

# TROTSKYIST PLATFORM

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*Melbourne, July 2016: Workers at a Coles food distribution centre in the suburb of Truganina go on strike to demand that the casual workers amongst them be made permanent.*



Sydney, 3 May 2018: Supporters of Trotskyist Platform and unemployed people's rights activists rally against job slashing by corporate bosses. The demonstration was organised to help build a class-struggle movement to force capitalist business owners to increase hiring at the expense of their profits. The action was held outside the building of the NAB on the same day as the bank announced its half yearly profit results. That announcement confirmed that NAB bosses had already forced over 1,000 workers out of their jobs as part of their plan to slash 6,000 jobs in three years.

# **NAB: \$6.6 Billion Profit, 6000 Jobs Axed**

## ***Stop Rich Bosses Slashing Jobs to Leach Even Greater Profits***

### ***If the Capitalists Can't Run the Economy in a Way That Ensures Jobs For All Then Working Class People Should Take Control of It All***

**15 April 2018:** Last November, the NAB (National Australia Bank) CEO, Andrew Thorburn, was gloating with smug delight. He announced that the bank had increased its annual cash profit to \$6.6 billion. Yet, for NAB workers this was very bad news. In the very same announcement of the huge profit, the company boss declared that they would be cutting the jobs of 6,000 workers over three years. Having leached fabulous profits from the hard work of their employees, the wealthy big shareholders and executives who control NAB want to grab profits at an even higher rate by dumping more than one out of six of the very same workers who made them their fortunes.

For many of the workers being axed the pain is not only the big financial hit that they and their families will suffer as a result of being retrenched. It is also the demoralisation that comes from not being able to utilise their skills and labour, the loss of self-esteem as well as the social isolation for many that results from not interacting with co-workers at a workplace. However, the suffering of the retrenched workers means nothing to the big shareholders benefitting from their misery. To the big end of town, workers are just a "cost" on an account ledger needing to be minimised.

So who are those bigwigs set to benefit from the misery of the axed workers? The big shareholders are mainly ultra-rich local Australians. Their exact identities are hidden as they direct their holdings through wealth management and other investment firms. However, one can be sure that several of the 200 richest Australians – whose combined wealth is a filthy \$233 billion (<http://www.afr.com/leadership/afr-lists/rich-list/financial-review-rich-list-2017-20170525-gwcvr6>) – have major stakes. Many of the corporation's executives are themselves significant shareholders. CEO Andrew Thorburn alone owns over \$8 million worth of NAB shares. Meanwhile, he rakes in a fat remuneration package that last year alone was worth over \$4 million. No

doubt the directors will be rewarding him with an even greater package for his "cost cutting" – i.e. his ruthless axing of 6,000 workers' jobs! Meanwhile, even as NAB owners were "forced to" axe 6,000 workers, they could still afford to pay former NSW premier Mike Baird almost \$900,000 in just his first five months employed as an executive at the firm. What a racket! Baird took up this lucrative position just six weeks after exiting the NSW parliament. In employing Baird, NAB's directors no doubt want to strengthen links with the mainstream political parties to ensure that these parties continue to aggressively serve the bosses' interests.

NAB's jobs massacre shows the fraudulent character of "trickle down economics" – the claim that in order to have more jobs and higher wages one has to first ensure that the very wealthy and the corporations that they own first make larger incomes. It is the right-wing Liberal party that most openly espouses this deceitful "theory." The Turnbull government uses it to "justify" its drive for still greater tax cuts for the richest corporations. Yet, as the NAB bosses' action showed, higher corporate profits can actually mean less jobs not more!

The social democratic ALP has won some respect

from their working class base for at least opposing the new tax cuts for the rich pushed by the Liberal-National government and Pauline Hanson's racist One Nation party. Yet, while opposing the latest planned handouts to the ultra-rich, the ALP's platform is only about maintaining the current, blatantly unfair, status quo. Thus, the ALP does not in the least challenge the "right" of the likes of the NAB bosses to axe large numbers of jobs whenever these capitalist exploiters calculate that this can bring them still more obscene profits. The ALP also accepts nearly all the existing laws restricting union

industrial action and organising – laws that hamper workers' efforts to take the kind of action needed to stop company bosses taking an ever greater share of the fruit of workers' labour. The status quo that the ALP upholds allows billionaire bosses to throw workers out of their jobs like used packaging while, officially (and these figures grossly underestimate the problem), approaching two million people are either unemployed or working less hours than they want to and nearly three and a half million workers endure insecure employment as casuals.

## Who NOT to Blame for Unemployment

**NAB's jobs massacre highlights the reality of who is to blame for unemployment, underemployment and the shortage of permanent, secure full-time jobs in Australia; and that is the big end of town business owners. In Australia's capitalist system, the factories, banks, mines, agricultural land and media and communications infrastructure are owned by a small class of wealthy individuals. They make decisions about what, how much and how to produce solely on the basis of what ensures them the greatest profits. If that profit imperative means scaling back production or provision of services in order to slash "labour costs" or if they can get away with slashing jobs and then forcing remaining workers to toil faster for the same pay, they will not hesitate to throw onto the dole queues the workers from whose labour they had derived their wealth. However, because this class of bigwigs is very small relative to the masses whom they exploit, they are fearful of the working class masses uniting against them. That is why they and their mouthpieces seek to blame others for the unemployment, casualisation of the workforce, lack of affordable rental accommodation and stagnant wages that they and their system cause. Most notably, the media that the capitalists' own, the mainstream political parties that serve their interests and sometimes the capitalists very openly themselves – like in the case of racist multi-millionaire Dick Smith – seek to push the blame for unemployment onto migrants. "Migrants are taking Aussie jobs" is their open or implied message. Typically, reinforcing White Australia racism, they single out – either openly or through implication – migrants from East Asia, the Indian subcontinent, the South Pacific and Africa. The claim that migrants are the cause of the shortage of secure, permanent jobs is a complete lie. Six thousand NAB workers are not being thrown out of work because of immigration or because their jobs are being replaced by migrants! By taking part in work life and then paying taxes and spending just like those born here, migrants create as many jobs as they occupy. It is worth noting that in the period when Australia had by far its highest rate of unemployment, during the 1930s Great Depression, there was very little immigration and none at all from Asia, the Middle East and Africa.**

It is not just the conservative Liberal-Nationals, the racist One Nation Party and still more extreme far-right forces that are seeking to blame migrants for unemployment. The ALP – and on occasions the Greens too – play into these myths, in particular by blaming joblessness on temporary migrant skilled workers (these workers used to come under the 457 visa program but that scheme has been abolished and replaced by two smaller visa categories). Last May, the Labour Party released a video promising that a future ALP government would "Employ Australians First" with visuals where nearly all the Australians shown were white Anglos. The

ad with its unmistakable racist message – that white people had to be supposedly protected from having their jobs taken away by non-white people – was rightly condemned by many. Like all claims that migrants are "taking Aussie jobs," the ALP's campaign against visa workers is based on racist myths. One of these deceptions is to greatly exaggerate the number of guest workers in the country. The reality is that the number of temporary skilled migrant workers in Australia is tiny (<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2016-11-15/what-is-a-457-visa/8026280>) – they make up just



*Left: NSW Opposition Leader, Labor's Luke Foley whips up racist hostility to migrants with claims that refugees from the Middle East are swamping Western Sydney suburbs and leading to a "white flight" of Anglo-Saxons from these suburbs as well as a shortage of job opportunities and infrastructure. Refusing to stand on a program of class struggle to win jobs and decent public services for all workers, the ALP social democrats are left to offer bogus nationalist and racist "solutions" to unemployment and inadequate infrastructure. Yet, Asian, Middle Eastern, Latin American and African workers are among the ALP's bases of support. The best the Labor Party can "offer" these working class people are almost worthless, symbolic gestures.*  
*Right: Luke Foley makes Chinese language greetings to the Hong Kong and Cantonese-based Chinese community. The posters making these greetings were seen in the multi-racial Western Sydney suburb of Auburn just days after Foley made his racist rantings that migrants entering such suburbs were responsible for a "white flight" from these areas. (Photo credit for photo on Right: Trotskyist Platform)*

a mere **0.7%** of the workforce. Put another way there are twenty times more people who are either without a job or working less hours than they want to than the number of temporary skilled migrant workers in Australia. Yet the ALP, the Liberals and sometimes the Greens join Pauline Hanson's fascistic One Nation in blaming these workers for joblessness in Australia. The corporate high fliers who really do cause unemployment are left unscathed, unbothered and laughing all the way to the bank!

When the advocates for the big end of town aren't trying to shift the responsibility for unemployment onto migrants and guest workers, they condemn the unemployed themselves. This blaming of the victim is done through spreading various myths. Governments, morning TV talk shows and radio shock jocks disgustingly insinuate that the reason that unemployed workers are out of a job is that they "have suffered a loss of work ethic" and need "tough love" to be "re-schooled in habits which make them employable like getting up on time in the morning." So following this "logic" of the political poodles for the billionaires, the hundreds of NAB workers who will end up long-term unemployed as a result of the savage job cuts "lack a work ethic" and need to be "trained in adapting to work life." How insulting!

As part of blaming the unemployed for their own hardships, the ruling class is constantly making

life harder and harder for job seekers. That is as if inadequate welfare payments, a shortage of low-rent public housing, being bullied by privately owned, profit-seeking job agencies and being forced into semi-slave labour, work-for-the-dole schemes is not bad enough! Governments have introduced in two areas on a "trial basis" – in Ceduna, South Australia, and in the east Kimberley in Western Australia – a "cashless welfare" card. Under this scheme, welfare recipients are not allowed control of 80% of their own money which must be, instead, spent through a cashless debit card which can only be used at certain retail outlets. This draconian scheme will simply make life more miserable for those already suffering the hardships brought by paltry welfare income. They will need to now spend far more time doing basic shopping since jobseekers will have to travel often large distances to get to a cashless debit card-approved retail outlet. As is often the case with measures aimed against the masses, the racist ruling class is first implementing this "cashless welfare" scheme in areas with high concentrations of Aboriginal people. Similarly, the government has rolled out a particularly cruel form of work-for-the-dole targeting Aboriginal people called CDP. CDP requires welfare recipients in remote Aboriginal communities to work up to 760 hours more a year for the same basic payment as people in non-Aboriginal majority urban areas. All these paternalistic programs especially targeting Aboriginal people are inevitably the thin edge of a

wedge that is intended to be shoved into the heart of all the poor and working class. In February, the conservative federal government with the support of Pauline Hanson's One Nation – and in a deal with the Nick Xenophon Team (now rebadged as the Centre Alliance) – passed legislation extending the cashless welfare trials at Ceduna and east Kimberley for a further year. The new law also allows for the extension of the scheme to the Goldfields region in WA. The capitalist rulers say that “cashless welfare” is aimed at stopping welfare recipients spending their payments on alcohol, drugs and gambling. The truth is that it is just another means by which the rich ruling class can blame low income people for their own plight and make their lives harder in the process.

In a further blow to jobseekers, last month the federal government with the support of the racist One Nation, the Nick Xenophon Team, Derryn Hinch and other independents passed its draconian Welfare Reform Bill through the Senate. The new measures will impose ever more cruel restrictions and punishments on welfare recipients. Those who have been laid off will now have to wait longer before receiving payments. Jobseekers will also now be still more harshly hit with cuts to their payments for allegedly not meeting “job search” requirements for *non-existent* jobs! In short, many of the most economically vulnerable people in the country are going to have yet more hardships imposed on them while those newly unemployed reeling from the pain of being retrenched – such as the many axed NAB workers who will not quickly find new jobs – will be made to suffer greater financial stress. Meanwhile, the business owners whose greed has thrown the unemployed workers onto the dole queues will, of course, receive no penalty!

Even if one were to believe that the government is sincere in wanting to push the unemployed into work, the claimed rationale behind their harsh measures against welfare recipients is completely baseless. There simply are not enough available jobs. Indeed, on average, for every job vacancy there are 18 job seekers! One cause for this is that federal and state governments themselves have been slashing public service jobs as they underfund schools, hospitals and universities, slash TAFE and cut back on other services that working class people need the most. The main reason that there are not enough available jobs is that the rich company

owners who run this country don't hesitate to throw out workers when that is what it takes to boost profits. Moreover, in times when unemployment does fall, bosses become more and more reluctant to hire any more workers as remaining jobseekers will require greater training – training which greedy business owners simply don't want to pay for – and because competition between bosses to hire the remaining workers means that they must put up wages. Thus, under the capitalist system there will always be a large number of unemployed people – both those “officially” counted as unemployed and the many more people who are either barely employed because they are getting far less work hours than they want or have given up a fruitless search for work and are, hence, not even counted in the statistics. This means that even if Australia's rich people's regime was truly interested in making people more intensely look for work, their cruel measures supposedly aimed at doing this would make no significant overall difference to unemployment levels. When all jobseekers look more avariciously for work then this simply increases competition between jobseekers for the same number of few, available job placements. **The same overall number of people will remain without work as before!**

However, the Australian ruling class's real reason for bashing welfare recipients is something more sinister than a poorly thought out policy. Apart from shielding their corporate mates from deserved blame for job slashing, their main motive for implementing ever more cruel measures against unemployed workers is to make life so miserable for those looking for work that it will drive many to accept positions with especially poor wages and conditions. It will also pressure already employed workers, fearful of being thrown into the harsh life of the unemployed, to accept lower wages and worse working conditions from their bosses. Meanwhile, the prospect of a terrible life if one becomes unemployed acts to deter some workers from standing up to their exploiting bosses or to join in unions to fight for their rights at work. All this is why it is in the very interests of the union movement and the whole working class to oppose the every crueller attacks on unemployed workers. **No to cashless welfare! No to waiting periods for newly unemployed workers! No to the punishment of jobseekers! For a big increase in unemployment payments!**



*July 2014: Some of the capitalist billionaires who really run this country and the mainstream politicians who serve them. Gambling tycoon James Packer (Left) and media mogul Kerry Stokes (Right) have a discussion while sitting down to dinner with then Communications Minister, and future but now deposed Prime Minister, Malcolm Turnbull.*

## **Who is Really to Blame for Unemployment and Underemployment**

**Given how much that attacks on unemployed workers helps the capitalists to increase their rate of exploitation of existing and new workers, some big time capitalists have used their wealth and influence to directly push the campaign against welfare recipients – rather than just leaving it all to their representatives in parliament as they often do. Thus, the cashless welfare debit card is actually the brainchild of mining magnate Andrew Forrest, Australia’s sixth richest person. Forrest made introducing cashless welfare a key recommendation of his August 2014 “Creating Parity” report on indigenous employment which he was commissioned to produce by the former Abbott government. Last year, Forrest’s “philanthropic” Minderoo Foundation funded advertisements promoting the cashless welfare card. Having leached a personal fortune of nearly \$7 billion from mining on stolen Aboriginal land, Forrest is a high-living tycoon who owns a \$53 million private jet. He’s probably thinking how many extra private jets he could buy if expanded cashless welfare helps to drive down wages throughout society and, thus, helps to further boost the profits of his Fortescue Metals Group (FMG).**

Media groups owned – and, therefore, having their political outlook shaped – by billionaire moguls have also been at the forefront of pushing measures against unemployed workers. True to form, the newspapers owned by Rupert Murdoch’s News Corporation – like *The Daily Telegraph* and *The Australian* – have run frequent diatribes against

unemployed workers. Meanwhile, Channel 7’s Sunrise morning show has engaged in vilifying the unemployed by running stories such as “Australia’s worst dole bludging areas named and shamed.” On September 8 last year, the Inner West Sydney branch of the Australian Unemployed Workers Union held a lively rally against Channel 7’s hate

speech against the unemployed – a protest that we in Trotskyist Platform also participated in. Channel 7 is owned by tycoon Kerry Stokes who has a nearly \$3 billion fortune and is famous for owning extravagant mansions and cruising the world in his luxury yacht.

It is telling that the capitalists who have been at the forefront of vilifying the unemployed have been among the harshest in throwing workers out of their jobs whenever their profit “imperative” demands it. Thus, four years ago, one of Kerry Stokes’ Seven Group subsidiaries, heavy machinery supplier WesTrac, retrenched 630 of their workers despite Seven Group having made a \$486 million profit the previous financial year. And then Stokes’ Channel 7 has the hide to vilify unemployed workers as “dole bludgers.” A year after Stokes’ job massacre at WesTrac, none other than Mr Cashless Welfare himself, Andrew Forrest was spearheading the slashing of hundreds of jobs at his Fortescue Metals Group. Forrest cried poor as his excuse for the jobs slashing ... despite his company extracting a \$435 million profit that financial year! Indeed, while Forrest was so “poor” that he “had to” throw hundreds of workers out of their jobs, he was not poor enough to stop him buying, just months after his jobs massacre, a \$21 million mansion in the Perth seaside suburb of Cottesloe – just metres away from another mansion that he owns!

