and organisers; they would recommend particular articles to others to read. They would provide feedback on whether or not our message is getting through to workers and if not, how to improve it.

Strive for leadership in mass work

We need people who can lead the involvement of their workmates and community members in participation in the struggles of the whole working class and in its support of community actions, including those of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We need people who can keep politics to the fore and not be just another "trade union official" or content to lead a narrow community struggle without trying to make the links to the bigger picture.

We need people who will read Party publications and articles and papers recommended by the Party. Workers are often resistant to reading and writing: schools that have failed to develop them as readers and writers leave them feeling inadequate and ashamed; one of the legacies of schooling is that reading and writing never seemed relevant or purposeful - it was seen as tedious and a waste of time. For a revolutionary, reading is a discipline like having a job, and getting up early every morning to get to the job. It's just something that time has to be found for. Workers are skilled at hands-on tasks, but workers' leaders need to develop theoretical understanding of the way capitalism works and of the way socialism can be achieved.

We need people who have good social contacts and who will not always associate only with people of a like mind. A broad range of social contacts stops a person getting isolated within a small group of fellow activists, and helps develop him/her as a leader within society more generally.

We need people who are well-liked, respected and trusted by workmates, friends, family and people in the community. Because of the hostility that surrounds communism in this country, such a person should not openly declare their membership of the Party. It too often creates an artificial barrier to working with people politically. However, their standing with others will enable them to find those moments and those situations where a good political line can be injected into discussions and where exceptions can be made to non-disclosure of membership as mentioned earlier.

In short, the new era of transition to an online presence has its challenges, but with a confidence in Marxism-Leninism as our ideology and the working people as our social base, we can move ahead and build the Party under the new conditions.

TAFE cuts - and fightback - happen under the radar

by Louisa L.

In November, Pat Forward of the Australian Education Union asked the question, "What is at stake when Australia's private vocational colleges implode?"

She illustrated her answer using Vocation Ltd, which faces a class action by shareholders and has been forced to pay back almost \$20 million in subsidies to the Victorian Government because the training it provided was substandard.

Ms Forward stated, "On its public listing twelve months ago, Vocation Ltd.'s owners withdrew \$225 million in clear profit in the same year that Victorian TAFEs had a further \$212 million cut from their funding. Vocation's profits came exclusively from the Victorian public purse.

"But it is likely that this is only one example of many. The ASQA's (Australian Skills Authority) annual report for 2013/14 found that 75% of RTOs (Registered Training Organisations) failed to meet basic training and assessment standards, and that 21% still could not do so after being given a chance to improve. Add to that the widespread reports of the activities of some providers as they attempt to entice students - many of them some of the most disadvantaged in our community - into enrolling in courses of dubious value at exorbitant cost.

"This is not what the proponents of privatising vocational training told us would happen. These providers are not trying to compete on quality, innovation or value. They are simply trying to exploit the funding system to boost their profits," Ms Forward wrote.

For Ms Forward, TAFE "one of Australia's most trusted education institutions" is "crucial to a fair and just society", but is being destroyed to benefit "voracious profit-driven private colleges" The destruction, she writes, is "under the radar".

Little victories

NSW has faced big cuts to jobs and courses, even before the so-called Smart and Skilled policy decimating TAFE in Victoria and SA. But small battles happen under the radar too.

Geoff Turnbull is NSW Teachers Federation Vice President and a head teacher at Randwick TAFE in Sydney's eastern suburbs. Earlier in the year he was told that two HSC teachers who had been made redundant would exit the Institute in July.

For a teacher that's unimaginable. How could anyone abandon students just a term before their exams? No

problem. Bring in casuals, even though they mightn't have expertise for the specific topics studied or know any of the students. That was the plan. So Geoff told his bosses that he would refuse to employ any part-time casuals to take up the HSC classes. And that he wasn't going to be quiet about it.

They backed down. Yes the teachers will still lose their jobs, but not only were they given a reprieve till the HSC, but their final day of service was 28 November. Four months' pay is better than a kick in the teeth. This little victory lets those students and teachers know that they were valued enough for others to take a stand with their backing.

Alongside the public campaigning, these little victories on the job make it harder for the corporate giants, who aim to profit from TAFE's destruction, to get it all their own way.

Immediate and long term solutions

Pat Forward states, "The immediate solution is simple and cost effective. Serious limits must be imposed on how much public funding is open to this shoddy market. This would not cost governments a single cent."

With hundreds of million dollars at stake, she called for standards to be developed and enforced through a well-

resourced regulator before allocating more funds, plus a ban on outsourcing training to unregistered third parties.

These immediate demands shape a way forward. But capitalism's compulsion to ever-increasing profits will mean that reversing privatisation will not be easy. Meanwhile the knowledge that capitalism destroys the lives of ordinary people grows in many more minds. Getting rid of that system is a much longer term struggle.

Read Ms Forward's article at: <http://stoptafecuts.com.au/blog/what-stake-australias-private-vocational-colleges-implode-le/>

Gaol teacher speaks out for prisoners

by Louisa L.

Vanguard doesn't bullshit about prisons. In 50 years of publication it's never whinged about prisoners having it easy or the other garbage that Murdoch's media churns out. We tell the truth.

Prisons are part of the state apparatus for defending capitalist rule.

As Anatole France wrote 100 years ago, "The law, in its majestic impartiality, forbids the rich and poor alike to sleep under bridges, beg in the streets and steal loaves of bread."

No kid is born wanting to go to gaol. But an utterly corrupt system, that reinforces multi-billion dollar corporate profits, while privatising and cutting funds to public schools, hospitals, broadcasting or other services that benefit ordinary Australians, fails too many of our kids.

The research on the effect of small class sizes in the early years of schooling and of high quality pre-school education is overwhelming; we can prevent many kids ending up in prison as adults if we spend enough on early education.

Do the governments that manage capitalism do it? Not a chance!

Different relationships

Teachers in gaols try to serve those that end up in prison.

In NSW gaols, teachers are paid less than colleagues in schools and TAFEs, so recruitment's a problem and, until they recently won permanency industrially, prison educators were on six month contracts.

Teachers Federation representative Stewart Burkitt outlined issues earlier this year. "We don't want a deficit model, as if prisoners haven't got anything to offer. Lots of them are very skilled, very capable," he says.

According to Mr Burkitt, teachers are glad that education isn't compulsory,



Long Bay Prison in NSW

because it allows teachers to foster a different environment and different relationships. "Education is seen is a cooler place, so there are not many incidents," he explains.