The axing of workers’ jobs that Andrew Forrest, Kerry Stokes and the NAB bosses are prosecuting is being done by many other business owners throughout the country – whether they are big corporate heavies or small business owners exploiting just a few workers. Telstra bigwigs last year threw 2,800 workers out of their jobs despite making a massive \$3.9 billion profit last year and an even more obscene \$5.8 billion profit the year before. In February, they flagged even more job cuts because the *poor devils* had only made a half-year profit of \$1.7 billion! Meanwhile, last August, Cadbury announced that it would be slashing 50 jobs, or more than one in ten of its workforce at its Hobart factory, after having axed 80 workers two years previously. This, despite Cadbury’s owners, Mondelez International having made a whopping \$US 3 billion profit last year.

In recent years, company bosses have sometimes

given automation as their reason for cutting jobs. However, automation, AI and advances in technology need not, in themselves, lead to job slashing. Improvements in efficiency could be used to increase the amount of training time for workers, to reduce employees’ working hours with no decrease in pay or to broaden customer services. Instead, when capitalist companies use automation to slash jobs this is often associated with a decline in the quality and flexibility of service to consumers and customers. Thus, a month after beginning to implement its jobs massacre, NAB announced that it would close seven bank branches in the rural Riverina area.

The recent obsession of the media and economic “experts” to blame automation and robots for unemployment and underemployment is yet another means to get wealthy business owners off the hook. It makes out that job slashing and casualisation of the workforce are part of some kind of unstoppable historical trend driven by technological progress. However, decisions to axe workers’ jobs are not made by robots! They are made by greedy business owners who will do anything to maximise profits. Their profit obsession and the profit imperative of the capitalist system leads them to use any labour time savings from automation not to increase workers’ training time and working conditions or to expand the quality of services for customers but to slash workforces. In a humane, workers-run society automation and technological advances would not lead to any less jobs at all but to a trend towards higher skilled and better remunerated positions requiring greater degrees of training. So let us not be fooled by corporate bosses who express “regret” that they were “forced” to axe workers’ jobs because of automation. When these ultra-rich business owners throw out of their jobs large numbers of the very workers whose toil made them their own fortunes it is for the very same motive that capitalists have always had for slashing jobs: the motive to organise production and employment levels in a way that maximises their own private profits. **It is all about the corporate bosses being able to leach ever greater wealth so that they can afford those additional holiday homes, that extra Ferrari and a quicker upgrade to their private jets.**



**Build Union and Working Class People's Action to  
Stop Companies Slashing Jobs and  
Force "Money-Making" Businesses to  
Increase Hiring at the Expense of Their Fat Profits!**

**We don't have to accept business owners slashing jobs at will. Through mass action, especially union strike action, we can force bosses to retain jobs. Such action can threaten company owners with far greater losses in revenue than the extra profit they would gain through axing workers jobs. Right now solid strikes of workers at any one of the corporations where job slashing is taking place – such as at NAB, Telstra and Optus – backed up by solidarity industrial action at other workplaces could force the bosses there to cancel their job axing programs.**

When the union movement starts stopping business owners from retrenching workers whenever these capitalists' profit imperative demands it, this will also greatly boost the struggle for higher wages. Currently, even as profits are ballooning, workers' wages are not keeping up with price increases. Whenever our unions demand a pay rise, the bosses respond that they will be "forced" to cut jobs if wages increase. They use this to deter our struggle for decent wages. However, they will only cut jobs when wages rise if we let them! If through action we can force the bosses to retain jobs then higher wages simply mean less profits for the capitalist business owners and a greater share of the fruit of our labour going back to us workers.

As well as industrial action to stop job slashing at private corporations, we need similar struggle to stop layoffs at public sector workplaces including at schools, hospitals, Australia Post and public transport. We must also mobilise action to oppose any privatisations – such as the NSW Liberal Party government's sell-off of STA public buses in Inner West Sydney to a private company, Transit Systems. Such privatisations inevitably mean job cuts and attacks on working conditions as governments outsource job slashing to private firms and, thus, avoid the political cost of being the ones responsible for throwing workers out of their jobs. Transit Systems, which is owned by the wealthy Australian Francis, Leishman and Smith families, are slated to take over the Sydney Area 6 buses from July onwards.

Unfortunately, all workers are not employed by big enterprises like STA buses, Telstra or the big banks where it is relatively easier to build industrial action against job cuts or jobs-threatening privatisations. Many workers also toil in smaller workplaces and

businesses where it is harder to organise workers into unions. To help protect these workers as well from job slashing, we need to fight for laws that ban *all* profitable businesses from cutting the size of their workforce. We will only be able to win such laws by fighting for them since all governments in capitalist Australia – whether Liberal, ALP or ALP/Greens coalitions – have proven that, ultimately, they only serve the big end of town. Governments administered by all these parties accept the "right" of business owners to only retain as many workers as makes them the greatest profit. Therefore, to win a ban on profitable businesses slashing their workforce will take a huge campaign of strikes and mass protest actions. Importantly, such struggle would inevitably bring together unionised workers toiling for larger companies with unemployed workers and workers in smaller workplaces, enabling the latter to be drawn into the class struggle and giving impetus to the fight to organise workers in smaller businesses into our unions too.

The demand that all profitable businesses be stopped from cutting jobs is not the be all and end all of the fight for jobs. Actually, regardless of whether they are currently making a profit or copping a loss we do not give any capitalist – who hires workers for the sake of trying to exploit their labour for profit – the "right" to retrench workers. However, the call to stop profitable companies slashing jobs is crucial at this time because it shows to the working class that their jobs are being axed not out of "necessity" but because of the greedy pursuit of ever greater profits by wealthy business owners. Organising around this demand, thus, has the potential to kickstart a badly needed, class struggle fight for secure jobs for all workers. Furthermore, it helps to undercut the divisive myth that the way to save local jobs is to

reduce immigration or to put “Australian workers first.”

As our struggle intensifies we need to emphasise still more stringent demands on the capitalist enemy. Not only should all profitable businesses be banned from cutting their workforce, we should also demand that any loss-making firm able to afford to pay any director or executive above a certain salary – say, more than ten times the annual wage of the lowest paid employee – also be prevented from cutting jobs. Moreover, a presently loss-making firm should be forbidden from cutting their workforce if they have made an overall profit over the previous, say, five years. In other words, the capitalist business owners should be forced to sell off, say, a luxury yacht or two and a couple of their holiday homes – i.e. some of the things they have bought from the profits they had previously leached from their employees’ labour – to enable them to cover the losses their business is currently making in order to continue operating with its current workforce levels. For those companies making a profit, we should demand that they not only be prohibited from axing jobs but be forced to increase hiring by at least a certain minimum level in proportion to their profits. For example, we could demand that firms must increase their wages bill by at least 10% of their profits. That means that NAB bosses, after making a \$6.6 billion profit, would instead of being allowed to cut 6,000 jobs be forced to increase their total annual outlay for wages by \$660 million. If we, probably somewhat optimistically, assume that the annual cost to them of each worker – including super and insurance – is \$100,000, then that means that they would be forced to increase their workforce numbers by 6,600 full-time equivalent positions (if they do not provide existing workers with a pay rise). The capitalists will scream that they should not be forced to hire workers for positions that don’t exist. However, positions only “don’t exist” because the capitalists are being allowed to organise their operations in the way that maximises their private profit. If they were forced to increase hiring they would be impelled to – in order to make use of the bigger workforce – improve services for customers, for example by opening more bank branches in remote areas if they are a bank like NAB; or, if they are a manufacturing business, to increase production and then reduce prices to sell the additional output. They could also use any

excess labour-time of each of their employees for community service projects – the type of work that is currently being performed for virtually free by jobseekers forced into work for the dole schemes! If any of this were not feasible, company owners would end up being compelled to increase training and professional development time for each worker or to reduce work hours per worker with no loss in pay. In summary, the fight for jobs is a fight to force capitalist bosses to maintain a workforce larger than that which is most profitable for them – it is a **fight for more jobs at the expense of the profits of the business owners.**

So it really is possible to win permanent jobs for all jobseekers through class struggle. Unfortunately, in the face of chronic unemployment, the growing casualisation of the workforce and fears about automation, many people are resigned to there always being a high level of unemployment and underemployment. Reflecting this, many advocates for the rights of jobseekers and the disadvantaged have advanced the call for a minimum living allowance for all. This demand has been taken up by the Greens who have associated it with analysis that claims that in several years automation will lead to a large number of people being unemployed and that there is a seemingly irreversible, steady trend towards underemployment. We certainly must demand a **massive** increase in unemployment payments, the disability support pension, the old age pension and other welfare payments. However, the problem with emphasising the call for a minimum living allowance – especially when used in the way the Greens are as an answer to unemployment and underemployment – is that **it is defeatist**. It accepts that the capitalists will be able to get away with maintaining high levels of unemployment and with forcing increasing numbers of workers to accept working far less hours than they want to. What is more, it plays into the false narrative that technological development and automation will in themselves lead to increased unemployment and under-employment. This again gets the capitalist bosses off the hook ... and **let’s never forget it is they and not robots that make the decision to axe workers’ jobs**. Thus, while we should demand a massive increase in welfare payments, to emphasise the call for a minimum living allowance can end up as a diversion from the necessary class struggle fight to **force** business owners to increase their number of full-time, permanent employees. In terms of the

overall interests of the working class, a minimum living allowance is a poor substitute to secure, full-time jobs for all jobseekers. For one, the allowance will never end up matching that of paid workers. Moreover, as social beings who are driven to want to contribute to society, being given the guaranteed

right to participate in social labour is important for our mental and social happiness. Most importantly, being brought together at the point of production is what gives workers the ability to unite and collectively organise to challenge the whole present system of exploitation and insecure jobs.

### **If the Capitalist System Cannot Provide Secure Jobs for All Then *Let it Perish!***

Once a class struggle fight against job slashing gains momentum, we need to bring to the fore the demand for an *across the board* reduction in work hours – to share the available work around – with no loss in workers’ pay. For example, we can demand there be a 30 hour normal work week with workers still receiving a weekly wage as they are in a 38 hour week. The exact amount of reduction in the work week will depend on how many jobseekers or underemployed people need to be brought in to secure, full-time jobs. The capitalists will, of course, shout in response that such a sliding scale of hours is “impractical.” They will yell that the higher per unit labour cost this will bring and the resulting loss of profits will drive many of them out of business. Indeed, some struggling business owners will as a result end up going bust but the increased hiring that will be forced upon profitable firms will more than soak up any jobs lost. Furthermore, when business owners scream that being forced to hire more workers and pay higher hourly wages will lead to a collapse in investment and economic ruin – as they inevitably will scream – we must respond that: if you capitalists cannot run the economy in a way that guarantees secure, full-time jobs for all then we working class people need to take the economy out of your hands. By placing the key means of production into our own collective hands, we, unlike you capitalists, will ensure that millions of workers are not left to lead an unhappy, stressed life without secure work.



*Greedy NAB (National Australia Bank) CEO, Andrew Thorburn. Last November, after informing that NAB had received a massive annual profit of \$6.6 billion, Thorburn announced that the corporation would slash 6,000 jobs.*

Calls to force bosses to increase hiring and for a sliding scale of hours are *transitional* demands – that is, a type of demand that communists have long used to unite and mobilise the working class to fight for their needs while simultaneously helping to show to the toiling masses the necessity for the struggle to go all the way to the revolutionary seizure of state power by the working class and its allies. Indeed, the demand for a sliding scale of hours was part of the *Transitional Program* raised by the Trotskyist Fourth International in the period of capitalist crisis preceding the outbreak of World War II. As the *Transitional Program* famously stated: “If capitalism is incapable of satisfying the demands inevitably arising from the calamities generated by itself, then let it perish.”

Unemployment and underemployment not only causes misery to those affected by it but is also a terrible squandering of human resources that makes all of society materially and culturally poorer than it could be. Under capitalism this wastage of human potential occurs because decisions of what and how to produce are not based on satisfying society’s overall needs but according to the profit drives of the competing capitalist bigwigs. Socialist, collective ownership of the economy will guarantee jobs for all not only because the working class in power will ensure that the system meets the basic need for jobs for all but because the system’s successful operation demands that all available human resources are brought to bear for society’s benefit. That is why even in periods during its life when the capitalist world was undergoing deep crisis – such as during the 1930s Great Depression or the 1982-83 recession when Australia had double digit official unemployment rates – the socialistic former Soviet Union was able to maintain full employment. This was despite a mid-1920s bureaucratic degeneration that weakened socialistic rule and opened the way to the eventual 1991-92 collapse of the Soviet workers state under the weight of massive capitalist pressure. Similarly, despite being squeezed by the most crippling economic sanctions imaginable and despite being burdened by its own bureaucratic distortions, the DPRK’s (North Korea) socialist, planned economy is today still able to ensure jobs for all its workers. More significantly, in the world’s most populous country, China, socialistic rule has ensured that unemployment has been kept at comparatively low levels – even when the capitalist world was being

mired in the 1997-98 Asian financial crisis or the late 2000s-early 2010s Great Recession. The same can also be said for the other socialistic states: Vietnam, Cuba and Laos. If China, Vietnam, Cuba and Laos do still have some level of unemployment it is only because, while socialistic state-owned enterprises dominate the strategic economic sectors in these countries, a capitalistic private sector and market allocation of some resources exist side by side with the socialist-led economy. In other words, the triumph of socialism is far from fully accomplished in these countries and there remains an intense political battle over the future direction of these lands.

Whether it is the battle to maintain socialistic rule in the existing workers states or the fight to overturn capitalism in the capitalist ones, the conflict between socialism and capitalism – which boils down to the clash between the working class masses and the capitalist exploiters – is in good part the struggle between a future where every person has the guaranteed right to contribute their labour and talents for society’s benefit and one where large numbers of people will be consigned to the poverty and demoralisation brought by unemployment and underemployment. It is, thus, also a conflict between a future where an economy based on common, i.e. socialist, ownership and guaranteed jobs unites the different races of the world in a beautiful harmony and savoured diversity versus one where the scapegoating of minorities for joblessness and insecure work leads to ever greater racism; and opens the gate to the triumphant march of more hard right-wing Donald Trumps, Marine Le Pens, George Christensens, Pauline Hansons and Peter Duttons; and eventually to the ascendancy of mass murdering, Hitler-style fascism. And as the recent brutal Western imperialist missile attack on Syria foreshadows, the struggle between socialism and capitalism is the struggle between a future where shared ownership and an internationally planned economy lays the basis for a world of everlasting peace and equality between nations or one where the more powerful capitalist countries will make up for the economic crises at home by still more cruelly subjugating the ex-colonial nations and – eventually – by going into a cataclysmic war between imperialist powers themselves.

## Advancing *Towards* Working Class Rule

**For the working class to advance its struggle towards socialism – and indeed to even effectively fight against attacks on its jobs and wages – its most determined layers need to understand that the existing capitalist state machine is its enemy. That means we must understand that the various organs of the state – the courts, police, military, commissions and top bureaucrats – have been built up to enforce the rule of the big end of town over the toiling masses. This remains the case whichever party is administering the government. For the organs of the state are themselves connected by thousands of veins to the capitalist exploiters. It follows that we can never wield this capitalist state or its various organs to further the struggle against the exploiting class. Illusions in the possibility of utilising the existing state or its individual organs – especially when administered by an ALP government – is one of main things retarding the class struggle. For such illusions make the masses believe that there is a road to salvation other than through the difficult path of militant social struggle.**

We need to keep all the above in mind in our fight against job slashing. We must ensure that we are careful to wage the struggle in a manner that teaches the masses to always distrust the capitalist state rather than a manner that reinforces illusions in it. This is especially the case because when we call for a ban on profitable companies slashing jobs or for an enforced reduction in the work week with no loss in pay, we are actually making this demand upon the capitalist state. This is permissible as it is a demand for an economic concession from the enemy – much like we demand pay rises, reductions in work hours and bans on asbestos use when we launch industrial action against individual capitalists. However, we should never make positive demands on the capitalist state – that is, demands that portray the state as having the ability to use its discretionary power in a way favourable to the working class or ones that increase the reach and power of this bosses state. This should be an absolute rule! For example, just as any genuine socialist would never call for the Australian imperialist state to intervene abroad to supposedly “liberate” any oppressed people overseas, we should never call for this state to be given special emergency powers to “fight unemployment.” For not only would making that demand breed illusions in the potential of the capitalist state to act in the masses’ political interests, it would be downright dangerous. The special powers would inevitably end up being used to break strikes and drive down wages – which is the capitalists’ favourite “remedy” for unemployment. Similarly, we would never call for a state inquiry into the problem of unemployment or for a commission to act against it, since these too would – in keeping with the class allegiance of capitalist state institutions – recommend and enact wage freezes and “more flexible” working conditions. In contrast, when we demand a ban on profitable companies slashing jobs or for a sliding scale of hours we are not calling for the state to use its discretion to act in a way favourable to workers’ interests but are rather making a very specific demand

for an economic concession *from the enemy*. Like when we have in the past called for a restriction in the working week to forty hours or demanded a ban on asbestos use or called for increases in minimum wages, all such demands, in one way or another, amount to a demand for the bosses to be forced to accept a lower profit and for a greater share of the fruit of our toil to go back to us.

Nevertheless, as well as calling for militant class struggle to stop job slashing by individual firms and to compel the bosses state into the concession of enacting laws to force capitalists to increase hiring, we also need to organise other independent actions and workers’ organs to advance the struggle for jobs for all. In this way we help the masses to trust only their own united efforts. This becomes especially practical over the question of enforcing any concessions we may win from the capitalists and their state. Today, concessions we have won from the capitalists are often simply ignored by them. And even as their state sometimes enforces these concessions in order to avoid enraging us – which would threaten their interests in a more serious way – they often also allow individual bosses to get away with violating the rights that we have won. Take, for example, the minimum wage. Currently there are hundreds of thousands of workers in Australia – mainly casual, young and sometimes migrant – receiving far less than the minimum wage. A Facebook campaign started by a female University of Wollongong student in August 2016 created a storm after it exposed the extent to which young casual workers in the hospitality and retail sectors are being underpaid – some getting as little as \$10 per hour. Therefore, alongside demanding bans on profitable companies slashing jobs etc we need to demand the right – and when possible simply assume the right – of our unions and workplace committees of workers to inspect all the bosses’ account books. Even as they talk up their prospects when they want to get new investments,

bosses always cry poor to workers in order to “justify” keeping wages low and cutting jobs. We need to see their true position: how much of the fruits of our labour they are actually stealing, how much of their actual profits they are hiding by giving themselves spectacular corporate bonuses and fringe benefits or by siphoning off company resources to their own personal business accounts. Should any companies be found to violate any legal concessions we have won – for example, on minimum hiring requirements – then

we should use the cover of enforcing these laws to put these businesses under the control of workplace committees. Eventually these workers committees can link up and elect higher committees to coordinate the operations of the different firms that have been put under workers’ control. In this way workers get a taste of administering power in their own interests and of **the need for our class to take over economic and political power entirely.**

## **For A Workers Leadership That Truly Believes That *The Workers United Will Never Be Defeated***

In the struggle for jobs for all, the social power of our trade union movement is crucial. Unfortunately, while our union leaders have expressed anger at job cuts in the likes of the NAB and Telstra they have not actually mobilised any opposition to this job slashing thus far. This is because it is the program of the ALP that currently dominates our union movement. This social democratic program, while seeking greater benefits for workers within the current social order, accepts the “right” of capitalists to determine how they should organise production and, thus, how many workers they should retain. Consequently, many of our unions only take a strong stand against job slashing when they believe that axed jobs are being sent overseas or replaced by guest workers from abroad. However, this does little good to the fight to win jobs for all because although there are phone helpdesk and IT jobs that are being sent abroad, the number of jobs that are offshored are comparatively few and even less are replaced by guest workers. For example, **none of the 6,000 jobs being slashed at NAB are due to offshoring or replacement by guest workers.**

Indeed, the obsession of many of our union leaders with the supposed “export of jobs” and with the entry of guest workers is worse than useless. For it diverts workers from the necessary fight to force the greedy capitalist bosses to increase hiring at the expense of these bosses’ fat profits. Instead, it channels workers into squabbling over jobs with their overseas working class sisters and brothers. This inevitably creates racist sentiments which harm workers’ unity and further undermine the possibility of the needed class struggle fight against job slashing.

Now, of course, the capitalist exploiters are always seeking the cheapest sources of labour and always trying to undercut working conditions. They do this by not only hiring some guest workers but also when they hire many young workers or apprentices. However, in those cases where bosses are actually offshoring jobs or in the fewer cases where jobs are given to skilled overseas workers that could go to locals, our slogan should not be the divisive one to give the jobs to local workers instead of overseas ones but the simple demand to stop any job losses here and for increased hiring of workers. And the way to oppose attempts to use the entry of temporary skilled workers to undercut working conditions is to demand that all these workers (formerly known as 457 visa workers) be paid at the same rates with the same conditions as local workers and be given the full rights

of citizens so that the threat of deportation cannot be used to intimidate them. Most crucially, our unions must energetically and sympathetically organise these working class sisters and brothers into our unions.

More left talking union officials will disguise their nationalist opposition to the entry of 457 and other visa workers by expressing concern at how badly these workers become exploited. And, indeed, many of these workers can be severely exploited. However, true solidarity with these workers means fighting to win them equal pay and conditions, union protection and the rights of citizens ... not trying to kick them out and prevent them getting a livelihood! The argument that we are saving guest workers from exploitation by excluding them has a parallel to racist Australian governments’ claims that they are saving asylum seekers from drowning by locking them up if they make it here! Unfortunately, in this overall wealthy country surrounded by lower income people, the strength of a selfish, rich country-type nationalism is so strong that even many of the Far-Left groups in some way buy into it. This was seen most starkly in July 2012 when there was the largest demonstration in Australia to keep out foreign workers: the “Local Workers First” rally in Perth. The Socialist Alliance group, Socialist Alternative and the Communist Party of Australia (CPA) all backed this divisive, national-chauvinist march.



Photo: Bernadette Smith



Photo: Daily Mail

Left: September 2017 Sydney rally against the vilification of jobseekers by Channel 7's morning Sunrise program. Right: 16 March 2018 Aboriginal-led protest against the very same Channel 7 show. The action targeted Sunrise because a segment in an earlier broadcast outrageously called for an intensified push to steal Aboriginal children from their families. The Trotskyist Platform placard featured in the photo stressed that such racist lies spread by Sunrise serve the greedy designs of its billionaire owner, Kerry Stokes and the capitalist class that he is part of. The struggle for workers jobs and workers rights and the fight against the intense oppression of Aboriginal people are struggles against the same enemy and against the same racist and exploitative capitalist system.

Being leftists, those socialist groups that buy into anti-overseas worker campaigns advocate a “clean” “local workers first” policy which rejects conscious dog whistling to racism. These groups are torn between healthy internationalist impulses to solidarise with overseas workers and a pull to capitulate to the nationalist sentiments bred by pro-ALP union bureaucrats. For example, in the editorial in the 1 November, 2017 edition of their newspaper, *The Guardian*, the CPA correctly called for “an end to all forms of racial discrimination” and for visa workers to be given the same wages and conditions as local workers, for temporary visa workers to be given permanent residency and for them to be organised into the unions. However, the editorial also stated that: “Temporary visa workers are used to break solidarity, pit worker against worker in a race to the bottom. It creates fear and divisions, fosters racism and xenophobia, as workers who lose their jobs or cannot find work in one country see the foreign workers being brought in as ‘taking their jobs’.” This is rather rich given that the statement refused to oppose the pro-ALP, union leaderships’ nationalist campaign to keep out these workers. **It is not the entry of visa workers that is fostering racism and xenophobia but the demands to keep them out.** To argue otherwise is like claiming that the entry of migrants in general, rather than anti-immigrant

agitation, is to be blamed for fostering division and racism. However, even as the CPA editorial rightly stated that, “Temporary visa workers are not the enemy of the working class in Australia. They are part of the international working class and must be welcomed”, the CPA itself fosters anxieties about guest workers “taking local jobs.” Thus, an article in the 30 August 2017 edition of their *Guardian* (<http://cpa.org.au/guardian/2017/1792/06-457-rises.html>) has the fear-mongering title, “457 rises Phoenix-like.” The article expresses shock horror over Thomas Foods in Tamworth bringing in twenty 457 Visa workers. It favourably quotes the Australasian Meat Industry Employees’ Union (AMIEU) leadership divisively asking: where was the genuine, independent local labour market testing that showed New England somehow needed even more foreign workers while unemployment is so high? Feeding into the national myth that joblessness is caused by 457 visa workers, the article concludes by positively quoting the AMIEU leadership’s statement that: “All Australians should be deeply concerned about the future of Australian jobs under Malcolm Turnbull. The 457 Visa program is far from dead, but Turnbull has no problem killing off the future of young Australians ...” The fact is there is no such thing as a clean “local workers first” policy! Any policy that calls for putting the interests of (mainly white) Australian workers

over (overwhelmingly coloured) lower paid workers from “Third World” countries will inevitably appeal to and reinforce White Australia xenophobic attitudes as well as “First World” arrogance. And all such demands divert workers away from the struggle that is actually needed – the one against the job-slashing capitalist exploiters – while pitting local workers against their natural allies: the working class people of the world.

This is true, too, also for protectionist demands that call for tariffs, local content policies or other measures to favour local capitalists over overseas producers. Where such measures lead is very apparent today: to Donald Trumpism! In other words, protectionism is associated with racist hostility to ethnic and religious minorities. Meanwhile, as the masses are distracted by seeing the non-existent enemy abroad, the local capitalists will savage workers’ rights at home: in Trump’s America’s case by gouging the funds needed for social services by giving a massive tax cut to the rich. Meanwhile, as Trump’s incitement of a trade war is showing, protectionist measures bring no net savings to jobs as overseas countries retaliate with their own measures. In the end all that happens is that working class people are divided and the possibility of class struggle against job slashing is, thus, undermined. Meanwhile, protectionism also weakens class struggle by promoting the notion that more profits for the bosses are what is needed to get more jobs for workers – **basically a variant of the claims of trickle-down economics**. Yet as the recent mass sackings announced by NAB shows, more profits for the capitalists can actually mean less jobs!

The fight for jobs for all workers, which means a struggle to force bosses to retain more workers than they wish to, is indeed a struggle to force the capitalists to produce in a way that is **less profitable** for them. Put simply: the interests of workers are counterposed to that of the capitalists. We need our union movement to be dominated by this understanding – not hamstrung by the ALP social democratic myth of common “national interests” between local workers and Aussie bosses. A union leadership infused with a class struggle understanding will mobilise the militant industrial action needed to win secure jobs and improved wages for all workers. Given that the capitalists have created laws to prevent nearly all the kinds of strike action that can actually win gains for us, our unions need to be prepared to flout these unjust laws. This was starkly seen when the Fair Work Commission outlawed the then impending January 29 strike by Sydney rail workers. The pro-ALP leaders of the RBTU union caved in to this ruling and obeyed it. They did not have the program

to defy the laws and then deter them being used by upping the ante through deepening the planned strike action, calling out for solidarity strikes and actively building community support. However, there were many rank and file, rail worker unionists and elected delegates who were outraged at this decision to obey the no-strike ruling. These most determined militants from throughout the toiling masses must cohere themselves into a workers party based on an unalloyed class struggle and internationalist program. This is the instrument by which these most active, militant layers can win broader sections of the masses to join a class struggle fight for jobs, improved wages, public housing and all the services that working class people need the most.

Such a revolutionary workers party would oppose all “local workers first” and protectionist demands that divide us. Instead it would positively work to foster the working class unity and internationalist spirit crucial to class struggle by fighting to win the workers movement to champion the rights of guest workers, refugees, Aboriginal people, the unemployed, women and LGBTI people. The interests of the working class of all ethnicities and that of all the downtrodden are, indeed, the same and we face the same capitalist enemy. It is notable that the same billionaire Kerry Stokes who threw hundreds of workers out of their jobs at his Seven Group’s Westrac subsidiary and whose Channel 7 vilifies jobseekers is the same capitalist tycoon whose Channel 7 Sunrise breakfast program last month outrageously called for a renewed push to steal Aboriginal children from their families.

Uniting all sections of the oppressed, a revolutionary workers party would include all sections of the working class especially its lowest paid, most downtrodden sections including “coloured” ethnic workers, Aboriginal workers, women workers, young workers, casual workers and unemployed and underemployed workers. Rejecting the myth of “common interests” between local bosses and local workers, this party would within our unions popularise demands to force the capitalists to retain more workers at the expense of their profits. Through promoting such demands and in the course of waging struggles to win public housing, crush fascists, oppose racist oppression, advance the emancipation of women and oppose imperialist tyranny, a revolutionary workers party will show the masses the need to sweep away the cruel capitalist order and usher in a workers-run society. Such a society will finally guarantee that every single person has the secure job, free quality health care and education, free housing and lasting peace that we have all longed for.





# Defend Socialistic North Korea! Free Chan Han Choi!

*Free a Pro-North Korea Political Prisoner in Australia*

*Above, Sydney, December 2017: Australian Federal Police officers arrest Chan Han Choi. The Australian regime has since then imprisoned this pro-DPRK political prisoner in harsh and isolating conditions. Left: A rare image of the face of Chan Han Choi, socialist political prisoner in Australia.*



**14 March 2018:** Like in other capitalist countries, the government and mainstream media in Australia make wild claims about supposedly gruesome “prison camps” in North Korea (the Democratic Peoples Republic of Korea - the DPRK). Yet, there is little evidence for this. The main supposed “evidence” are the stories of a few of the defectors from North to South Korea. Yet only a small percentage of the defectors make such claims. Moreover, even though these defectors represent that tiny proportion of North Korean citizens who think that life would be better in the capitalist world – if only because North Korea’s people have been so squeezed by severe UN sanctions – hundreds upon hundreds of these defectors actually end up going back to North Korea because they find life in the capitalist South so harsh and unfriendly! And that is very telling. Because for a defector to return they have to undergo great risk

to sneak past a brutal South Korean regime that actually jails any person who is caught trying to return to North Korea. The few defectors who do make claims about “human rights” atrocities are those eager for the celebrity status and the resulting fortune that their tales of “suffering” can bring them in a South Korean society ruled by an ultra-rich capitalist class eager to demonise the socialistic DPRK. Moreover, many such high profile defectors have famously slipped up by accidentally contradicting their own earlier accounts; thus proving that their tales are indeed inglorious works of fiction (see for instance: <http://thediplomat.com/2014/12/the-strange-tale-of-yeonmi-park/>).

Yet, while most of the claims against North Korea are bogus, there is something that is patently true: and that is that there is right now a supporter of North Korea who is a **political prisoner in Australia**. This pro-DPRK person who is being jailed by the Australian regime is 59 year-old, Chan Han Choi. He is an outspoken sympathiser of the DPRK. Chan Han Choi is a working class Australian who rents a dwelling in Sydney and worked as a hospital cleaner until his arrest by the Australian Federal Police last December. Neighbours describe the now imprisoned

man as “polite”, “nice” and “softly spoken.”

However, Chan Han Choi faces decades in jail after Australian police arrested him on charges of attempting to raise money for the DPRK – in violation of UN sanctions – by trying to broker the sale of North Korean coal to private buyers in Vietnam and Indonesia. They also claim that he discussed the sale of North Korean technology and expertise to overseas buyers, which they allege could have been used for missile componentry and guidance. Thus, they claim

that he violated Australia's hypocritical weapons of mass destruction act. Australian Police admit that he did not actually sell anything, just supposedly planned to. We have no way of knowing whether the claims are based on fact. But given the racist, anti-working class and pro-capitalist bias of Australia's legal system we wouldn't be surprised if Chan Han Choi is simply being persecuted for what, basically, amount to thought crimes. Yet, even if the claims against him turn out to be partially or fully true, he is no criminal from the standpoint of the Australian – and, thus, international – working class. Quite the opposite! In that case, Chan Han Choi was simply trying to help people being ground down and potentially starved by some of the most severe sanctions ever imposed on any country. These sanctions imposed at the behest of the U.S., Japanese, Australian, South Korean and other capitalist regimes ban 90% of all North Korean exports – including her main exports coal, textiles and iron ore and other minerals. They also ban all North Koreans from working abroad, freeze out the DPRK's financial entities and limit North Korean people's import of crude oil and refined petroleum products. Similar UN sanctions imposed on Iraq in a thirteen year period from 1990 are estimated to have caused the death of up to two million Iraqis (!) due to increased rates of malnutrition, lack of medical supplies and diseases from lack of clean water. The U.S., British, Australian and other imperialist countries that pushed these sanctions actually killed even more people from the sanctions than they did from their subsequent brutal invasion of Iraq. Even the UN's own agency, UNICEF, estimated that the first eight years of the sanctions alone had caused such an increase in infant and child deaths in Iraq that it led to the deaths of 500,000 Iraqi children under the age of five (<https://www.unicef.org/newsline/99pr29.htm>). If what the Australian regime allege Chan Han Choi did turns out to be true, he was laudably trying to save the children of North Korea, their mothers and the other people of the country from meeting a similar fate.

However, what Chan Han Choi allegedly tried to do was not only a selfless act of humanitarianism. If he, indeed, did try to enable the North Korean people to sell items to raise money he was, importantly, standing by a workers state. The DPRK is a socialistic state based on public ownership. The system of collective ownership of the means of production in North Korea means that the DPRK is, even when faced with the most extreme sanctions, able to provide jobs for all its workers as well as genuinely free education, free health care and almost free housing to all its people. To be sure, the workers state

in North Korea is bureaucratically deformed – mainly as a result of intense imperialist pressure and isolation in a capitalist-dominated world. Nevertheless, the socialistic state that was formed from the overthrow of capitalist and landlord rule in the northern part of Korea at the end of World War II is a huge advance from capitalism. It represents a historic gain for the world's working class in their struggle against the capitalist exploiters; just like a workers victory in a big strike does – but in a much bigger way. Working class people of the world must, therefore, defend to the hilt this conquest. In standing by the DPRK workers state, in whatever way that he did, Chan Han Choi should be considered a hero to the toiling classes of not only Korea but to the working class and all downtrodden of Australia and, indeed, the whole world.