No rights to education

Remand prisoners have limited educational access, and even that is under attack. They could be on remand for three years and cop a four year sentence, getting just one year of education, but building literacy skills alone could take years.

Prisoners are often required to undertake offence related courses to get parole, but they need a certain level of literacy to succeed, and many don't have that.

This is why a broad adult education curriculum, including art, computer studies, ESL, literacy and numeracy are so important, to bring people into education, to encourage thinking and build capacity, not just to train them in narrow work-related skills.

Teachers are also mindful that things can change at any time.

There's a review into educational provision in gaols, where Burkitt states, "everything is on the table."

"The government's aim of shifting all metropolitan gaols into remand will

limit educational access, and there's always the prospect of privatisation and contracting out... 'Let's get Acme Training in' like they did in the UK. It's cheaper, but duplication, no follow-through and demoralisation were the results," Mr Burkitt continues.

Time to do better

Mr Burkitt says that education isn't just training for employment. "We're not trainers; we're teachers!

All the research demonstrates that those who have engaged with education while in gaol have a better chance of staying out.

"Therapeutic, well-being programs are integral. They're gateways that bring people to other things. We want to ensure a broad adult education that prisoners need!" he declares.

Already a 50% funding cut has negatively affected prisoners' ability to access distance education and even basic supplies of pens, exercise books, folders, art materials, etc. as well as teaching resources and access to professional learning.

We need a system that supports all people to reach their potential.

Vanguard is on the side of those who try to create that fairer future.

IPCC report: Climate change is happening fast

by Alex M.

On Sunday 2 November the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) released its Synthesis report, synthesising the work of various working groups connected with the body.

The report is the culmination of the collective work of hundreds of scientists. Reports from the IPCC are usually not happy reading and this one is no exception.

At the very least, if there is not a sustained reduction in carbon emissions coupled with a rapid shift to renewable sources of energy, then humanity is in for some very difficult times in the coming decades.

Amongst other things, the report stressed that governments must act now to deal with the impacts of climate change.

‘Continued emission of greenhouse gases will cause further warming and long-lasting changes in all components of the climate system, increasing the likelihood of severe, pervasive and irreversible impacts for people and ecosystems.’

Greenhouse gas emissions, the report found, were at an 800,000-year high and already having discernible impacts.

Climate change in urban areas will lead to increased risk of ‘heat stress, storms and extreme precipitation, inland and coastal flooding, landslides, air pollution, drought, water scarcity, sea-level rise and storm surges.’

It needs to be borne in mind that this litany of woes will have consequences for all of the world’s people.

The scale of the problem is such that governments must take serious steps to tackle greenhouse gas emissions.

Australian scientists understand the problem

Dr John Church from the University of Tasmania, a CSIRO researcher whose area of expertise takes in rising sea levels, affirmed the key message of the report - that global warming was ‘unequivocal’.

For Church, who was involved in producing the Synthesis report, the impacts of global warming can be readily seen in such things as the increased numbers of heatwaves, bushfires, floods as well as ocean acidity and coral bleaching.

Church also believes that these highly visible signs will impel governments to act: ‘What’s going to win this argument is the observable impacts; Hurricane Sandy in the US had a huge impact in changing people’s mind ... The same will occur around



the world over time and has already occurred to some extent.’

The Australian Bureau of Meteorology researcher, Dr Scott Power warned that high greenhouse gas emissions required ‘substantial and sustained reductions’ in order to lessen the negative consequences of climate change.

The current situation requires the reduction of these emissions by 20% to 40% within the next 30 years, underpinned by a turn to sustainable energy sources such as wind and solar energy.

Carbon capture and storage, which has not been successfully accomplished

on a commercial scale yet, has been the salve for the consciences of those promoting fossil fuel energy sources.

It is instructive that the Commonwealth government has cut almost half a billion dollars from research into carbon capture and storage (CCS).

The IPCC claims that the successful development of CCS is crucial if coal continues to be used as an energy source.

Abbott of course has openly shown what he thinks about the problem of greenhouse gas emissions and the imperative of phasing out fossil fuel based energy sources by proclaiming

that coal is the ‘foundation of our [Australia’s] prosperity’.

What is more, such reliance on coal is not going to be challenged: ‘For now and for the foreseeable future, the foundation of Australia’s energy needs will be coal. The foundation of the world’s energy needs will be coal.’

Corporate interests dictate ineffectual government response

Whilst climate change scepticism is a badge of honour for many on the right such as Abbott and his ilk, their scepticism is based on their servitude to particular class interests.

In Australia, the mining, extractive and fossil fuel industry sectors exert a powerful influence over the mainstream political parties (aside perhaps from the Greens) and thus dictate government policy.

This explains the foolish and recalcitrant approach to the critical problem of global climate change by the current Australian government.

Class interests prevail even whilst Abbott fiddles and Rome burns.

Victorian state election – a negative affair

by Bill F.

On November 29th Victorian voters will probably kick out the Napthine Liberal-National coalition government with a hefty boot.

A Labor victory will have more to do with a protest at the poor record of the Victorian coalition government plus rejection of the Abbott federal government austerity budget, than wholehearted embrace of Labor policies.

This will be in keeping with the common trend in recent Australian elections of kicking out disappointing governments “to give the other mob a go.” It’s common because public disenchantment is common with all state and federal governments, whether Liberal or Labor.

They all kow-tow to big business, to the multinationals, to the corporate media monopolies, to the vested interests that control capitalist society in Australia. Even when they throw a few crumbs to the working people, they all make sure that, at the end of the day, the rich get richer and the poor stay in their place.

This time, many Victorians are particularly angry at the Napthine government’s cuts to services, especially schools and hospitals, as well as the ongoing crisis in the ambulance service.

Many are angry at the lack of support for renewable energy initiatives to



combat climate warming and the re-direction of funding into so-called “clean coal”.

They are sceptical of Napthine’s grandiose East-West Tunnel scheme which will suit the road transport operators if Westernport goes ahead, but will not solve congestion issues in the rest of Melbourne.

As for the rest of the state, there is considerable anger in regional towns at the cut-backs to TAFE and lack of maintenance to public schools. Towns are shrinking as manufacturing and processing jobs disappear and the unemployment rate for those under 25 years pushes up towards 25%.

Labor, for its part, has paid more attention to health and education, and its own grandiose plan for the Melbourne Metro underground and elimination of level crossings contrasts somewhat to Napthine’s road-fixated vision.

However, both grandiose plans are somewhere over the horizon and Melbourne people will continue to choke in traffic jams for years to come.