For the very reason that he has heroically stood by working class interests, the Australian capitalist regime is imprisoning Chan Han Choi in especially harsh conditions. He has not been granted bail since his arrest some three months ago. Even though he has not been convicted of any crime and is still in the early stage of court proceedings, the Australian regime has outrageously detained him in a maximum security jail. Moreover, they have classified him as an Extreme High Risk – Restricted (EHR-R) prisoner which is the harshest, highest security classification that can be given to any prisoner. The EHR-R category was sold to the public as a measure reserved for those considered to be an extreme risk to others and “a threat to order and security within jails” (<https://www.smh.com.au/news/national/baddestofthebad-convicts--ehrr/2008/10/17/1223750306676.html>). It was said to be reserved for crime bosses and suspected terrorists. Yet, Chan Han Choi not only has no violent history but is not even accused of conducting or planning any violent act.

EHR-R prisoners receive the lowest stipend to buy food. They are allowed less phone calls than other prisoners and these phone calls and any postal mail must be in English. All EHR-R prisoners have their phone calls listened to and mail opened, read and copied. The inhumane system is designed to make it very hard if not impossible for friends and family to visit as prospective visitors must first go through a months long security check and then wait to have their visit approved by the Commissioner of Corrective Services. Chan Han Choi's detention in the most gruesome conditions possible in an Australian prison camp are clearly an attempt to break his spirit and isolate him.

## Australian Working Class:

### *Stand by the DPRK Workers State! Oppose the Sanctions!*

Precisely because the maintenance of the workers state in North Korea is in the interests of the Australian and whole world's working class, the U.S., Australian, South Korean and other capitalist ruling classes are hell bent on destroying the DPRK. They see the existence of socialistic rule anywhere as a threat to their capitalist rule at home. And they are right! The existence of workers states – in however a tenuous and distorted form – necessarily sends a message to the working classes still subjugated under capitalism that another alternative is possible; that capitalism is not inevitable. And this terrifies the imperialist ruling classes of the U.S., Australia and Japan. Furthermore, they have a particular fixation on targeting the DPRK because over six decades ago during the 1950-53 Korean War, the North Korean masses did the unthinkable. Incredibly, they faced down and beat off a combined attack from the most powerful imperialist countries in the world: including the U.S., Britain, Australia, France and even the apartheid South African regime of that time. Ever since then, the U.S. and its allies have had a particular obsession with crushing the DPRK alongside their usual hostility to all workers states. That is what the extreme sanctions that they have imposed on the DPRK are all about. They want to weaken the DPRK workers state and starve its people into submission.

In order to deter public opposition to their threatening campaign against the DPRK, the U.S. and Australian regimes – and the big business or government-owned Western media – have been portraying the DPRK as a dangerous “threat” to peace. They even make out that the DPRK is hell-bent on attacking Western countries with a nuclear first strike. This is a ridiculous assertion. The DPRK has made itself very clear that its nuclear weapons program is purely for self-defence. If one believes the notion that a country's mere acquisition of nuclear weapons makes it a grave threat, what does that say for the U.S. which has nearly 7,000 nuclear warheads ... as opposed to the DPRK which has at most a few dozen and those not yet extensively tested. What is more, the U.S. regime, with the support of Australian imperialism, is the only government to have ever actually unleashed nuclear weapons on human beings. We should never forget their horrific war crimes in Nagasaki and Hiroshima. In contrast, although Western media have themselves stated that North Korea has long had enough conventional missiles to quickly destroy Seoul

as well as other cities in South Korea and Japan, she has never even started to make such an attack. This despite all the provocations she has faced. Indeed, the DPRK has actually never attacked a foreign country. The only war she has ever been involved in is the 1950-53 Korean War when her people with the backing of hundreds of thousands of Chinese communist volunteers defended the socialistic state against the imperialist godfathers and the capitalist regime that rules the south of the country.

Let's also not lose sight of the fact that it is not North Korea that twice attacked Iraq, that totally destroyed Libya and that devastated Serbia in the 1999 war on Yugoslavia. It is not North Korea that is committing an ongoing series of war crimes by murdering tens of thousands of civilians in Afghanistan (and more recently Syria and northern Iraq) through air strikes which the bombers knew would kill many civilians. No: all these crimes were the foul handiwork of the U.S. rulers and always with the direct or indirect assistance of their Australian, British and other junior

Kamal, an Iraqi child lies in pain from illness. He died three days after this photo was taken from a lack of medicine. Sanctions imposed on Iraq from 1990-2003 caused the death of up to two million Iraqis due to lack of medical supplies and increased rates of malnutrition. If Chan Han Choi indeed attempted to help the DPRK evade sanctions then he committed truly heroic, humanitarian deeds aimed at helping the people of North Korea avert the kind of calamity that Iraqi children and adults endured. Although the DPRK's socialistic system enables her to direct resources to the needy in a way that makes her population better able to avoid the level of catastrophe that sanctions caused in capitalist Iraq, the extreme sanctions do still cause many hardships for her people.



imperialist partners. It is these capitalist powers that are the real threat to the world's peoples and not at all the DPRK. What the DPRK's nuclear weapons program does "threaten" to do is to make the North Korean people less intimidated by the menacing military "exercises" that the U.S., Australian and South Korean capitalist regimes regularly stage on her doorstep. Most importantly, North Korea's highly effective weapons program "threatens" to make it harder for the capitalist powers to launch a new Korean War against her. That is why the Western capitalist powers are so obsessed with stopping the DPRK acquiring a nuclear missile capability.

In targeting the DPRK, the imperialist powers have in their mind an even bigger target. That target is the DPRK's neighbour and ally, the Peoples Republic of China (PRC): the world's largest socialistic country. Although decades of pro-market measures by China's government has dangerously allowed capitalists to gain a foothold in China, these capitalists do not hold state power there. China remains a workers state whose key economic sectors are dominated by socialistic state-owned enterprises. It is this that has enabled the PRC to spectacularly lift hundreds of millions of its people out of the terrible poverty of its capitalist days. However, the greedy ruling classes of the capitalist powers know that the presence of such a socialistic power as China is a threat to their "right" to bully and exploit most of the world. That is why they are working feverishly to contain China's rise and foster capitalist restoration there. The assertion that China's development is "challenging Australia's interests" that's contained in the Australian regime's foreign policy White Paper unveiled in November and the increasingly frequent government and media scare campaigns alleging that China is "aggressively influencing" Australian affairs show the efforts that



the capitalist rulers are going to in order to mobilise the population behind their anti-PRC campaign; just as they manufacture the bogey of a "North Korean nuclear threat" to deceive the masses into accepting their war drive against the DPRK.

A key method that the Western capitalist rulers use to tighten the military, diplomatic and economic screws on the PRC is to menace its socialistic neighbour, the DPRK. That is why the PRC government's policy of seeking to meet the imperialist powers half-way over the DPRK is harmful to socialistic rule in China itself. The PRC should recall the internationalist spirit of its heroic support to the DPRK during the Korean War. She must immediately end participation in all sanctions against the DPRK and, instead, strongly stand by her socialistic neighbour – including by defending the DPRK's development of a nuclear deterrence.

Should the imperialist powers succeed in using some combination of military power, intimidation and extreme sanctions to bring down the socialistic order in North Korea they would be able to greatly embolden the forces of capitalist counterrevolution in China as well. And if the, currently fragile, workers state in China were to be smashed by capitalist counterrevolution it would be a terrible disaster for the working class and downtrodden of the world – on a par with the 1991-92 destruction of socialistic rule in the former USSR. Capitalist restoration in China would lead to hundreds of millions of Chinese people being plunged back into poverty while the country would be turned into one huge sweatshop for exploitation by not only local Chinese capitalists but by Western and Japanese ones – just like in the pre-1949 capitalist-feudal China. This would then be used as a giant wedge to drive down the wages and conditions of workers around the globe – including in Australia. Meanwhile, triumphant capitalist rulers from the U.S. to Mexico to Britain, Germany, Egypt, India, Thailand, the Philippines and Australia would be emboldened to attack the rights of workers and the oppressed in their own countries, just as they did after the overturn of socialistic rule in the USSR. That is why **it is doubly important for the working class and all the downtrodden of Australia and the entire world to stand by socialistic rule in China and North Korea and to also defend the other workers states in Cuba, Vietnam and Laos. By standing by**

Beijing, March 2018: PRC president Xi Jinping toasts Kim Jong-un during the latter's first overseas trip since becoming leader of the DPRK. The meeting shored up the badly needed socialist alliance between China and the DPRK. A major reason why the U.S. and Australian imperialists are targeting North Korea is to indirectly squeeze her socialistic neighbour and ally, the PRC.



Nampo, North Korea: The Taean Friendship Glass Factory built by the Peoples Republic of China as a socialist solidarity project. Below right: The hi-tech factory's control room. The plant's display room proudly shows a photograph (below left) from when the then Chinese president Hu Jintao together with then North Korea leader, the late Kim Jong-Il, visited the plant in October 2005 shortly after its opening. The PRC must step up economic and military co-operation with its socialistic neighbour and completely ditch the sanctions that the imperialist-dominated UN have imposed on the DPRK. Photos: Trotskyist Platform



**the DPRK in whatever way that he did, Chan Han Choi has taken the side of the international working class in this crucial battle. For this stance he is being persecuted by the Australian regime. The working class and downtrodden of Australia and the world must stand by him. We must demand: Free Chan Han Choi! Drop all the charges now!**

Chan Han Choi should be considered a working class hero. However, we do not advocate that other working class people politically aware enough to understand the need to defend socialistic states like the DPRK do what he is alleged to have done. The reason is that the chances of getting caught are too high. Australia is a police state where the authorities engage in massive spying on the population for the sake of enforcing the interests of the big end of town. As the 2013 unveiling of classified documents provided by former U.S. National Security Agency (NSA) contractor, Edward Snowden, proved, the Australian spy agency, the Australian Signals Directorate (ASD), is part of a sinister global surveillance apparatus involving the American NSA, the UK's GCHQ and Canada's CSEC. These Five Eyes partner agencies are harvesting email contact lists, searching email

content and tracking and mapping the location of cell phones of millions of everyday internet users as well as secretly accessing Yahoo and Google data centres to collect information from hundreds of millions of account holders. *The Sydney Morning Herald* of 29 August 2013 also reported that:

The nation's electronic espionage agency, the Australian Signals Directorate, is in a partnership with British, American and Singaporean intelligence agencies to tap undersea fibre optic telecommunications cables that link Asia, the Middle East and Europe and carry much of Australia's international phone and internet traffic.

Meanwhile the powers granted to the ASD, ASIO, the police and other repressive police and spy agencies are being ever increased. Therefore, **covert** activities to support working class interests and workers states are not the best strategy. What we need to do is to **openly** appeal to the interests that the Australian working class and downtrodden have in defending socialistic states in order to mobilise these layers in solidarity with the workers states as part of the fight for the workers' own liberation.

## Why a Working Class Immigrant from South Korea Living in Australia Would Want to Stand By the DPRK



Han Sang-gyun, the former president of the Korean Confederation of Trade Unions (KCTU) – South Korea’s biggest oppositional trade union federation – spent almost two and a half years behind bars for organising workers’ protest rallies. South Korea is a capitalist dictatorship that jails several trade unionists and brutally represses workers rights.

When the Federal Police (AFP) announced the arrest of Chan Han Choi, the Australian media got itself all excited and jumped on the story. They made this headline news and pointed to it as “evidence” of the “North Korean security threat.” Yet, before long they realised that this story could punch a hole in their narrative about North Korea. They have spun the lie that everyone in South Korea is fearful and hostile to the North and that North Koreans themselves are desperate to escape to capitalist South Korea. Yet here is a man who grew up and worked in South Korea - and what’s more then lived in “democratic” Australia - and then allegedly took a huge risk to support North Korea in a way that, the cops admitted, sought no personal gain. On ABC current affairs programs, reporters and anti-DPRK “Korea experts” twisted themselves in knots trying to “address” this question. One expert admitted that there are people in South Korea who do support North Korea. Of course, they didn’t go into why. So let us fill in the blanks here. The reality of South Korea is that working class people there face a harsh life in that cut-throat, dog-eat-dog capitalist society. A very high proportion of workers in South Korea work as casuals with no job security whatsoever and minimal rights. Yet even with a large number of part-time workers, South Koreans endure one of the highest average working hours in the world. The brave trade unionists involved in organising to fight for workers’ rights face brutal repression. Currently, at least nine leading South Korean trade union activists are languishing in jail. Among those are the leader of the country’s biggest oppositional trade union federation, the KCTU. KCTU head Han Sang-gyun is currently serving a three year jail sentence for ... organising a series of street marches that blocked traffic! Far from being the “democracy” portrayed by the mainstream Australian media, South Korea is a brutal capitalist dictatorship. Just over three years ago, the South Korean regime banned the left-leaning Unified Progressive Party (UPP) and stripped its MPs of their parliamentary seats for not being hardline enough against North Korea. This party had been the third biggest party in parliament with a vote share slightly larger than that which the Greens receive in Australia. With the aid of such repression, the South Korean regime is able to impose cruel living conditions on the working class. For example, there is no universal old-age pension in South Korea and there are large numbers of homeless people forced to sleep in train stations every night (see: <http://www.trotskyistplatform.com/an-eye-witness-account-of-capitalist-south-korea/>). Little wonder that the country has the fourth highest suicide rate in the entire world.

Given this harsh reality of life for working class people in capitalist South Korea, it is no surprise that there are people there sympathetic to the DPRK. Indeed, in the mid-1960s, the Western imperialists were terrified about how much sympathy there was for the DPRK

in South Korea. Since, at that time, North Korea had better levels of health care, education and working conditions than the South, the U.S. was so fearful for the stability of their Cold War frontline state that they started pouring massive subsidies into South

Korea. It is this aid which underpinned South Korea's supposed "economic miracle." Nevertheless, there continued to be a large degree of sympathy for North Korea amongst the South Korean masses up until the 1991-92 destruction of the USSR that left the DPRK isolated and led to a large drop in living standards there. Even today, the most politically aware working class people in the South remain sympathetic to the DPRK at some level. North Korea is seen by some in the South as the real, independent Korea whereas South Korea is viewed as a lackey of U.S. imperialism, founded by former collaborators with the much hated previous Japanese colonial occupiers of the whole Korean peninsula.

If the lavishly paid journalists in the mainstream media were struggling to explain why a person who had grown up in South Korea would risk his freedom to support North Korea, they were completely unable to deal with the fact that this person who had allegedly harmed Australian "national security" interests for the sake of North Korea was also someone who had lived here for almost three decades. After all, they could not pass him off as someone brainwashed by religious zealots – as they could with ISIS supporters – as sympathy for the DPRK is not based on religion. Yet, if one looks at the reality faced by working class people in Australia, especially those from Asian and other non-white ethnicities, then why someone like Chan Han Choi would want to stand by a socialistic state opposed by the Australian ruling class is not really such a mystery after all. Even as the profits of corporations go through the roof and the likes of Andrew Forrest, James Packer, Gina Rinehart, the Lowy family and all their ilk amass ever more billions, the income of most workers are not keeping up with price increases and many workers face the reality of casualisation and having almost no job security. Meanwhile, especially with governments slashing public housing,

landlords are charging exorbitant rents which means that low-income workers living in urban areas are being squeezed tight. As a cleaner, Chan Han Choi would face both low pay and poor job security. In the suburb where he rents a house, the average rent for a two bedroom house is \$510 per week – that's more than 80% of the after-tax minimum wage! Who can then blame a low-income worker renting in Sydney for being sympathetic to a state like the DPRK. In North Korea, even though sanctions and threatening military encirclement severely constrict the economy and hence people's wages, at least rent is almost free and workers don't have to face the indignity of being bullied by greedy capitalist bosses and high-handed landlords and their agents.

Furthermore, like other Asian-descent residents of Australia, Chan Han Choi would likely have experienced the racist hostility that this capitalist society engenders. It is Aboriginal people who have always suffered the brunt of White Australia racism. In a society which churns through the unfortunate targets of racism, one after the other, almost according to the changing whims of fashion, it is Muslims who are currently the number two victim. Over the long term, however, it is Asians who have been second only to Aboriginal people in being subject to racist oppression in Australia. Asian-origin residents – especially the majority who are not wealthy enough to shield themselves somewhat from the brunt of racist hostility – face threats or even real acts of violence from rednecks on the streets, abuse on public transport, bullying of their children at school and discrimination in employment. Chan Han Choi had a lot of good reasons not to have loyalty to the Australian ruling class and the socio-political order that they have created. Indeed, so do, ultimately, all working class people in this country!