Socialism could fix it, capitalism can’t.

In this election the Greens will again pick up a good proportion of the disaffected votes, in spite of being marginalised and ridiculed by the monopoly media and denied preferences by the major parties. In the past, their best chance has been the Legislative Council, but here again a host of single issue parties are stitching up preference deals to lock out the Greens, or at least deny them the so-called “balance of power”.

The Greens play this game of preference deals also. In spite of many connections with grass-roots campaigns, the Greens have swallowed the parliamentary bait hook, line and sinker.

Labor will probably get in, but don’t hold your breath waiting for radical changes. They might get to steer the good ship “Victoria” for a while, but it is owned by big business, who set the course and speed, determine the cargo, and toss overboard anything or anyone who is surplus to their profiteering.

Marxism Today

Communism: Society without class

by Bill F.

The vision of Communism is a society without class differences and class conflict, where all people can contribute to society “according to their abilities” and receive from society “according to their needs”. Communist society is not about uniformity, but rather the recognition of different human capabilities and needs.

In the day to day struggles of the working people against war, oppression and exploitation, Communists pay careful attention to the strategies, tactics and policies best suited to complex and varied stages of struggle.

socialism.

Yet the irony, the contradiction, lies in the fact that as socialism is further consolidated, the more class differences are progressively reduced and the more the working class state becomes superfluous and can ‘wither away’ as the vision of a classless society becomes reality.

Transition to a classless society

Marx recognised that it was not possible to establish communist society in one hit, and that a fairly long transition period would be necessary to create not only the material conditions but also to develop the social outlook necessary.

This first stage of communism, the stage of transition, has been called

regulated production to overcome the random anarchy of capitalist production, and to produce goods and services to meet the real needs of the people rather than just for profit. This controlled economic development would also avoid the boom-bust cycles characteristic of capitalism.

The working class state - dictatorship of the proletariat

“Between capitalist and communist society lies the period of the revolutionary transformation of the one into the other. There corresponds to this also a political transition period in which the state can be nothing but the *revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat*.” (K. Marx *Critique of the Gotha Programme*)

The task of the working class state involves not only economic re-organisation of society in the interests of the workers and other working people,

mood of the masses, it is impossible to conduct such a struggle.” (V.I. Lenin *Left-Wing Communism*)

Towards a classless society

Dictatorship of the proletariat is class rule by the working class. It replaces the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, i.e., the capitalists as a class.

Unlike the rule of the rich, who seek only to perpetuate their rule, the working class state acts in the interests of the majority of the people, and struggles to empower the working people in such a way that it will eventually “wither away”.

Communists have a vision of a future society that has no need for hierarchies or weapons. “State interference in social relations becomes, in one domain after another, superfluous, and then dies out of itself; the government of persons is replaced by the administration of things, and by the conduct of processes of



Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin and Mao: Unity of theory and practice in marking out the path towards a society without class

If the correct strategies, tactics and policies are applied they can win support and mobilise the people around demands for change and achieve, sometimes, even a measure of success.

But the real measure of success for Communists is in the raising of political consciousness. In this sense, there are lessons in the losses and the stalemates as well as the victories.

What is meant by “raising political consciousness”?

For Communists it means taking people beyond recognition of the need for better and fairer conditions in society to the recognition that the most far-reaching and fundamental change is necessary, revolutionary change that empowers the working people and disempowers the ruling class of exploiters and oppressors.

Communists uphold the leading role of the working class in the ideological and political struggles of the exploited and oppressed against their exploiters and oppressors.

The history of socialist revolutions tells us that the importance of this leading role is equally critical after the overthrow of the old system and for the construction and consolidation of

Socialism. “This socialism is the *declaration of the permanence of the revolution*, the *class dictatorship of the proletariat* as the necessary transit point to the *abolition of class distinctions generally*, to the abolition of all the relations of production on which they rest, to the abolition of all the social relations that correspond to these relations of production, to the revolutionising of all the ideas that result from these social relations.”

(K. Marx *Class Struggles in France*)

Marxist Socialism

The revolutionary smashing of the old state power by the working class is only the beginning of the much greater, more complex and difficult task of building a new society. “What we have to deal with here is a communist society, not as it has developed on its own foundations, but, on the contrary, just as it emerges from capitalist society; which is thus in every respect, economically, morally and intellectually, still stamped with the birth marks of the old society from whose womb it emerges.” (K. Marx *Critique of the Gotha Programme*)

Therefore, Marx and Engels saw the necessity to establish planned and

but also the critical tasks of preserving and consolidating the gains of socialism, to move forward the whole of society in the direction of communism.

This means gradually introducing new ways of thinking based on the common good rather than the old, selfish values of capitalism.

It means using the state apparatus of the working class (i.e., the people’s armed forces, police, courts, prisons, etc) to prevent attempts by the defeated classes and their international supporters to overthrow or side-track the revolutionary power of the workers.

The broad scope of these critical tasks means that the period of socialist transformation is necessarily prolonged, and does not always proceed in a straight line.

“The dictatorship of the proletariat is a persistent struggle – bloody and bloodless, violent and peaceful, military and economic, educational and administrative – against the forces and traditions of the old society. The force of habit of millions and tens of millions is a terrible force. Without an iron party tempered in struggle, without a party enjoying the confidence of all that is honest in the given class, without a party capable of watching and influencing the

production. The state is not abolished.” It dies out.” (F. Engels *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific*)

“Only in communist society, when the resistance of the capitalists has been completely crushed, when the capitalists have disappeared, when there are no classes (i.e., when there is no distinction between the members of society as regards their relation to the social means of production), only then “the state ... ceases to exist,” and “it becomes possible to speak of freedom.”

“The state will be able to wither away completely when society adopts the rule: “From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs,” i.e., when people have become so accustomed to observing the fundamental rules of social intercourse and when their labour has become so productive that they will voluntarily work according to their ability.”

(V.I. Lenin, *State and Revolution*)

In Australia, our immediate struggle is against imperialist domination, our program is revolutionary national independence continuing on to build socialism.

At all stages, despite difficulties and set-backs, we should not lose sight of the goal - society without class.

The fraud of “Constitutional recognition”

by Nick G.

The case for “Constitutional recognition” of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) peoples is an attack on the unceded sovereignty of Australian First Nation peoples.

It is driven by the demands of big mining and other corporations for access to Aboriginal land.

It is driven by the pious wishes of both Liberal and Labor for an end to ATSI peoples’ demands for self-determination and their opposition to the racist practices of the colonial structures imposed on their communities.

It is driven by the neo-liberal assimilationists within the ATSI peoples, by the Pearsons, Langtons and Mundines who grovel at the feet of imperialism and demand of their own people that they “improve” themselves by obliterating their identity and becoming happy wage slaves within the mainstream capitalist economy.

Its capacity for deception is enormous.

Very good people, people of great compassion and good-will, are attracted to the cause of the big “R” because “R”ecognition of ATSI peoples in the Constitution through a national referendum sounds, on the surface, to be such an obvious good, an obvious – if belated – act of justice towards ATSI peoples.

Surely only racists and bigots would oppose a referendum on the issue?

Referendum excludes considerations of ATSI sovereignty and rights

Well, there is opposition, and it is being led by ATSI people.

In fact, the issue has deeply divided the ATSI community.

Opponents of the referendum point to the exclusion of the issue of sovereignty from the proposals for Constitutional change. The Expert Panel appointed by Gillard to report on Constitutional recognition determined that sovereignty not be considered:

“Any proposal relating to constitutional recognition of the sovereign status of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples would be highly contested by many Australians, and likely to jeopardise broad public support for the Panel’s recommendations. Such a proposal would not therefore satisfy at least two of the Panel’s principles for assessment of proposals, namely ‘contribute to a more unified and reconciled nation’, and ‘be capable of being supported by an overwhelming majority of Australians from across the political and social spectrums’.

“While questions relating to sovereignty are likely to continue to be the subject of debate in the community,

including among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, the Panel does not consider that these questions can be resolved or advanced at this time by inclusion in a constitutional referendum proposal.” (P. 213)

Also excluded from the Expert Panel’s Discussion Paper are definitions of ATSI peoples’ rights. Minutes of the Expert Committee reveal an early agreement to replace the term “rights” with “values”. Doing this represents a massive capitulation to a reactionary agenda to nobble the struggles of ATSI peoples.

Fears that recognition will weaken ATSI land rights

Recognition of ATSI peoples’ prior occupancy of Australia will not be expressed in terms of their continuing ownership and custodianship of the land. Instead, it proposes to acknowledge “the continuing relationship of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples with their traditional lands and waters” without reference to ownership and custodianship. Legally, ownership of Australian land is vested in a Minister of the Crown.

The 1992 Mabo case negated “terra nullius” and recognised native title in those parts of Australia not subject to freehold title; and the 1993 Native Title Act created laws to administer native title claims in these very restricted areas of unallocated Crown land and some National Parks. However, these are legal mechanisms and not inalienable rights embedded in a Constitution. Recognition of prior occupancy and “a continuing relationship” changes nothing in this regard.

Fears that recognition will weaken self-determination

Removing the offensive references to race is long overdue, but will do nothing to embed Aboriginal self-determination in the Constitution. It is proposed to change that part of the Constitution which gives Parliament the power to make special laws for “the people of any race, for whom it is deemed necessary” to one that gives Parliament the power to “make laws for the peace, order and good government of the Commonwealth with respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples”.

ATSI peoples are to have no say in the matter. Under the new wording a racist attack on ATSI peoples such as the intervention in the Northern Territory or the imposition of income management, or changing collective community land ownership to individual capitalist land ownership are all possible. They are even more likely.

For a treaty and an anti-imperialist, republican constitution!

The Australian Constitution was unworkable and out-of-date even as it was proclaimed. It retained certain powers for British imperialism and imposed a hopeless shambles of divided powers between the State and the Federal governments. It was racist in its denial of injustices towards the ATSI peoples.

In time it will be swept from the shelves of lawyers. The people will enact a Treaty between the ATSI peoples and the national government. It will have the status of government-to-government agreement and be the basis for the entire Australian people’s single and unitary national sovereignty.

It will acknowledge that ATSI peoples never surrendered their sovereignties and are the traditional and continuing owners and custodians of their lands. It will condemn the seizure by force and violence, or the threat of force and violence, of ATSI lands by British colonialism. It will acknowledge ATSI peoples’ rights to self-determination.

An anti-imperialist and republican constitution will be created. It will contain an Australian people’s Bill of Rights. It will declare that our territorial integrity and national sovereignty are vested in the Australian people and are never to be surrendered or weakened or undermined or subverted by trade pacts, alliances, shared military facilities or by any other means.

This is not a pipedream. It is not wishful thinking. It is embedded in every act of people struggling against injustice and in defence of their rights. It must be at the core of an independent agenda that relies neither on parliament nor on its parties, but on the conscious organised strength of the people.

From little things, big things grow. From our actions for anti-imperialist independence and socialism shall come the Australia of its own people, by its own people and for its own people.

No fraudulent tinkering with an obsolete and unworkable Constitution!

Fight for unity of purpose in our communities and organisations and build our own agenda!

Abbott still believes in “terra nullius”



by Nick G.

Racists like Tony Abbott refuse to believe there was anything – or anyone – in Australia before its seizure by British imperialism.

There can only be one thing worse than a calculated insult, and that’s an insult that is so spontaneous, so unrehearsed and so natural that its offense is magnified by a factor of thousands.

Abbott has revealed that deep in his soul is a denial of the very thing that he proclaims he stands for when he urges support of the fraud of the constitutional recognition of ATSI peoples.

“As we look around this glorious city,” he told British Prime Minister David Cameron, “as we see the extraordinary development, it’s hard to think that back in 1788 it was nothing but bush.”

“The marines and the convicts and the sailors that straggled off those 12 ships, just a few hundred yards from

where we are now, must have thought they had come almost to the moon.

“Everything would have been so strange. Everything would have seemed so extraordinarily basic and raw, and now a city which is one of the most spectacular cities on our globe.”

Abbott has the racist mentality of the settler. He sees nothing wrong in the unsettling of stable, sustainable and functioning societies of First Nations peoples. He sees nothing wrong in it because he refuses to see the people unsettled by the forceful and violent seizure of their territories.

His racism is so deeply embedded that it can’t help coming to the fore.

He has previously said that the arrival of the so-called First Fleet was the “defining moment” in Australian history.

No matter how he ducks and weaves and subsequently tries to extricate himself from his offensive gaffes, he has further revealed his deep-seated hostility to Aboriginal sovereignty and self-determination.

Flinders Uni occupation - 40 years on

by Verity M.

The Flinders University occupation took place in 1974, a time of almost worldwide social unrest culminating in revolutions in some countries and invasion of neighbours in others.

The Carnation Revolution in Jordon, the Yom Kippur War, the fall of Allende in Chile, the war in Vietnam, the Paris student revolt were all part of this turbulent period.