*Seoul, August 2017: South Korean people protest against "Ulchi-Freedom Guardian" (UFG) – the U.S.-South Korea war games that were menacing North Korea. They also condemned Donald Trump for his threat to unleash against North Korea, "fire and fury like the world has never seen." Especially given Trump's escalation of U.S. terror bombing in Afghanistan and his regime's ever more callous disregard for civilian life in their air strikes in Syria and Iraq, this was indeed a chilling threat. However, the DPRK's subsequent demonstration that it has developed a credible nuclear deterrent has compelled Trump to promise to suspend future joint U.S.-South Korea-Australia war games as part of trade-offs with the DPRK leadership. Such concessions wrested from imperialism, while welcome, can only be temporary until these capitalist powers are swept away from within.*



## Political Prisoners and Persecution in Australia

Chan Han Choi is certainly not the first person in Australia jailed for standing by the interests of the working class and oppressed. In 2004, Victorian secretary of the Australian Manufacturing Workers Union Craig Johnston was jailed for nine months for leading a completely justifiable, militant protest of dozens of union activists through the offices of two companies that were involved in the union-busting sacking of 29 workers. In the same year, several Aboriginal people and their supporters were jailed for periods ranging from a few months to up to two years for their involvement in a brave resistance struggle in Redfern that responded to the racist police murder of 17 year-old Aboriginal youth, TJ Hickey, and subsequent continued police intimidation of the Redfern black community. Then nine months after the Redfern resistance struggle, several Aboriginal people on Palm Island, off the coast of Queensland, were persecuted for their participation in a hundreds-strong uprising on the island that responded to the bashing to death of 36 year-old Aboriginal man, Mulrunji Doomadgee, by a racist cop. Several of the arrested community members were jailed including the leader of the struggle, Lex Wotton, who spent in total three years in jail. Meanwhile, the murdering policeman, Chris Hurley, got off completely free! The authorities had intended to jail Lex Wotton and the other Palm Island and Redfern Aboriginal resistance heroes for considerably longer but a spirited *on the streets* campaign in support of the persecuted people – culminating in a stop-work action by Maritime Union of Australia-organised waterfront workers in Sydney in support of Lex on the day of his sentencing hearing – made the ruling class and their courts realise they could not get away with even more severely, unjust sentences.

Two peace activists are also amongst the people who have been political prisoners in Australia in recent years. David Burgess and Will Saunders were each jailed for nine months of weekend detention for simply painting the words “No War” on the Opera House in March 2003, in protest at the then impending U.S. and Australian invasion of Iraq. That brutal invasion murdered hundreds of thousands of Iraqi people and was sold on the now notorious lie that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction. However, unlike the jailed peace activists, those who ordered and implemented the blood-soaked invasion and perpetrated the “weapons of mass destruction” hoax were never brought to justice.

Aside from jailing some of the people who have taken firm stands for the interests of the oppressed, the Australian regime carries out daily repression against many others participating in pro-working class and leftist struggles. Over the last few years, they have persecuted in the courts well over a hundred trade unionists from the CFMEU construction workers union as well as other unions. Many of these union officials and activists have received hefty fines and other punishments for the “crime” of standing up to greedy bosses or leading industrial action. Two participants in last year’s ten thousand-strong, Invasion Day protest against the Australian regime’s brutal oppression of Aboriginal people have also been fined and given criminal records. Outrageously, they were convicted for rightly attempting to protect the crowd against a dangerous and unprovoked police charge into the rally which ended up with the marauding police barging over a woman so forcefully

that she was knocked into a coma and sustained a level of permanent brain damage. Of course, no police were charged or disciplined over their riotous behaviour. Meanwhile, in a few months time, four pro-working class activists will be on trial after heavy-handed riot police arrested them following their involvement in a spirited, eighty-strong union/community/leftist protest occupation of public housing dwellings in the inner city suburb of Millers Point. The struggle rightly demanded that these homes, from where the NSW state government had driven off the working class tenants, be again made available to those on public housing waiting lists or the homeless rather than be sold off to wealthy developers and speculators as the government plans. Police have also arrested dozens of activists during protests against the Australian government’s brutal treatment of refugees. In December, five activists from the Whistleblowers, Activists and Citizens Alliance were fined a combined \$20,000 for hanging banners on top of the Opera House that read “Australia: World Leaders in Cruelty #BringThemHere” and “Evacuate Manus”.

The fact is that the Australian state is far from a “democracy” where every person has an equal say in shaping its direction. Instead, it is ultra-rich business owners who through their ownership of the media and their greatly disproportionate ability to fund political parties, pay for political advertising, finance NGOs and use financial and career inducements to sway politicians and bureaucrats alike who monopolise the “democratic process” and





*Left, November 2011: Police attack striking workers and their supporters at the picket line outside the Baida poultry plant in North Laverton, Victoria. Right: Police attempt to intimidate the union movement by making a provocative raid on the Sydney office of the Australian Workers Union (AWU). The 24 October 2017 intrusion was part of simultaneous raids by the Australian Federal Police on the Melbourne and Sydney AWU headquarters. The police and other state institutions in Australia exist to enforce the interests of the rich big business owners over the exploited working class. Their imprisonment of a committed supporter of a workers state – Chan Han Choi – in inhumane conditions is fully in keeping with this role.*

the agenda and outcomes of elections. Moreover, the state machine which Australian parliaments administer is itself tied by thousands of threads to the capitalist elite. This racist, rich peoples' state was originally founded to murderously uphold the dispossession of this country's first peoples and to subjugate the poor. Ever since, whenever this state machine attacks the resistance of the masses to their own oppression – like when police attack union picket lines, courts ban workers' strikes (as they did when they banned the Sydney rail workers strike that was to take place on January 29), the justice system persecutes union activists and the riot cops attack worker, anti-racist and leftist struggles – the institutions of this repressive machine and its enforcement personnel become ever more hardened in their role as enforcers of the current, anti-egalitarian social order. The imprisonment of political prisoner Chan Han Choi in inhumane conditions is simply a particularly cruel example of this capitalist state in action. It is notable that just two months before Chan Han Choi was arrested, the very same agency that arrested him, the Australian Federal Police (AFP), was busy intimidating the union movement. The AFP conducted heavy-handed raids on the Sydney and Melbourne offices of the Australian Workers Union over trumped up allegations about union donations to political campaigns more than twelve years ago.

This capitalist nature of the Australian state conditions its "human rights" practices. Today, due to the rampantly racist nature of Australia's justice system and continuing discrimination against Aboriginal people in every aspect of their lives,

Aboriginal people are the most imprisoned people in the entire world. Meanwhile, the Australian regime locks up innocent refugees and migrants branded "illegal" in hell-hole prison camps in Nauru, Manus, Christmas Island, Villawood and elsewhere. Let's never forget too the horrific crimes of the Australian capitalist regime in the PNG-controlled island of Bougainville. When the people of Bougainville rose up in 1989 against the arrogant destruction of their land and the refusal to pay any decent compensation by Australian owned mining giant CRA (which later merged with a British company to form Rio Tinto), the then ALP-led Australian government directed its puppet PNG government to brutally put down the resistance. They provided arms, intelligence and helicopter pilots flying as "mercenaries" to aid the war. Then they helped to enforce a cruel years-long blockade of the island. As a result, in all, some 15,000 to 20,000 people on the island were killed as a result of either gunfire or the lack of medicines and food caused by the blockade. Later, the Australian government and Australian-owned corporations Woodside Petroleum and BHP so savagely plundered the oil wealth of East Timor that the people of that resource-rich country have the highest rate of child stunting in the entire world! Figures from the United Nations Children Fund, WHO and World Bank show that 57.7 % of all children under five in East Timor have stunted growth due to malnourishment (see page 120 of Global Nutrition Report 2016, <https://data.unicef.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/130565-1.pdf> )! All this due to the greed of the Australian regime and the corporate bigwigs that this regime serves.

## Those Claims About “Atrocious Human Rights” in North Korea

So what of the capitalist powers’ propaganda about “atrocious human rights” in the DPRK. Other than for dubious claims from certain defectors, the main “evidence” that capitalist politicians and media present for their assertions are restrictions placed on those who visit North Korea. Visitors do face some additional restrictions in the DPRK. For example, while North Koreans freely use mobile phones, visitors must leave their mobiles in lockers at the airport before picking them up on their way out. There is a level of paranoia in the DPRK about Western visitors. However, this is a paranoia borne out of reality. The North Koreans know that the capitalist powers really are out to destroy their socialistic system and will use any means possible to do so – including by sending in agents disguised as tourists or journalists to stir up trouble. For today, the DPRK is the most embattled country in the world. Not only do her people face the most grinding sanctions imposed on any country, they also face constant threat from the most fearsome military power in the world – the United States. The U.S. has close to 30,000 troops ready to attack the DPRK across the border in South Korea. Moreover, the hard right-wing, racist U.S. president, Donald Trump, has openly threatened to “totally destroy North Korea.” The people of North Korea know that this is no idle threat. During the Korean War, the U.S., Australian and other capitalist armies actually did all but “totally destroy North Korea” (but still failed to defeat her) as they dropped millions of litres of napalm to repeatedly burn Pyongyang and other North Korean cities to the ground. Long after the war, some U.S. war criminals boasted of their deeds:

Over a period of three years or so, we killed off — what — 20 percent of the population,’ Air Force Gen. Curtis LeMay, head of the Strategic Air Command during the Korean War, told the Office of Air Force History in 1984. Dean Rusk, a supporter of the war and later secretary of state, said the United States bombed ‘everything that moved in North Korea, every brick standing on top of another.’”

*The Washington Post, 24 March 2015*

It is with this background that we should look at the case of Otto Warmbier, an American who was imprisoned in North Korea and died a few days after his release. Warmbier’s tragic death has been used by Trump and the Western establishment as an excuse to escalate their war drive against the DPRK. The son of a wealthy company owner, Otto Warmbier, was a university student who had the self-declared aim of becoming an investment banker. While on vacation in North Korea, he was sentenced to jail after he snuck into a staff-only area of his hotel and attempted to steal a pro-socialist poster declaring: “Arm ourselves with strong socialism.” Security footage released by North Korea shows him ripping down the poster but then abandoning it because it was too large to carry off. He later confessed to the deed saying that a member of a Methodist Church in Ohio had made a large bet with him to take down a North Korean political poster and bring it back to the U.S. as a trophy. Warmbier added that the Z-Society – a shadowy, secret society in the university traditionally based on elite, upper class students – had encouraged him in this act. The Western media screamed at the severity of the sentence given to Warmbier. The sentence was on the harsh side. However, if one knows the mass murder that the imperialists committed during the Korean War, then one can understand how North Korean people would view Warmbier’s act with the same anger that Jewish people, Roma people, LGBTI people and leftists would view a German person

taking down a sign at a memorial to victims of the Nazi holocaust or an Aboriginal person would look at a white Australian who defaced a site commemorating a racist massacre of Aboriginal people.

A month into Warmbier’s sentence, he suffered brain damage that according to North Korea was caused by an adverse reaction to medication given to treat an infection. The DPRK later released him on humanitarian grounds and he returned to the U.S. in an unconscious state. American doctors assessed that his brain damage had been caused by a lack of oxygen to the brain caused by cardiac arrest. However, even the viciously anti-DPRK Western media reported that his American physicians found no evidence of physical abuse or torture and that scans of Warmbier’s neck and head were normal outside of the brain injury. Indeed, when Otto’s grieving parents falsely claimed that his body showed signs of torture, the American coroner who had investigated the matter denied that there were any signs of torture, even adding that Warmbier had been “well nourished” and that, “We believe that for somebody who had been bedridden for more than a year, that his body was in excellent condition, that his skin was in excellent condition” (<https://www.nbcnews.com/health/health-news/otto-warmbier-had-breathing-tube-n-korea-exam-shows-n805191>). Warmbier’s death was indeed tragic: for although his deed in North Korea was that of an arrogant, American rich kid he did not deserve



*Right: Barbaric Western Australian police grab dying Aboriginal woman, Julieka Dhu (Left), by the armpits and drag her, handcuffed, through a police cell like an animal, while telling her to shut up as she moaned in pain. She died just minutes later from a severe infection. Her death was caused by being repeatedly denied adequate medical treatment after she was cruelly jailed for non-payment of fines. Unlike, Ms Dhu, there is no evidence that American man Otto Warmbier, who died in the U.S. after earlier imprisonment in North Korea, was ever harmed by DPRK state authorities. Yet the mainstream Western media ranted that his death showed the "terrorist and brutal nature of the North Korean regime," while refusing to make anything nearing the same conclusions about the Australian capitalist regime responsible for killing low-income, Aboriginal women, Julieka Dhu – and for killing countless other Aboriginal people in custody. Furthermore while Warmbier's death was indeed tragic, an American adjunct professor at the University of Delaware, Katherine Dettwyler made a sharp point about the issue (for which she was witch-hunted and driven out of her university teaching position), writing that Warmbier was "typical of the mindset of a lot of the young, white, rich, clueless males who come into my classes .... I see him crying at his sentencing hearing and think, 'What did you expect?' ... These are the same kids who cry about their grades because they didn't think they'd really have to read and study the material to get a good grade. His parents ultimately are to blame for his growing up thinking he could get away with whatever he wanted. Maybe in the US, where young, white, rich, clueless white males routinely get away with raping women. Not so much in North Korea" (see: [https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/morning-mix/wp/2017/06/26/professor-who-said-clueless-white-male-otto-warmbier-got-what-he-deserved-wont-be-rehired/?noredirect=on&utm\\_term=.4e442960d6dc](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/morning-mix/wp/2017/06/26/professor-who-said-clueless-white-male-otto-warmbier-got-what-he-deserved-wont-be-rehired/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.4e442960d6dc)).*

to die for that. Yet, the most likely root cause of his death was the extremely severe sanctions imposed on the DPRK. These make life and medical care more rudimentary in North Korea than they otherwise would be; and since, as in every other country in the world, conditions for prisoners are not as good as for other residents, this makes life for prisoners poorer as well and, thus, increases the probability of prisoners getting serious infections while reducing the range and quality of available medication. In a way, what Chan Han Choi was allegedly attempting to do – easing the effects of sanctions on North Korea – would have helped people like Warmbier as well.

In the very worst case – and there is absolutely no evidence for this at all – it is possible that North Korea may not have provided an adequate quality of medical assistance to Warmbier in the early part of his incarceration (yet that North Korea was able to hand to the U.S. sets of MRI brain scans of Warmbier shows that North Korean doctors certainly did make valiant efforts to treat him later). However, even if one assumes that this worst possible variant occurred, the DPRK authorities' treatment of Warmbier was not anywhere as brutal as the way Western Australian police treated 22 year-old Aboriginal woman, Julieka

Dhu. Ms Dhu died in police custody in August 2014 just days after being imprisoned, so outrageously, for the late payment of fines! Unlike Warmbier, who the American coroner admitted showed no evidence of having been physically hurt in custody, Julieka Dhu was definitely physically harmed by police. In one case, video footage shows a police officer yank a very ill Ms Dhu violently by the arm and then cruelly leave her to flop down and smash her head on the concrete cell floor. The cop does not even then check to see if Ms Dhu had been further injured. And while DPRK authorities at least attempted to treat Warmbier's medical condition, Julieka Dhu was cruelly denied treatment on multiple occasions – even when she cried out in pain from the severe infection that she was suffering. Yet the way the Australian media have handled the two cases could not be more different. They reported on Ms Dhu's case as a tragic occurrence and in a small number of reports as a case of police neglect and discrimination. However, never did the mainstream media – and certainly never did any ruling class politicians – use the case to highlight the barbarity of the Australian regime. In contrast, the tycoon and government-owned Australian media railed that Warmbier's death shows the "terrorist

and brutal nature of the North Korean regime.” For Warmbier was a white American, yuppy rich man who died following imprisonment in a socialistic country. Whereas Julieka Dhu was a low income, Aboriginal woman killed by the criminal neglect and racist brutality of Australia’s capitalist authorities.

The truth is that Julieka Dhu’s case is hardly an exception in Australia. Police and prison guards here have outright murdered Aboriginal people both in and out of state custody. Eddie Murray, John Pat, Lloyd Boney, David Gundy, Daniel Yock, Colleen Richman, TJ Hickey, Mulrunji Doomadgee and David Dungay are just a small proportion of the names of Aboriginal people who have been bashed, rammed, hung, suffocated, lethally injected or shot to death by Australian state authorities in recent years. Indeed, so many Aboriginal people have been killed in state custody that relative to the current Indigenous population, approximately one out of every 1,200 Indigenous people have died in Australian prison camps or police cells since 1980. For the U.S. and Australian regimes to make accusations about North Korea based on the death of Otto Warmbier or based on highly contentious accounts from a handful of detectors is not only deliberately misleading, it is also the height of hypocrisy. Indeed, in U.S. prison camps the number of people dying in custody numbers from some 4,000 to 6,000 every year! This is in part because the U.S. regime is so biased against blacks, Hispanics and the poor of all races that the U.S. is by far the world’s biggest jailer. Indeed, the U.S. regime imprisons its population so much that the total number of people that it incarcerates, 2.4 million (!!), is more than three-quarters of the entire population of free-living residents in North Korea’s capital city, Pyongyang. Put another way, imagine if the overwhelming majority of the population of North Korea’s biggest city was locked up in jails – well that is what is happening ... not at all in North Korea but in the United States of America!