The Vietnam War in particular alerted Australians to the extent to which Australian politics, economy and military were entangled with the United States and the resultant cost to Australia.

It radicalised a great many Australians who were critical of what they saw as the subservience of Australian Governments to the expansionist needs of the United States.

Students are generally an aware group and often are quick to take action against what they see as attacks on democratic rights.

The Whitlam government had made Universities free of cost opening up tertiary education to more public school educated students, to the children of workers who would not have been able to attend a fee charging university and to mature age students, many of whom were denied a university education in their youth.

All of this led to a population both within and outside of the university who were recognising threats to Australian democracy and were organising to express their concerns

Within the Universities students were critical of the hierarchical structure and the very limited voice students had over how knowledge was being constructed in many of the more conservative disciplines and who such constructions benefited, whilst other ways of seeing and knowing were being marginalised.

At Flinders University History students, in particular, were resisting examinations in their subject which they saw as blocking new ideas or ways of thinking from entering the curriculum.

As students outside the History Department moved in to support the struggle, and as the History discipline heads made no moves to negotiate, students upgraded their struggle and moved in to occupy the administration building, the Registry, bringing the whole university to a go slow.

As in all prolonged political actions the issues widened to include the whole functioning of the university;



it's relation to capital and imperialism, particularly U.S. interests.

As the university moved into holiday mode students racked up their demands.

They researched Russell, the Vice Chancellor of Flinders, to discover that he had been involved in research for the American war machine and had been a consultant for the CIA.

This heightened the students' concerns about links enabling universities to meet the needs of capital and U.S. imperialism.

They threatened to open the VC's office files, one per week, until their demands were met.

The files, once opened, revealed the extent to which Vice Chancellor Russell's research had been related to military and intelligence agencies and indeed some suggestion that there had been involvement or supportive research for chemical and biological warfare.

Just as importantly, students' published research saw the Flinders' findings and Russell's role as symptomatic of the 'parasitic cancer' of the United States imperialist system that builds its wealth on the exploitation of countries all around the world, including Europe, Latin America, Asia, Africa, and Australia.

This was all too much for the forces of reaction.

Staff who had been forced to find alternative accommodation were mobilised to storm the Bastille, (the Registry actually), climbed in windows and reclaimed most of the Registry

The Occupation was over, but not the struggle.

Flinders students received considerable support interstate.

Students in Melbourne and Sydney held sit-ins to support Flinders students and to raise demands of their own.

Flinders students returned to the university to reclaim the Registry. Police were called in. A number of students

were detained, but no formal arrests were made.

The University no doubt considered it too risky to invite the close examination that court procedure could involve; in fact the university administration implemented court proceedings to prevent publication of the material students had 'illegally' accessed and implemented their own disciplinary action, expelling several students, suspending and disciplining others.

When students returned after the end of semester break, the largest student meeting ever held at Flinders voted in support of the Occupation and its aims.

The kind of information students were retrieving and the struggles they were involved in, not just at Flinders but around Australia, led to a reaching out to the working class who were working under the same constraints.

Workers' struggles, like theirs, were against the foreign exploitation and capture of Australian labour, knowledge and resources for the benefit of imperialist global expansion, resources that rightly belonged to the Australian people and should be used for their benefit, not for the benefit of foreign, particularly American profiteers.

The militarisation of Australia in the interests of United States global

domination is ongoing as witnessed by recent history and current events: the exploitation of Australian workers and the abandonment of the same workers when profits don't meet expectations is also ongoing.

Australia's resources, industrial, educational and cultural are no less foreign owned and/or influenced today than they were in 1974, and here we are going into yet another war at the behest of the United States.

We are spied on by American intelligence agencies, as are American citizens, and as we are by our own spying agencies.

We have American army leading personnel and troops deeply embedded in our own armed forces, skewing our national strategic interests to what is in the interest of the United States global aspirations.

We have American bases around Australia, some designated first strike targets; companies dominating Australia's resource sector exploit Australian workers and send their profits off-shore.

What began at Flinders and other Universities as local issues around the working conditions under which they studied and what happened to the knowledge and skills they developed became part of a working class struggle for independence, and in many cases an understanding long realised by workers, that capitalism could not provide the cultural and economic conditions that would bring long term benefits to all Australians, not just a selected few.

Universal benefits can never be realised in a system of private ownership and reliance on a monopoly dominated market.

That requires a true democracy based on collective ownership. That is what the student and workers struggles in the seventies were about. That is what they are still about.

Student struggles deserve wide support



*Today's students are fighting back against cuts to courses and fee increases
They are active on many social and environment issues*

Union members and community activists unite and win

by Ned K.

On the weekend of the G20 meeting in Brisbane in mid-November, there were for working people and those reliant on welfare payments in South Australia, far more significant meetings being held in Adelaide.

The state branch of the ALP held its annual Convention meeting at (of all places) the Hilton Hotel.

Outside the entrance to the Hilton, people from the northern suburbs community group, *Stop Income Management in Playford* (SIMPla), greeted the in-coming Convention delegates.

The ALP Conventions are pretty staged-managed affairs, usually to reinforce the position of the existing ALP leadership, in this case the leadership of Jay Weatherill.

However in SA, community groups and some of the more progressive trade unionists affiliated to the ALP have taken action which has upset these stage-managed affairs.

A few years ago, former Premier Rann and Treasurer Foley felt the power of community and unions taking a stand at an ALP convention against their reactionary attack on workers' compensation entitlements and long service leave.

On this occasion, the SIMPla group successfully demonstrated against Premier Weatherill's enthusiastic embrace of corporate boss Andrew Forrest's proposal to put Aboriginal people and other welfare recipients on an Income Management Scheme.

The proposal would see all welfare recipients other than those on aged and veterans' pensions deprived of cash payments, that they have 100% of their welfare quarantined onto a debit card that can be used at any ATM that uses Visa and MasterCard, and that purchases of goods and services such as alcohol and drugs (but not tobacco!) and gambling be automatically blocked through the card.

A flyer distributed both outside and inside the Convention by supporters of SIMPla quoted a statement from ACOSS which said the Forrest scheme would "take our nation back to the 1930s when unemployed people did not get cash benefits and had to work on the roads or beg for charity to survive".

The flyer was well received by passers-by and the majority of delegates inside the ALP Convention.

The community group action attracted media and police attention.

In an example of how a community group can work well with progressive trade union leaders, including SA Unions, their leading body, not only was



the flyer distributed widely inside the Convention, but the following resolution was passed almost unanimously.

“Convention opposes the Weatherill Cabinet’s rushed embrace of the Forrest Report.

“Of note, Convention is concerned with the Report’s advocacy of financial penalties for welfare-recipient parents as a means of improving school attendance, its

attack on TAFE funding and its replacement by vouchers that would only fund training for employer-approved courses, its call to block cash payments for welfare recipients via the Healthy Welfare Card, and its bland acceptance of increased crime in the community that will flow from the implementation of its recommendations.

“This rushed support of the Forrest

Report has been made without consultation with the Aboriginal people whose lives will be affected and is contrary to Labor values.”

Premier Weatherill was forced to back-track inside Convention in the face of overwhelming support for this resolution.

The resolution and the media attention were only possible because of the tireless activism of people from the working class northern suburbs over many months, with support from progressive unionists.

Despite his apparent back-down inside the ALP Convention, reports on the ABC website after the resolution was passed seemed to indicate that the Premier is maintaining his support for implementation of the Forrest Report! Has he learned nothing from history, from what happened to Rann and Foley?

Or does he see storm clouds of rebellion brewing in the northern suburbs on the welfare front, with thousands of workers soon to be jobless due to the end of the car and car component industry not far away?

The last print edition of *Vanguard*

by Duncan B.

As someone who has been a reader of *Vanguard* and a contributor for many years I can't help feeling a twinge of sadness that this is the last print edition of *Vanguard*.

I understand the issues with finances and human and other resources that have necessitated the change to a solely on-line version of *Vanguard*.

One benefit of the on-line format is that *Vanguard* will be able to react quicker to the fast-changing world situation, instead of being overtaken by events.

I still have a copy of the very first *Vanguard* published over fifty-one years ago in September 1963. It is interesting to read the editorial of the first *Vanguard*.

Under the heading “Why *Vanguard* is Published”, the editorial says, “The publication of *Vanguard* is an historic event. It is now the only paper which upholds the universal truth of Marxism-Leninism. The paper has a big and noble job to do. Its main task will be to give a Marxist-Leninist analysis of the major events of our time.”

Vanguard has continued to give this Marxist-Leninist analysis of world and Australian events since 1963.

The editorial of the second *Vanguard*, published in October 1963, elaborated on the role of *Vanguard*. It said, “In essence, the task before *Vanguard* and



its supporters is to make Marxism-Leninism the property of the masses so that the people can distinguish what is right and wrong for themselves.

“*Vanguard* will not merely report events. It cannot cover all the day-to-day struggles of the working people.

“But in the light of Marxism-Leninism it will attempt to analyse all the main events affecting the working people so that correct conclusions can be drawn as a starting-off point for further action.

“In the process of generalising experience theoretically the people will learn, from life and in struggle, the universal truth of Marxism-Leninism and how to apply it to particular, concrete situations.”

This is as true today as it was when written back in 1963. *Vanguard* has tried very hard since then to help the Australian people to learn the truth of Marxism-Leninism. In its on-line format *Vanguard* will continue the “big and noble job” it started in 1963.

China Free Trade deal: three issues

by *Bill F.*

The China-Australia Free Trade Agreement has been hailed as a great benefit to Australian exporters, but there are at least three issues that will cause dismay and concern to progressive supporters of friendship between the Australian and Chinese people.

Of greatest concern is the inclusion of an Investor State Dispute Settlement clause (ISDS) in the agreement. This mechanism allows a foreign company to sue the Australian government if changes to Australian law harm their investments here.

For example, a future government might pass legislation restricting genetically modified foods or banning coal seam gas exploration and mining on agricultural land, or change visa conditions for 457 workers. The ISDS clause couldn't prevent these changes to Australian law, but it could be used to sue the government for loss of profits.

The other effect of ISDS clauses is that they may inhibit a future government from adopting decent policies on social issues such as health and education to improve the living standards of the people, because this may cut across the profits of the foreign corporate investors in these areas.

ISDS clauses undermine the national sovereignty of countries. Governments that accept them betray the interests of their people.



Swanston Dock Melbourne

US corporations have a history in using similar clauses to sue governments, such as the recent action by Phillip Morris over Australia's tobacco plain packaging laws. Will China go down the same road?

Dr Kyla Tienhaara, from the Regulatory Institutions Network at the Australian National University said that "Corporations can challenge pretty much anything under these agreements" and noted that Australia would now have to include an ISDS clause retrospectively in the Japan-Australia free trade deal, as this was a condition required by Japan if an ISDS was in the deal with China.

In spite of Prime Minister Tony Abbott and Trade Minister Andrew saying that there are "... strong safeguards to

protect the Australian Government's ability to regulate in the public interest and pursue legitimate welfare objectives in areas such as health, safety and the environment", the text of the agreement is being kept secret, just like the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP) trade deal being negotiated (pushed) by US imperialism.

Trans Pacific Partnership

A second concern is the knock-on effect this deal with China will have on the TPP negotiations.

For starters, it has killed off any faint chance of keeping out an ISDS clause.

There will now be extra pressure to conclude the TPP deal, as Australia now

has 'free trade' deals with South Korea, Japan and China, plus the Australia-US Free Trade Agreement. (US FTA)

The US FTA didn't deliver everything US imperialism demanded, so the TPP is another opportunity for the US corporate monopolies to further penetrate the Australian economy and tighten their grip over our nation.

China's "market socialism"

As for China, the deal allows Australian private healthcare providers and health insurance funds to operate in the country, further undermining the extensive public health system built up by socialism. Even this public system is no longer free, as "market socialism" has taken over.

Similarly, Australian private education and training companies are also welcome, undermining the public education system established by socialism.

The parasites are coming, and just like us, the Chinese people will end up with two-tier health and education systems – one for the rich and well-off and one for the poor.

There are also concessions to financial institutions and taxation lawyers to help the Chinese "market socialists" minimise their taxes both here and in China, leaving more for speculation around the globe.

What a sorry thing is "socialism with Chinese characteristics".

Seamen stick up for Australian jobs

by *Bill F.*

For more than 2 weeks, 18 seamen on the tanker *Tandara Spirit* have held the ship at anchor in Port Phillip Bay in a dispute over jobs and fuel security.

Viva Energy had been using the ship to transport petrol from the Geelong refinery, but had instructed the crew's employer Teekay to sail the ship to Singapore and then lay off the crew.

It then turned out that Viva had hired another ship, the *Vinalines Galaxy*, which carried a Vietnamese crew working for \$2 an hour – Gina Rinehart rates!