There are a few people that the DPRK state does indeed deal ruthlessly with. These are mostly those that try to subvert its socialistic system and open the road to capitalist restoration. In this way, the DPRK workers state is acting just like staunch trade unionists on strike do when they take firm action against filthy scabs trying to cross a picket line; it is resolutely acting to defend the collective interests of the working class. In a sense, the DPRK can be thought of as one huge, more than 70 years-long strike against capitalism by its masses. It is a yet unfinished struggle because two-thirds of Korea still languishes under capitalist rule and because the workers conquest in the northern

part of Korea is so threatened by imperialist powers. And just as the more up against it a workers strike is, the more harshly they must deal with strike-breaking scabs, so also the more embattled a workers state like the DPRK is, the more firmly they must deal with counterrevolutionary enemies.

Although the DPRK acts strongly against pro-capitalist threats to the workers state, it is very gentle in its treatment of the working class masses. Thus, while many Australian workers lucky enough to have a job spend a large proportion of their time worried about being bullied by their boss or about being the next one to be retrenched, the DPRK offers its masses a relaxed work life and a guaranteed right to full-time, secure employment. Indeed, this guaranteed employment, the tenderness of the DPRK state towards its masses and the society’s laid back work culture combine to mean that the North Korean state actually sometimes struggles to spur adequate productivity from its workforce!

There is, however, a more serious defect in the DPRK workers state. As well as rightly coming down hard against those trying to undermine socialistic rule, the state also represses genuinely pro-socialist elements who raise dissenting views to government leaders on various issues. It is possible – although not certain – that North Korean leader, Kim Jong-un’s uncle, Jang Song-thaek, was executed because he led a rival faction of the DPRK government (by contrast the claim made by Western governments and media that the DPRK leader had his half-brother Kim Jong-nam assassinated at Malaysia’s Kuala Lumpur International Airport is far from proven and the killing is more likely to have been the work of Western or South Korean intelligence agencies desperate to further isolate the DPRK by poisoning her relations with Malaysia – the one capitalist Asian country that had friendly, diplomatic ties with North Korea). Suppression of alternate views from those loyal to the workers state is actually harmful to socialistic rule in North Korea – as it prevents the free discussion of ideas necessary to work out the most effective course for the embattled workers state to navigate. This lack of workers democracy reflects the fact that although the DPRK has an egalitarian system based on socialistic public ownership, there is a somewhat privileged bureaucratic layer who believe they know what is best for the country and who fear their, fairly petty, privileges being questioned by the masses. However, as long as the DPRK faces such intense threats from the capitalist powers, it will be hard for her to be re-directed onto the road of socialist democracy that the workers state needs to follow. For as long as such acute

## The West's "Commitment to Human Rights": Australia's SAS-Style



Left: Australia's SAS special forces fly the Nazi flag – the symbol of racist terror – over their vehicle during operations in Afghanistan. As well as participate in the NATO-led butchery of tens of thousands of Afghan civilians through deliberate or criminally careless, "accidental" airstrikes, Australian military forces in Afghanistan have committed several particularly heinous war crimes all on their own. In one example in September 2012, SAS troops landed in the village of Darwan and proceeded to murder in cold-blood three unarmed Afghan civilians from the same family who they had taken into custody and – with little evidence – claimed had sheltered a Taliban fugitive. The families of the murdered civilians - Haji Nazar Gul, Yaro Mama Faqir and Ali Jan Faqir – remain distraught to this day (Right). From their racist killings of Aboriginal people in state custody and stealing of Aboriginal children from their families – both of which continue to this very day – to

their participation in the U.S.-led destruction and burning to the ground of millions of civilians during the Korean and Vietnam Wars to their overseeing of the killing of up to 20,000 people in Bougainville when they rose up against a greedy Australian-owned mining corporation, to their involvement in the war crime-filled imperialist invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan to their incarceration of refugees in hell-hole "detention centres" (i.e. suicide factories), Australia's racist, rich people's regime has responsibility for the deaths or suffering of millions upon millions of people. So yes, "human rights should have been raised" during the June 12 summit meeting between Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong-un. Kim Jong-un should have challenged Trump on the appalling human rights atrocities against oppressed peoples that are being committed by the U.S. capitalist regime – and allied imperialist regimes like that of Australia. Photo credit (for photos at top: ABC News)

threats remain, much of her masses will be resigned to accepting the administration of a know-it-all, slightly privileged bureaucracy because they fear that any political turmoil could open the way for a **far, far greater evil**: capitalist restoration and the return of domination by imperialist powers. Moreover, just as any half-heartedness and weakness (even serious ones) in Australian union leaders – and even any corruption on their part – does not change the main point that trade unions are workers organisations that must be uncompromisingly defended from the capitalist bosses and their state, so too the lack of socialist democracy in North Korea does not change the fundamental fact that the DPRK is a socialistic state based on public ownership that must be unconditionally defended against capitalist military and political threats.

The U.S., South Korean and Australian governments and media have made much of the execution of Kim Jong-un's uncle and the far from proven claim that he had his half-brother assassinated in Malaysia. However, we need to put any problems in North Korea in perspective. In the U.S. or Australia one does not need to be a factional rival to a political leader to be killed by the authorities. One only needs to be the wrong skin colour or a person living in poverty ... and

accused of being intoxicated or of infringing a traffic law! **In 2016 alone, U.S. police killed 1093 people on the streets of America!** (<https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/ng-interactive/2015/jun/01/the-counted-police-killings-us-database>). Then there are the horrific crimes of the U.S. and Australian regimes abroad. Together in the anti-communist Korean and Vietnam Wars they slaughtered more than five million people, killed hundreds of thousands more in their two wars against Iraq, their invasion of Afghanistan and their more recent indiscriminate bombing campaigns in Syria and northern Iraq. Then there are the U.S. drone strikes in Pakistan, Yemen and Somalia – conducted with the support of joint U.S.-Australia spy bases in Australia – which have killed thousands of civilians. **The fact is that other than from the standpoint of the capitalist big end of town whom these racist, rich peoples' states serve and that of a broader upper-middle class layer who are comfortable under the current social order, it is the U.S. and Australian regimes who are the most atrocious violators of the human rights of the world's peoples. Compared with these regimes, the North Korean rulers come off as saints!**



*People take and watch rides in one of North Korea's many fun parks. Contrary to the propaganda of the mainstream Western media, North Korea's people enjoy a vibrant entertainment and cultural life. Photos: Trotskyist Platform*

## **Australia's Capitalist Rulers and Their Obsession with Attacking the DPRK**

**It is not surprising that there is a pro-DPRK political prisoner jailed in an Australian prison camp. When it comes to attacking the DPRK, the Australian capitalist ruling class is *not* merely following the U.S. out of loyalty to the superpower that protects its own plunder in the South Pacific. Rather, the same motives that drive Washington's hostility to the DPRK drive Canberra's own enmity to North Korea. Thus, just as the U.S. ruling class is bitter that it was not able to crush a small, socialistic country during the 1950-53 Korean War, so too are Australia's rulers. They had unleashed a massive force of 17,000 troops into the Korean War – nearly nine times what they later sent to participate in the 2003 U.S.-led invasion of Iraq. Moreover, as an imperialist ruling class that considers the Asia-Pacific region as its “backyard,” where it should have the “right” to super-exploit darker-skinned workers and loot natural resources at will, Australia's capitalists know that the existence of workers states in four Asian countries – China, North Korea, Vietnam and Laos – is a big problem for them. For the mere existence of these truly independent, workers states in countries formerly subjugated by colonial powers sends a powerful message to the toiling masses in the Asian-Pacific countries still grinding under neo-colonial domination. It sends a message to the masses of Indonesia, India, the Philippines, Bangladesh, Thailand, PNG and East Timor that by taking the road of anti-capitalist revolution you too can free yourself from imperialist subjugation.**

This is why Australia's right-wing government was so annoyed by the presence of North Korean athletes, cheerleaders and artistic performers during the recent Winter Olympics in South Korea. They feared that this would damage their regime's efforts to falsely portray North Korea as a cold, cruelly oppressed society. Meanwhile, Australian warships and the Australian military continue to take part in threatening war games on the DPRK's borders.

The Australian ruling class is also up to its neck in the imperialist propaganda war drive against the DPRK. Former Australian high court judge, Michael Kirby, was chosen to head the UN's “Commission of Inquiry on Human Rights” in the DPRK. This 2013-2014 inquiry was meant to produce a report condemning the DPRK in order to justify further

imperialist aggression against her. And Kirby duly delivered! He produced a thoroughly deceitful report based on “accounts” from gold-digging defectors and Western-backed NGOs. Kirby in the past had tried to cultivate the image of a small-l liberal. However, as a high court judge he was a top-level judicial enforcer of the racist, capitalist order. He has also been outspoken in defending the current social order in Australia. Thus, he is a raving monarchist who insists on maintaining the Crown in the Australian constitution and was one of the principal founders of Australia's main pro-monarchy campaign group, Australians for Constitutional Monarchy. Indeed, he is such a reactionary that none other than the hard right-wing, former prime minister, Tony Abbott, is not only an open admirer of Kirby but considers him

a mentor (see this fawning article praising Kirby from Abbott: <https://www.theaustralian.com.au/business/legal-affairs/kirby-true-to-himself/news-story/1d080f4607675de6df618f3ed3a56bbb> ).

**As part of fighting for its own interests, the working class and oppressed of this country must stand against the all-sided campaign of the rich ruling class to destroy the DPRK workers state. Let us stand together to say: Down with the monarchist Kirby and his lying human rights propaganda against the DPRK – Down with the monarchy! U.S. and Australian troops get out of South Korea and surrounding waters! End all the war**

**games threatening the DPRK! Close the joint U.S./Australia military and spy bases in Darwin, Pine Gap and Geraldton that are used to prepare imperialist military attacks against the DPRK and China! End all the sanctions against the DPRK! In the same way that we must always support a strike of fellow workers against capitalist bosses, we must unconditionally defend the DPRK workers state against all the military, economic and political threats that she faces. In whatever way that he did, Chan Han Choi bravely tried to do this. For this he is being cruelly persecuted. We must stand by him and demand that he be freed immediately.**



*Magnificent launch! North Korea's 4 July, 2017 test of its Hwasong-14 intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) was a great success. Some four months later, North Korea successfully tested her still more powerful Hwasong-15, proving that it has developed an ICBM that can reach any part of the U.S. mainland. Meanwhile, in September last year, the DPRK tested a powerful thermonuclear bomb that could be loaded onto an ICBM. It is this rapid development of a nuclear deterrence capability that forced the war-mongering U.S. regime to finally agree to the DPRK's decades-long call for a peace summit between the leaders of the two countries. It is not wrong for the DPRK's leaders to try to cut a deal to ameliorate the threats she faces from imperialism. However, North Korea must not give up its nuclear weapons capability. As the 2011 NATO-led destruction of Libya showed – after that country gave up its nuclear weapons in exchange for recognition by the West – “security guarantees” given by imperialist powers are, in the end, worthless scraps of paper.*

# UPDATE: SOCIALIST POLITICAL PRISONER IN AUSTRALIA FREE CHAN HAN CHOI!

**1 August 2018 – Socialist political prisoner Chan Han Choi continues to languish in an Australian prison camp. He has been locked up in harsh conditions now for well over seven months and has been denied the most basic rights.**

Chan Han Choi was arrested late last year due to his sympathy for socialistic North Korea. He was accused of trying to help the people of the Democratic Peoples Republic of Korea (DPRK – “North Korea”) by facilitating the sale of their produce abroad in violation of United Nations sanctions. However, Chan Han Choi maintains his innocence despite pressure from both the authorities and his previous legal teams to “plead guilty” or accept a plea bargain. Indeed, given the racist and pro-capitalist bias of Australia’s legal system we wouldn’t be surprised if Chan Han Choi is simply being persecuted because he is an outspoken supporter of North Korea who has friendly relations with DPRK officials.

Yet, even if the claims against him turn out to be partially or fully true, he is no criminal from the standpoint of the working class. Quite the opposite! In that case, Chan Han Choi was simply trying to help people from being ground down and potentially starved by some of the most severe sanctions ever imposed on any country. Similar sanctions imposed on Iraq in the 1990s caused the deaths of over 500,000 babies in just the first eight years of their implementation. Although the DPRK’s socialistic system has enabled her to cushion her people from such catastrophic consequences, the cruel sanctions still cause much hardship to the people of North Korea.

Moreover, if the allegations against Chan Han Choi are in any way true then he has even more boldly than thought stood by a socialistic state. Although the North Korean government does have certain flawed policies, the fact remains that the North Korean masses have built a workers state founded upon the overthrow of greedy landlords, bankers and factory bosses. In standing by a workers state that the imperialist powers are trying to grind down into submission, Chan Han Choi is like a proud trade unionist defending a strike on a picket line. He is standing not only by

the workers involved in the immediate struggle but by workers everywhere. In supporting the DPRK workers state, Chan Han Choi is also standing by the interests of the working class in Australia and the entire world. The workers movement and all genuine socialists in Australia must now stand by him and demand his immediate freedom.

Chan Han Choi is an avowed socialist, who is conscious of the cruel racist oppression of Aboriginal people in Australia. He rightly believes that there are no real, human rights in this country. Indeed, his own persecution is living proof of his views. The authorities seem to be trying to avoid having his trial in open court, having shown indications of wanting a closed court trial with no public and media present. Why does the truth exposed to open light scare them so much? Indeed, Australia’s ruling class is so determined to isolate and dehumanise this socialist political prisoner that media shots of him have blurred his face and for the first several months he did not even appear on video link at his own court mentions. Moreover, subsequent to an initial, roughly 50 day-period when his lawyer was denied access to him, Australia’s racist, rich people’s regime has made it almost impossible for family and friends to visit Chan Han Choi. Indeed, prior to two friends visiting him late last month, he received no visits whatsoever for the previous five months. The two supporters that did visit him had to, incredibly, wait over four months to get their visit approved! Indeed, even his son, who the Australian police and intelligence services have subjected to heavy handed surveillance even though he is not at all involved with his father’s political activities, has been barred from visiting him. Meanwhile, when Chan Han Choi speaks to his wife by telephone, prison authorities force them to speak in English despite both of them being far from fluent in this language. The authorities openly admit that this is to enable them to listen in on his calls. However,



it is clearly also yet another attempt to break his spirit. When he or his wife inadvertently break into Korean during a phone conversation, the authorities immediately cut the call. If all that is not enough, the regime has moved this socialist political prisoner into the hospital section of a jail. Why? Because they have deemed his defiance and his sympathy for socialistic North Korea as a symptom of “mental illness”! Chillingly, there were even signs that dark forces, including his previous, “own” legal team (now sacked), were conspiring to have him declared mentally not competent enough to decide on a plea just so that they could enter guilty pleas or accept plea bargains on his behalf!

The denial of basic rights to Chan Han Choi comes in the context of a growing crackdown on the right to dissent within Australia. New laws purportedly targeting “foreign interference” provide pretexts for regime crackdowns on protest movements and even media reporting. Furthermore, at the start of this month, the NSW provincial government’s Crown Land Management Act came into effect which gives low-ranking bureaucrats broad powers to disperse or ban protests and meetings on any state-owned land. Most importantly, nationwide anti-strike laws and draconian laws targeting construction workers have curtailed the right to strike and led to legal proceedings against over one hundred trade unionists in the construction industry. Now, the federal government has introduced the Defence Amendment Bill 2018, which if passed into law will make it easier for the authorities to call out the army against protests and strikes.

The persecution of Chan Han Choi is part of the drive of the Australian and U.S. regimes to strangle the socialistic DPRK. Although North Korea’s successful development of a nuclear deterrence finally forced the U.S. government to accept peace talks, the capitalist rulers of the U.S. and Australia remain determined to overturn socialistic rule in North Korea just as they remain hell bent on destroying every other state where the working class rules – however tenuously and imperfectly – whether that be in the Peoples Republic of China or in Cuba.