The *Vina Galaxy* had previously been pinged by the Australian Maritime Safety Authority for almost 50 breaches of health and safety, and several pollution issues.

This, with the slave labour rates of pay, ought to put this particular ship "off limits" in Australian waters.

In contrast, none of the 5 Australian



coastal tankers have recorded any defect notices over the last 5 years.

The assistant national secretary of the Maritime Union of Australia, Ian Bray, stated, "The union is very sympathetic to the workers on board, not only about their jobs but also their unanswered questions about fuel security and the future of Australian shipping around the Australian coast.

"We now import 91% of Australia's

fuel task, so in times of economic crisis when ships are laid up, in times of acts of terrorism, acts of war, shipping lanes being closed, we're not guaranteed that supply.

"The second part of that is once we lose control of how it's regulated, it probably has a direct effect on consumers at the bowser, where we're subject to price-gouging."

A further issue was raised by Matt

Ruchel, executive director of the Victorian National Parks Association, which was concerned at the risk of defective ships leaking oil into Port Phillip Bay and damaging sensitive bird habitats and sea life.

"The risk of some kind of damaging oil or fuel spill from ships that are not up to scratch is much higher," he said.

With Australia now importing over 90% of its petrol and diesel, and nearly 100 foreign tankers involved, the threats to jobs, fuel security and the environment have multiplied.

As Ian Bray said, "The attempt to justify international seafarers taking the jobs of Australian seafarers and only pay them \$2 per hour was an absolute joke.

"To our members out on *Tandara*, we know other seafarers and wharfies are watching this dispute with keen interest and support you."

So do millions of Australian workers concerned about their own job security and happy to see someone prepared to have a go.

Widodo sends wrong message to West Papua

by Nick G.



Ryazamid Ryacudu

Indonesia's new President, Joko "Jokowi" Widodo, has appointed retired general Ryazamid Ryacudu as Indonesia's Defence Minister.

This is a bitter blow to the West Papuans and other peoples who have suffered at the hands of the Indonesian National Armed Forces (TNI).

Joko Widodo, before being elected president, promised the West Papuans that he would allow greater access to overseas journalists and that there would be a greater chance for greater dialogue.

By appointing Ryamazid as Defence Minister, the President has effectively broken his promise.

When Ryamazid was a general, he was noted for being a hardliner. He organised repressive programs against

those calling for freedom in Aceh and West Papua, and for human rights activists within Indonesia itself.

In 2001, after West Papuan independence movement leader Theys Eluay was murdered by TNI soldiers, Ryamazid praised those guilty of the murder.

Indonesia has to do a lot more to respect human rights, bring the perpetrators of human rights abuses to justice and to compensate the victims of TNI brutality.

Australia leaders should honour their sanctimonious mantra about "human rights" and "individual freedoms" and demand that Indonesia respect the right to self-determination of the people of West Papua and the rights of all Indonesian working people.

Extracts from a statement by the Popular Front for Liberation of Palestine

by Khalil Maqdesi

Central Committee PFLP
18 November

Occupation is responsible for escalation in Jerusalem.

"Resistance is our only path; there is no other way in which Palestinians can liberate their land and achieve their rights. Resistance includes many methods of struggle, including, centrally, armed resistance and armed struggle. Revolutionary violence is necessary in order to confront and overthrow the colonization of our land and the confiscation of our rights," said Maqdesi.

"Oppressed people are determined to seek their freedom. It is the responsibility of the so-called 'international community' to hold Israel accountable for its attacks on the Palestinian people.

"It is the occupier who should be labeled 'inhuman'. Instead, their settlement building, their killings, their mass attacks on Palestinian rights are met with approval and silence by the United States and the European Union, who have shown themselves to be consistently on the side of Israel, on the side of colonialism and imperialist hegemony," said Maqdesi.

"The PFLP is not a religious organization and our resistance is not based on religious convictions. We are struggling to liberate Palestine from a settler colonial project imposed on our people. Occupiers and racists do not belong to the land of Palestine; there are, and must be, consequences and repercussions for the theft of our land and our rights," said Maqdesi.

"Our message to the Palestinian



Ever expanding settlements in East Jerusalem and the recent Zionist incursions into Al Aqsa Mosque have intensified Palestinian resistance

people inside Palestine and in exile is that you have maintained your resilience and resistance to the occupier for 66 years. You are strong and have the ability to continue on the path of struggle. No power can liquidate your cause. The PFLP reaffirms its commitment to you, and your cause, and your rights. We call upon all Palestinian political forces to unify under the banner of the Palestinian heroic people, to protect their sacrifices, and unite to march forward toward a new stage and a new intifada," said Maqdesi.

"The PFLP is committed to redirecting and recentering the compass of the region and its people on the central issue – towards Palestine, towards Jerusalem, confronting Zionism and imperialism; away from sectarian wars and chaos in the region. Palestine is still the issue, and Jerusalem is at the heart of this struggle," Maqdesi said. "Today, the PFLP has a message to the Arab people, that your battle is with imperialism and Zionism and not with each other, and that the fragmentation

of the Arab people can only benefit the occupier who is colonizing your beloved Palestine. The masses must awaken and shake the collective consciousness of the Arab nation to confront the real enemy."

"The PFLP also wants to send its message to a billion and a half Muslim brothers and sisters that our fight is not with Jews and is not based on religion; it is about justice, liberation and return to the homeland, and this is your struggle," said Maqdesi.

"Our message today to the Jewish people around the world is that the Palestinian-Israeli conflict was never a conflict between Muslims and Jews. Palestine has embraced the Jewish community for hundreds of years. What stands between us is this colonial project. We know that thousands of Jews around the world are true and genuine voices for the struggle, leading boycott movements and joining the Palestinian struggle for liberation on a daily basis. We salute each and every one of them.

"And for those Jews who are misled

by the Zionist discourse, Israel is nothing but a deathtrap for both Jews and Arabs. Racism can never resolve conflicts, and apartheid is not a solution. You must stand by the side of the oppressed, and not the oppressor; raise your voice against the Zionist criminals who are oppressing our people in your name," Maqdesi said.

"As for the threats of Netanyahu and Yaalon to our people," Maqdesi said that they are "worthless and carry no weight and reflect a racist settler mindset that thinks that through coercion and oppression we will become silent and defeated. The battle with the occupation will not be limited to Jerusalem. It is going to expand to every inch of Palestine, and through the borders of Palestine.

"Today, also, the PFLP wants to send a message to the solidarity movement with Palestine, to intensify their efforts and their struggle to support the resistance on the path of establishing a democratic Palestine where all people live in equality and freedom."

Whitlam sacking - a tipping point in the relentless attack on workers' rights and living standards

by Ned K.

Much has been written about the legacy of the Whitlam Government since his passing away in October this year. One feature of the Whitlam Government period that has not received much press is what was happening with workers' share (including self-employed workers) of the national income in the mid- 1970s and what has happened to it since.

A graph sourced by the ACTU in a 2013 document "A Shrinking Slice Of The Pie" shows that in the Whitlam Government period, workers' share of the national income rose from 63% in 1961 to 75% in

1975, the year of Whitlam's sacking. Union membership which gave some indication of the numerical collective strength of the working class was just under 60% of the workforce.

The Whitlam sacking was a tipping point for workers in Australia. It symbolised a decision by US imperialism, in particular, that its global plans did not include toleration of an active, united working class in countries within its sphere of influence.

US imperialism intensified its efforts to court Labor 'leaders' like Hawke to control the working class and to participate in the systematic dismantling of the core strength of the working class in Australia.

Its purpose was to maximise profits

to the enterprise level, the narrow definition of workers' right to 'protected industrial action' not only paved the way for the individual contracts of Howard's WorkChoices, but they turned workers away from being union members in their droves.

From a high of just below 60% in the 1970s, union membership has fallen to about 18% overall and 13% in the private sector. Strikes are a rare event in Australia now.

Renewed assault on workers' living standards to increase profits

However, imperialism is not satisfied. Through its latest parliamentary agent, the Abbott Government, it is trying to wipe out workers' mass organisations (unions) altogether through legal means combined with a sustained media campaign portraying unions as corrupt organisations that workers should avoid at all costs.

The Government is also planning to pass laws which further restrict the rights of workers to discuss issues with union officials inside their workplace. The Government wants to restore the right of the boss to prevent a union official from meeting workers in the place where they have their meal break.

This builds on the lack of rights of workers' elected workplace delegates in the Fair Work Act where the word 'shop steward' or 'union delegate' does not even rate a mention!

The Government, on behalf of the big corporations, is also hoping to legislate to further restrict when workers can take the already limited 'protected industrial action'.

The purpose of this latest attack is to prepare the way for a further reduction in the workers' share of the wealth of the country and to further increase the profit share of the corporations, including those that dodge their tax obligations and those that do not.

Workers fighting back

Despite the incredible assault on workers since the sacking of the Whitlam Government by imperialism and the in the main servile parliamentary friends, workers continue to find ways to act collectively to defend and extend their interests. Although the number of workers in unions has declined as a percentage of the workforce, there are still thousands of workers who join unions.

However, there is also much higher turnover of workers in particular workplaces and industries now than in the 1970s when there were more full-

time jobs and more job security. Despite restrictive collective bargaining rights under the Fair Work Act, thousands of workers still stick together to win above award minimum pay rises and better working conditions.

One of the problems is that union membership does not 'follow' workers who are moving from one employer to another or one industry to another, so a worker who is a member of a collective today is 'lost' when they move to another workplace tomorrow

How workers communicate with each other to plan collective action has changed, but not been extinguished by the big corporations and their governments.

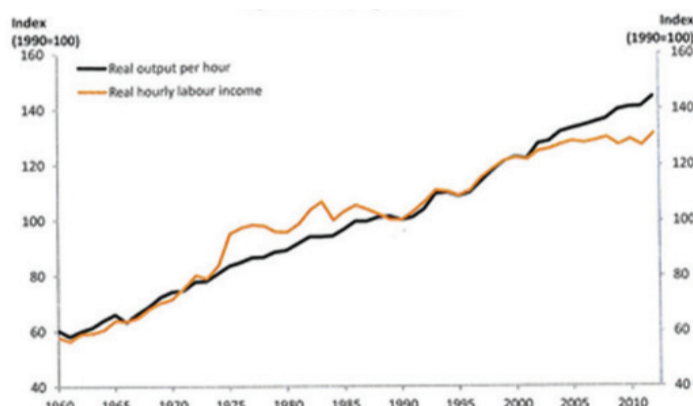
While the corporations benefit by having to rely on as many large concentrations of workers as was the case with big manufacturing plants of the past, they struggle to control how young workers in particular use social media to communicate with each other and to plan actions.

The recent *Bust The Budget* rallies, while not sustained, were organised almost entirely by social media and resulted in good numbers. They showed that though the corporations may have short term success in restricting action inside workplaces due to repressive laws and the changed nature of many workplaces, workers still and always will find ways to organise collectively to pursue their own interests.

Unions as organisations can still greatly assist in this process by themselves putting their common interests ahead of their own sectional interests.

Workers have no time for demarcation disputes which cause confusion among workers about which union to join. Most workers who have joined a union at one point or another in their working life would appreciate a membership system where their union membership can easily be maintained as they move in and out of different jobs, or temporarily cease working.

Workers want organisations to belong to that are in step with how they earn a living in the 21st Century.



Source: ACTU calculations based on ABS 5204, ABS 6291.0.55.001, Butlin 1977. Chart shows real total factor income per hour, compared to real labour income per hour, including employers' social contributions and the imputed labour income of the self-employed. Both series are deflated using the GDP implicit price deflator.

Figure 2: The labour income share



Source: ACTU calculations based on ABS 5204, ABS 6291.0.55.001, Butlin 1977. Chart shows total labour compensation, including employers' social contributions and the imputed labour income of the self-employed, as a proportion of total factor income.

1975, the year of Whitlam's sacking. By 2012 it had declined to below 60%.

The steepest periods of decline in workers' share of the national income since the sacking of the Whitlam Government occurred in the Fraser Government's second term of office from 1977 to 1980, in the mid-1980s under the Accord policy of the Hawke Government and the period of WorkChoices under the Howard Government.

During the early to mid-1970's, there were consistently over 2,000,000 working days lost due to collective action in the form of strikes by workers. Many of these strikes were over claims for a bigger share of the pie created by workers, but expropriated by the capitalist class.

of the big corporations, especially in the mining, agriculture and resources sectors where imperialism significantly increased its presence from the 1980s onwards.

It had other plans for manufacturing workers in Australia. In a sense, imperialism gave up any hope of taming manufacturing workers in Australia. It resorted to closure of whole manufacturing industries in Australia, with compliant governments, both Liberal and Labor, appealing to imperialism that they could carry out its wishes better than their parliamentary opponents.

The Accord policy of the 1980s, the introduction of non-union Enterprise Bargaining under Keating, the confinement of collective bargaining

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