**FREE CHAN HAN CHOI**  
**SOCIALIST POLITICAL PRISONER**  
**IN AUSTRALIA WHO DARED TO**  
**OPPOSE BRUTAL SANCTIONS AND**  
**SUPPORT SOCIALISTIC NORTH KOREA**

Chan Han Choi’s imprisonment for allegedly trying to help North Korea avoid the UN sanctions focuses attention on these cruel sanctions – which are aimed at starving the North Korean masses into submission. They want the North Korean masses to meekly stand by and accept a pro-Western takeover and capitalist conquest. **Alongside calling for the immediate dropping of all charges against Chan Han Choi, the workers movement and all genuine socialists in Australia must demand the immediate lifting of all sanctions against North Korea. Let’s stand by working class interests by standing by the DPRK workers state and its brave supporter, Chan Han Choi! No to the criminalisation of leftist dissent in Australia!**

# *What a Comparison between Red China & Capitalist Countries Says About:*

## **Socialism** vs **Capitalism**

15 May 2018 - When Donald Trump grabbed hold of the U.S. presidency some 15 months ago, he promised to “make America great again” through a program of racism, protectionism and tax cuts for the rich. Having slandered Mexican immigrants as “rapists” and “criminals,” a central part of his platform was and continues to be to build a “great, big wall” to keep Mexicans out. Since taking office, he has encouraged U.S. border authorities to be even more brutal in attacking *would be* migrants from Latin America. As neo-Nazis and other rabid white supremacists cheer him on from the sidelines, he has promised measures to keep out Muslim migrants. Indeed, Trump has already implemented executive orders that greatly restrict visits from several Muslim-majority and other non-white majority countries. Today we saw the fruits of another election promise that he has just fulfilled – to move the U.S. embassy in Israel to the expected capital of the proposed re-born Palestinian state: Jerusalem. The move was meant to be a message to the Israeli regime that they can do anything they want to the subjugated Palestinian people and the U.S. superpower will be openly behind them. The Israeli authorities certainly got the message! They have proceeded today to open fire on Palestinian protesters, massacring over 60 people so far and injuring well over a thousand people. Meanwhile, Trump’s defining legislative victory in his first year in office is a tax plan that cuts taxes for corporations and the very rich while throwing 13 million lower income people off from access to health insurance and forcing spending cuts that will hurt the working class and poor the most.

In contrast, when Xi Jinping was re-elected chairman of the Communist Party of China (CPC) at its five yearly congress last November and when the CPC outlined its vision for the future at the meeting, the agenda could not have been more different to that of America’s capitalist rulers. **A central aspect of the congress was to re-assert the CPC’s drive to make sure that no person in the People’s Republic of China (PRC) is living in abject poverty by 2020.** The congress’ other stated policy goals were to increase social welfare coverage, curb property speculation, reduce the income gap and reduce pollution. The overall vision presented was to make China a “modern socialist country” that is “prosperous, strong, democratic, culturally advanced, harmonious and beautiful” by 2050.

The very different agendas presented by the leaders of the U.S., the world’s most powerful capitalist country, and the PRC, the world’s most powerful socialistic country, says a lot. It says a lot about the contrast between societies where it is the capitalists who rule and those societies which are based on socialistic rule. In the next, main part of this article we present some hard facts comparing socialistic China with the capitalist countries.

However, we must note here that while capitalist rule

was smashed in China through its 1949 Revolution and while a new workers state has been built with an economy in which socialistic public sector enterprises form the backbone, China is still not yet a fully socialist society. A fully socialist society is one where not only have the capitalists been deposed from power and where the working class masses have built an economy based on socialistic state-owned enterprises but one where people are actually paid according to the work that they do. Over a period of time, such a socialist society will eventually progress to a communist one. A communist society is a community where people receive payment for their work according to their needs and where all social inequalities between different layers of the population have been overcome as everyone’s manifold and varied abilities are, quite naturally, given equal value and respect without the need of a state or any kind of administrative or bureaucratic mechanism to maintain order over society *from above*. The leaders of the CPC do not claim that China is already communist. Indeed, they state that the PRC is still a long way from even fully accomplishing the stage of socialism. Socialism can only be reached when the capitalists have been completely vanquished and the exploitation of workers by private business owners no longer exists. However, in China, alongside the



*China Then and Now. Left: Many women in pre-1949 China were subjected to the barbaric practice of foot-binding. For supposedly aesthetic reasons, young girls had their feet bound tight until their toe bones were broken so that their feet could be put into a cone shape. This left women crippled and with greatly reduced mobility for life. Right: Women acrobatic fighter pilots in the Peoples Republic of China. The 1949 anti-capitalist revolution and the resultant creation of a workers state greatly improved the position of Chinese women.*

dominant public sector, a significant private sector exists where capitalists exploit workers' labour. Of course, these capitalists in China cannot operate with the "freedom" that they do in countries where it is the capitalists that have state power. In the PRC it is the toilers who, even if in a deformed way, through the CPC, hold social power. Hence we use the description "socialistic China." This description alludes to the fact that in a sense China is in a transition from capitalism towards socialism. Yet, this is only in a sense. For although China has definitely moved in the direction of socialism since 1949, this movement has not always been in this forward direction over the last 68 years. What is more, there is no guarantee that China will progress all the way to socialism instead of falling back into the abyss of capitalism like the former USSR eventually, sadly, did.

For the private sector bosses that exist in China are not satisfied with their present lot where they are allowed to make capitalist profits in some industries but where their rights to make such profits are not only restricted but are always somewhat tenuous. So these capitalists – and the much larger layer of managers, lawyers, economists and journalists who cosy up to them – are constantly pressing for greater "rights" for capitalist exploiters. Most significantly, so too are elements within the right-wing of the CPC and the government – the sections of the ruling bureaucracy who are closest to the capitalists. Many in this entire pro-private sector layer are actually hell-bent on outright capitalist counterrevolution. However, given the current balance of forces, they often dare not openly promote such an agenda.

Instead, they lobby for right-wing reforms that would increase the economic clout and social weight of private sector capitalists and, hence, their ability to push for outright capitalist restoration in the future. Batting in the same direction are the capitalist powers around the globe who use military, political and diplomatic pressure to batter socialistic rule in China from the outside. Inevitably then the threat of capitalist counterrevolution in China is all too real.

The PRC's course towards socialism will only be assured once capitalist rule is overthrown in the most powerful capitalist countries around the world. That would relieve the military pressure bearing down upon the PRC and remove the main source of backing for the counterrevolutionary "dissidents" and NGOs operating within China. The deposing of capitalist rule in the West and Japan would also allow China to get access to the generally more advanced technology of the richer countries without having to allow excessive investment into China from capitalist corporations from these countries. Marx and Lenin always insisted that socialism can only be securely built on the basis of a productivity of labour higher than that of capitalism. Once the working class have secured state power in the most technologically advanced countries through revolutionary uprisings this will become possible: not only in these countries but in China and, indeed, the rest of the world too.

Given that the richest countries in the world currently remain under capitalist rule, it is not yet possible for the PRC or the other four workers states – Vietnam, Cuba, the DPRK (North Korea) and Laos – to progress all the way to complete socialism. Indeed, for this reason



*Prior to China's 1949 anti-capitalist revolution, the masses there suffered terrible exploitation and hardships. This photos shows peasants having to carry over 300 pounds of tea on a journey of over 180 kilometres.*

a fully socialist society – and therefore a communist one – has not yet existed in this world. Nevertheless, the 1949 Chinese Revolution, like the October 1917 Russian Revolution, the Cuban Revolution and the Vietnamese Revolution, represents a terrific victory for the toilers and downtrodden of the world. They have not yet been able to produce fully socialist societies but they have, nevertheless, made **massive leaps in the direction of socialism**. By comparing these socialistic societies with capitalist ones we can get some sense of how very different a future socialist world will be from the current capitalist dominated one that we live in.

When we do a comparison between China and the capitalist countries in terms of indicators of socio-economic structure, social progress and social ills, it will become obvious just how different the PRC is to actual capitalist countries. However, we cannot make such a comparison between China and the imperialist, rich capitalist countries like the U.S. and Australia. For at the time that China's heroic toiling masses pulled her up onto a socialistic path in 1949, China was in a vastly inferior position to countries like the U.S.A and Australia. Prior to its 1949 Revolution, China had suffered over one hundred years of humiliation at the hands of Western and Japanese imperialism. After

the British imperialist drug pushers crushed China's resistance to their "right" to turn half that country's people into opium addicts, the British forced China to cede its strategically located port city, Hong Kong, in the 1842 Treaty of Nanjing that followed the Opium War. This "treaty" also opened the way for the British to be granted "extraterritoriality" – meaning that its citizens residing in China were exempted from being subjected to Chinese law! Subsequent acts of imperialist aggression by Britain and other colonial powers forced China to later also concede extraterritoriality to the U.S., France, Netherlands, Italy, Germany, pre-1917 capitalist Russia and Japan. All this bullying and unequal treaties enabled the colonial powers to bleed China dry by dominating its markets and by brutally exploiting its workers in "concession" zones in key cities like Shanghai and Guangzhou (then called Canton). In contrast, colonial powers like Britain, the U.S.A and Australia grew fat from exploiting not only China but most of the rest of Asia, Africa, the Middle East, the South Pacific and South America. Meanwhile, U.S. capital was partly amassed through slave labour exploitation of black people. Australia's crucial agricultural sector was, for its part, built on the back of severe exploitation of Aboriginal workers who were largely denied access to their own wages as well as semi-slave exploitation of kidnapped Melanesian and Polynesian labourers from Pacific lands like Vanuatu, Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands.

By the time of the foundation of the revolutionary PRC in 1949, the richer capitalist countries like the U.S. and Australia were in a far different position to that of China. At that time, Australia had an average per capita income nearly 17 times larger than that of China. The U.S. for its part had a per capita income over 21 times higher than China's. Needless to say, given their vastly different starting points in 1949, it would be extremely unreasonable to make a comparison of indicators of social well-being between China and the richer capitalist powers. This is doubly so when it comes to any comparison between China and Australia, given that Australia has 50 times as much land per person as does China; and has much, much greater land, energy, mineral and water resources per person than China. To be sure, since the Chinese toilers pulled the country onto a socialistic path in 1949, China has made a lot of headway in catching up to the richest of the capitalist countries. While its income per person is still several times below that of the most economically advanced of the capitalist countries it has almost caught up in areas like literacy and life expectancy and even surged ahead in some areas like public transport and renewable energy.

## Capitalist India and Philippines versus Socialistic China



When China had its 1949 Revolution, India's per capita income was 87% higher than China's, while the Philippines' was 73% higher. However, today because the Philippines and India have remained under capitalist rule, millions of children in those countries live in abject poverty. Left, Above: Children and their parents living in a pipe in India.



Left, Bottom: Children scavenge for food at a rubbish dump in the Philippines capital. In contrast in even the poorer rural and western parts of China, 69 years of socialistic rule has largely eradicated extreme child poverty and given all kids access to basic education and health care. Right, Above: Children in a rural school play a dancing game. Right, Below: Children show off their painted bags at a painting event on children's day in Chongqing in South-West China.



To fairly compare China with a capitalist country we need to compare it with a capitalist country that is not only similarly populous but one that at the time that China was launched onto a socialistic path was at a similar level of development. We find such a capitalist country in India. Although the Indian working class, poor peasants and working class women have waged brave struggles against the greedy capitalists and rural landlords that subjugate them, thus far the Indian exploiting classes have managed to hold on to power. India is yet to be uplifted by its own anti-capitalist revolution.

Like China, India had been raped by colonialism. India gained its formal independence from Britain in 1947, while China was ripped free from neo-colonial domination through its 1949 Revolution. At this time, India was actually in a far more favourable position than China. Not only was it not burdened with the international isolation that came from being a socialistic country but its per capita income was over 87% higher than that of China's (see figures from Maddison Project Database 2018, Groningen Growth and Development Centre, University of Groningen, <https://www.rug.nl/ggdc/historicaldevelopment/maddison/releases/maddison-project-database-2018>). However, by the time that China first announced pro-market reforms in the late 1970s, 30 years of socialistic rule had enabled her to

catch up with and overtake (by over 45%) India in terms of per capita income and shoot way past India in areas like health care and education. Today, after nearly 70 years of socialistic development versus continued capitalist rule in India, China is way ahead by every measure of social progress. This is evident by looking at Table 1 below – a comparison which uses figures from largely UN or Western sources. The indicators which especially show how much more progressive the socialistic society in China is over the capitalist one in India are those related to the status of women and to poverty levels. As the table shows, China has at least a ten times lower proportion of people in poverty than India. Furthermore, the figures used in this comparison actually underestimates this difference since the figures for India are quite current while those for China are many years old – and since then China has made huge advances in uplifting people from poverty.

When the working class of India unite all that country's oppressed – from impoverished landless tenant farmers, to low-caste people, to the Muslim religious minority, to subjugated nationalities like the Kashmiris to the downtrodden women of India – to make a socialist revolution, then the Indian masses will also rapidly pull themselves out of poverty and subjugation.

## Table 1: Socialistic China vs Capitalist India

	Socialistic China	Capitalist India
<b>Economic Structure</b>		
Percentage State Ownership of Biggest 25 Companies	92% <sup>1</sup>	40% <sup>2</sup>
Percentage State Ownership of Biggest 50 Companies	86% <sup>1</sup>	46% <sup>2</sup>
Main Owners of Agricultural Land	Rural Collectives	Landlords
<b>Health</b>		
Average Life Expectancy At Birth <sup>3</sup>	76.1 years	68.3 years
Healthy Life Expectancy At Birth <sup>3</sup>	68.5 years	59.5 years
Maternal Mortality Rate (per 100,000 live births) <sup>3</sup>	27 deaths	174 deaths
Under-Five Mortality Rate (per 1,000 live births) <sup>3</sup>	10.7 deaths	47.7 deaths
<b>Poverty</b>		
Children Under Five Wasted (Very Low Weight to Height Ratio) <sup>4</sup>	2.3% (2010)	21% (2015-2016)
Children Under Five Underweight <sup>5</sup>	3.4% (2010)	35.7% (2015-2016)
People Under World Bank Extreme Poverty Line of \$1.90/Day (by PPP using 2011 prices) <sup>6</sup>	1.9% (2013)	21.2% (2011)
<b>Education</b>		
Literacy Rate (of over 15 years population) <sup>7</sup>	96.4 %	72.1 %
<b>Danger/Security</b>		
Murders per 100,000 People	0.74 <sup>8</sup>	3.21 <sup>9</sup>
<b>Despair/Contentment</b>		
Age-Standardised Suicides per 100,000 People <sup>10</sup>	8.5	16.0
<b>Status of Women</b>		
Female Literacy As Proportion of Male Literacy <sup>7</sup>	96.2%	77.6%
Ratio of Female to Male Labour Force Participation Rates <sup>11,12</sup>	80.8%	34.5%

## Socialism Works!

What Table 1 above shows is not only how much socialistic rule has enabled the PRC to improve the lives of its people but also how different her economic structure is compared to a capitalist, ex-colonial country like India. Thus, in socialistic China all urban land is publicly owned and all rural land is owned by collectives of the rural community. Although China's post 1978 reforms greatly weakened the practice of agricultural production through collectives by the granting of 30 year "use rights" to individual farmers, the continued collective ownership of agricultural land has protected farmers from the return of landlordism. By contrast, most agricultural land in India remains owned by wealthy landlords and capitalist plantation owners, resulting in a life of terrible hardship for poor tenant farmers and agricultural labourers.

Most notably, Table 1 shows the dominant position of state-owned enterprises in China. Actually, if anything, the figures tend to underestimate the dominance of public ownership amongst the PRC's biggest companies. Over the last few years several of China's biggest state corporations have merged. This has resulted in a smaller number of state-owned companies but ones of even more gigantic size. In the PRC, publicly-owned enterprises dominate all the strategic economic sectors including steel, oil/gas, power, banking, insurance, aluminium, mining, telecommunications, automotive, aviation, rail, shipping, ports, shipbuilding, aircraft manufacturing, train manufacturing, defence, space, robotics, high-end computing, wind turbines, electronics components, media, cinema, publishing, building materials, infrastructure construction and computer chip manufacturing. Even many consumer sectors have socialistically-owned enterprises playing a key role in them. Thus, China's biggest real estate developer is state-owned Vanke, its main TV manufacturers and exporters are state-owned Hisense and TCL, its biggest air-conditioner producer is state-owned Gree, its huge whitegoods manufacturer is collectively-owned Haier, its biggest liquor producer is state-owned Kweichow Moutai, its largest food processor, manufacturer and trader is state-owned COFCO, its biggest mobile phone manufacturer is majority state-owned BBK Electronics (producer of the Vivo, OPPO and OnePlus brands) and state-owned enterprises even play key roles in hotels, tourism, department stores and supermarkets. Unfortunately, there are some big

capitalist players present in areas like retail, property, internet, e-commerce and light manufacturing. Yet even some of China's most well-known "private" brands like computer producer, Lenovo, are actually state-controlled and have state-owned companies as their biggest shareholders. Meanwhile, another of the most prominent "private" Chinese brands, Huawei, is avowedly employee-owned with many believing that this company headed by a former Peoples Liberation Army officer is actually a state corporation hiding its true ownership to avoid facing restrictions from Western governments.

In contrast, state-owned enterprises play a much, much smaller role in capitalist India than they do in Red China. Nevertheless, for a capitalist country, India has a relatively large state sector. However, in a capitalist society, such state-owned companies are not socialistic enterprises **or even a step towards this**. In a capitalist country, a state-owned company is an enterprise owned by a state that exists to serve the big end of town capitalists. In particular, state-owned enterprises in a country like India serve to ensure that sectors necessary for the overall functioning of the economy are adequately covered so that the capitalist private business owners can make huge profits elsewhere or through corrupt association with the supposedly "public sector" firms. In contrast, in a socialistic country like China, the state firms are administered by a workers state. They are not there to assist the capitalists to make profits but to form the backbone of the entire economy and to dominate the economy's most lucrative sectors.



*Hyderabad, India, 2 September 2016: Trade unionists march during a massive general strike by 150 million Indian workers for higher wages. When the Indian working class – with doubly oppressed women at the forefront – lead the poor peasants, downtrodden castes, subjugated nationalities and the destitute of that country in socialist revolution, the Indian toiling classes will rip themselves free from exploitation and poverty in the same spectacular way that the Chinese masses have.*

Rather than operating purely according to the profit motive, state-owned enterprises in socialistic China are often guided to meet broader social goals including boosting of employment, training of skilled workers, creation of opportunities for the disabled and pioneering development of new industries deemed to be important for the whole society and her economy. Most importantly, these socialistic state enterprises have played the decisive role in China's poverty alleviation drive. Acting contrary to the capitalist practice of choosing investments according to which venture will bring the highest rate of profit, China's state-owned enterprises have been directed to build up industries and create jobs in the most poverty-stricken parts of China. This has played a key role in enabling the PRC to lift nearly 70 million people out of poverty (as defined by its poverty line based on the World Bank definition of abject poverty) in just the last five years. As far as low-income people are concerned, socialism simply works! This is the case even when it is applied in a state where its practice is deformed and uneven.

Apologists for capitalism will, of course, try to avoid dealing with a comparison between socialistic China and capitalist India by insisting that China be compared with the wealthiest of the large capitalist countries. They would say that since China is the most powerful of the socialistic countries and the U.S. is the most powerful of the capitalist countries, it is the U.S. that China should be compared with. No doubt they would also argue that since China is the most populous of the socialistic countries it should be compared to the most populous of the richer, "successful" capitalist countries: which is the U.S.A again. As we have noted earlier, given China's vastly inferior position to the U.S. at the time that its revolutionary masses pulled it up onto the socialistic path in 1949, such a comparison would be very unfair and misleading. However, while we cannot compare China and the U.S. in areas directly affected by the level of economic development where the imperialist U.S.A's massively advantageous position in 1949 allows it to still retain an edge, we can compare the two countries in areas like economic structure, social realities, social problems and government policy direction. Table 2 below shows that comparison.

In Table 2 we also compare socialistic China with another populous capitalist country in addition to the U.S.: Russia. We have chosen to include Russia in this comparison partly because she is the world's number two capitalist military power (indeed, Russia is the

world's number two power military power full stop, second only to the U.S. and not too far behind in this regard.) Much more significantly, Russia is a capitalist power that is not part of the NATO fold and currently not at all a U.S. ally – indeed, right now Russia is being ostracised by most Western powers. Furthermore, we have chosen to include Russia in this comparison partly because the particular structure of capitalism in Russia is somewhat different to that in the U.S. Russia has, compared to the U.S., a relatively large state sector. As Russian revolutionary Leon Trotsky noted during Soviet times: if in the tragic case that capitalist counterrevolutionaries were to destroy the Soviet workers state, the new counterrevolutionary regime would maintain a large, nationalised sector for a long time. Although the 1990s "shock therapy" saw massive privatisation in, the then, newly capitalist Russia and although the Putin government is today embarking on a renewed privatisation program, Russia's state sector remains larger than that in, say, the U.S.A or Australia. A look at Tables 1 and 2 show that capitalist Russia's state sector has approximately the same relative size as that in capitalist India. This is, of course, still much smaller than the relative size of the public sector in the socialistic PRC. Furthermore, as in India, the state-owned enterprises in Russia are administered by a state serving the interests of the capitalists, a state notorious for siphoning off the profits and assets of "public sector" enterprises to cronies capitalists.

Table 2 below illustrates the proverbial "Great Wall" that separates socialistic China from both the U.S. and Russia when it comes to economic structure, distribution of economic power and state policy direction. The table shows that despite China having a lower per capita income, its society is far freer from social ills like violent racism, suicide and murder than either capitalist America or capitalist Russia. Furthermore, the PRC government's policy direction is far more favourable to low-income people. Table 2 also proves that the argument that "at least people have more freedom" under capitalism is bogus. A resident of the U.S.A is nearly six times more likely to be imprisoned than a resident of China, while a resident of Russia is more than three and a half times as likely to be incarcerated as a resident of the PRC. Moreover, a person living in the leading country of the "free world", the United States of America, is **136 times** more likely to be killed by a police officer than a person living in China!



**Table 2: The Proverbial Great Wall That Differentiates the Nature of Society in the World's One Large Socialistic Power from those in Capitalist Powers**

	Socialistic China	Capitalist	
		U.S.A	Russia
<b>Economic Structure</b>			
Percentage State Ownership of Biggest 50 Companies	86% <sup>13</sup>	4% <sup>13</sup>	42% <sup>14</sup>
Number of Billionaires Per Hundred Million People <sup>15</sup>	23	174	67
<b>Relative Wages</b>			
Minimum Wage As a Percentage of GDP Based on Hourly Minimum Wage and 40 Hour Work Week, 48 Week Year <sup>16,17,18</sup>	32% - 71% <sup>19</sup>	15% - 48% <sup>20</sup>	
Minimum Wage As a Percentage of GDP Based on Monthly Minimum Wage <sup>16,17</sup>	19% - 48% <sup>19</sup>		16% <sup>21</sup>
<b>Repression/Freedom</b>			
Prison Population per 100,00 people <sup>22</sup>	118	666	420
Killings by Police Officers per 100 million People (in 2015)	2.6 <sup>23</sup>	353.2 <sup>24</sup>	No data available
<b>Danger/Security</b>			
Murders per 100,000 People	0.74 <sup>25</sup>	4.88 <sup>26</sup>	11.31 <sup>27</sup>
<b>Despair/Contentment</b>			
Age-Standardised Suicides per 100,000 People <sup>28</sup>	8.5	12.6	17.9
<b>Far-Right Terror</b>			
Number of Murders By Conscious Far-right Supporters <sup>29</sup> in Attacks on People from Racial, Religious and Sexual Orientation Minorities in 2014 to 2016 Period per 100 million People	0.0 <sup>30</sup>	5.5 <sup>31</sup>	39.6 <sup>32</sup>

	<b>Socialistic</b>	<b>Capitalist</b>	
	<b>China</b>	<b>U.S.A</b>	<b>Russia</b>
Stated Government Agenda			
Stated Strategic Goal of Government	To make China into a “modern socialist country” that is “prosperous, strong, democratic, culturally advanced, harmonious and beautiful” by 2050	“Make America Great Again”; put “America First”	A strong Russia; “an economically competitive, modern society with a strong defense and a stable political system”
Specific Policy Directions	<p>Targeted poverty relief to bring every single person out of poverty by 2020</p> <p>Crackdown on property investors; “houses are to live in not to speculate”; increase public housing</p> <p>Increase social service payments to low-income earners</p> <p>Promote innovation and Internet Plus</p> <p>Further expand high-speed railway network and urban subway systems</p> <p>Tighten state regulation of finance sector</p> <p>Increase support for the disabled</p> <p>Increase assistance for people living with AIDS</p> <p>Promote socialist values; influence of socialist culture</p> <p>Increase assistance to poorer countries and “South-South” co-operation with other developing countries</p> <p>One-Belt, One-Road Initiative to improve co-operation and connectivity between China and Central Asian, West Asian, Eurasian and African countries through building up infrastructure networks</p> <p>Make army smaller but more modern, high-tech and combat-ready</p> <p>Favour renewable energy sector</p> <p>Promote electric cars</p> <p>Curb coal production</p> <p>Slash air and water pollution</p>	<p>Tax cuts favouring the rich and for big businesses</p> <p>Change healthcare system in a way that would deny millions more low income people any health insurance but would lower premiums for wealthier and healthier people</p> <p>“Strengthen” American industry through trade protectionism</p> <p>Build a giant wall to keep out Mexicans</p> <p>Travel bans to restrict entry and immigration from Muslim majority countries</p> <p>Crackdown on undocumented immigrant workers</p> <p>Even while accepting negotiations tighten economic and military strangulation of North Korea</p> <p>Drive towards conflict with Iran</p> <p>Further embolden Israel’s subjugation of Palestinian people by moving embassy to Jerusalem</p> <p>Expand U.S. military forces in Afghanistan</p> <p>Bolster nuclear arsenal and loosen conditions under which they can be used</p> <p>Allow fossil fuel industry to trample on Native American rights</p> <p>Revitalise coal industry</p> <p>Withdraw from Paris Climate Change Accord</p>	<p>Improve property rights protection and “investment climate” for private business</p> <p>Privatisation of some state firms</p> <p>Prioritise digital economy</p> <p>Promote family values, Russian patriotism and Orthodox Church influence</p> <p>Removal of domestic violence from criminal penalty (now merely an administrative offence<sup>33</sup>)</p> <p>Ban on same-sex adoption and on “promotion of homosexuality”</p> <p>Open memorial to “state repression” victims during socialistic Soviet rule<sup>34</sup></p> <p>Repress communist, protests against capitalism<sup>35</sup></p> <p>Continue to defend Syrian government forces from ISIS remnants and Western-backed “Rebels”; but simultaneously pursue strategic alliance with key “Rebel” backer Turkey and warming relations with major “Rebel” supporters, Saudi Arabia and Israel.</p> <p>Greatly modernise defence forces and promote defence industry sector</p> <p>Diversify economy away from reliance on oil and gas sector</p> <p>Develop nuclear energy</p> <p>Develop Liquefied Natural Gas industry</p>

	<b>Socialistic China</b>	<b>Capitalist</b>	
		<b>U.S.A</b>	<b>Russia</b>
<b>Military Power Projection</b>			
Number of Major Wars or Open, Direct Military Interventions Since 1991	0	11 <sup>36</sup>	7 <sup>37</sup>
Foreign Military Bases <sup>38</sup>	1	61	15
Number of Nuclear Warheads <sup>39</sup>	270	6,800	7,000
<b>Characteristics of Top Leader</b>			
Name	Xi Jinping	Donald Trump	Vladimir Putin
Avowed Ideology	Marxism-Leninism, “Socialism with Chinese Characteristics”	Conservative, “America-First” nationalism, climate change skeptic	Russian conservatism, Russian nationalism
Attitude to Questions of Race/Ethnicity	Invariably refers to “Chinese of all ethnicities” in speeches	Labelled Mexicans as “rapists” and “criminals,” has restricted entry of Muslims; uses “law and order” rhetoric to dog-whistle to anti-black racism; has insulted Native Americans	Idolised by fascists in America, Europe and Australia; key adviser a fascist; in de-facto coalition with far-right party; ordered crackdowns on migrants even while at times stressing friendship with minorities
Occupation/s Prior to Entering Politics	Rural labourer, farm worker, student of Chemical Engineering	Billionaire capitalist real estate mogul	Intelligence official
Noted Personal Characteristics	Often makes visits to homes of low-income families during official trips within China; wants to be seen as rejecting luxury	Has boasted of groping women; at least nineteen women have made sexual misconduct allegations against him	Cultivated image as a macho, sporty, tough guy

*Capitalist rule in India has left hundreds of millions of its people suffering horrific poverty.*



## The Fight For Socialism and the 1917 Russian and 1949 Chinese Revolutions

**In summary what Table 2 shows is that whether we are comparing Red China with the U.S. or with a current capitalist rival to the U.S. like Russia, whether we are comparing the socialistic giant with a capitalist country with a relatively small state sector or a capitalist country with a relatively large state sector, as far as the interests of the masses are concerned socialistic rule is far better and more humane than capitalist rule. And if we make the fair comparison between countries that were at similar levels of development at the time that they diverged in political direction – which we do in Table 1 where we compare India and China – we see that socialistic rule – even if in a deformed form – delivers a far better life for the working class masses than does capitalism.**

If a socialistic state burdened by excessive capitalist intrusion and bureaucratic deformations can achieve so much then it indicates the tremendous benefits that healthy workers states administered by democratic workers councils will bring in the future. However, this poses a question: Why is the workers state in China – as great as its achievements have been – bureaucratically deformed and corroded today by a significant capitalist sector? To begin to answer this question we need to go back to China's heroic 1949 revolution and examine how it was different to the October 1917 Russian Revolution. There is an important difference between the October 1917 Revolution and the other great anti-capitalist revolutions that have been accomplished – including the 1949 Chinese Revolution. The social force that spearheaded the 1917 Russian Revolution was the urban working class which led the other oppressed masses of the cities and rural areas. These workers were brought together by collective labour in large workplaces and by the reality that any defence of their interests against their exploiting bosses could only come through their collective efforts. To be sure, it still took the tireless efforts of a determined communist party to solidify the workers together. However, the production and economic interest imperatives pulling workers together made it possible to unite this revolutionary class through its own organizations, the factory committees and soviets, and it was these elected workers organizations that exercised power in a truly sovereign way immediately after the 1917 Revolution. In contrast, the anti-capitalist revolutions in China, Vietnam and Cuba were spearheaded by poor tenant farmers and rural workers. Like the urban working class of Russia in 1917, these toilers had to fight with great heroism and self-sacrifice to achieve these tremendous revolutionary victories for the downtrodden. However, unlike the urban working class, the tenant farmers worked as individuals (albeit ones forced to hand over a big chunk of their produce to their landlords) operating separately from and even in direct market competition with each other. This mode of production inevitably had its reflection in the way the farmers related to each other. Thus, at times

the tenant farmers had to be held together somewhat artificially from above by the more politically aware communist cadres. During the revolutionary wars, the burning necessity to defeat the landlords kept the poor farmers together but afterwards, especially, party cadres were required to smother centrifugal tendencies that would otherwise have torn the unity of the farmers apart. As a result, unfortunately, the workers states produced by these revolutions were not based on truly democratic mass organisations of the toilers but on organisations in which the party leadership had to bureaucratically hold things together from above. In such a structure, especially once the fervent idealism of the actual revolution inevitably dissipated, those exerting bureaucratic control inevitably secured privileges for themselves. Their privileged position, in turn, had a *conservativising* influence upon them. In China, the ruling bureaucracy instituted pro-market reforms from the late 1970s onwards that, while they have, to a degree, stimulated economic growth, have increased inequality and dangerously allowed the capitalist private sector to gain greater influence.

Today, for China and the remaining workers states to progress further along the path to socialism, they need not only the assistance of workers' revolutions in the richer countries but, also, a domestic transformation supplemental to the toiling people's revolutions that created these workers states in the first place. They need the working class masses to *thoroughly* defeat emerging capitalist-restorationist forces and push aside those individuals within the bureaucracy and the more right-wing factions of the Communist Party of China who are bending to these capitalist elements. The working class masses will have to assume administrative control of society in the form of democratically elected workers councils. Such a movement would likely be led by genuine communist working class elements within – but possibly also outside – the CPC. Unfortunately, the program of the current CPC left – which tends to be based on a section of the middle-class bureaucracy rather than the working class masses themselves – is quite flawed and largely accepts the general thrust of the current

government's excessive tolerance of a capitalist sector. However, when strongly communist workers take the lead, this would likely spark - if not, actually, be led by - a left-wing, communist revival within the CPC itself. So, when a resurgent Chinese working class moves to defeat emerging capitalist-restorationist forces, one would expect the left-wing of the CPC and a chunk of the bureaucracy to follow or, more often, simply accept (even if somewhat grudgingly) the new reality rather than oppose it. It would, likely, only be right-wing factions of the CPC and the bureaucracy that would actually join the capitalists in actively opposing such a progressive transformation.

In contrast to the difficult birth of the revolution in China, the urban working class-led, October 1917 Revolution that overturned the bourgeois-landlord Russian Empire produced a workers state with a political structure and direction that, if only in its early days had it been buttressed by the support of sweeping revolutions abroad, would have been sufficient to one day carry the USSR all the way to complete socialism. However, the failure of the young communist parties in Europe to take advantage of revolutionary opportunities in the period immediately after the 1917 Revolution left the young Soviet workers state terribly isolated. Meanwhile, Russia and the other parts of the USSR were economically devastated by, firstly, the World War that preceded the revolution and, then, the four years of Civil War that followed when the Soviet masses had to defend their revolution from the overthrown and, yet, still ruthless and resurgent Russian capitalists along with all their international allies. Under these conditions of encirclement and economic scarcity and with the masses exhausted from years of wars, a bureaucratic

layer that had emerged to manage the scarcity and help oversee the rebuilding of the young workers state was allowed to come to the fore and take over the political administration of the country. This was achieved by squeezing out the more revolutionary, internationalist wing of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union whose ranks had, tragically, been diminished as so many of the finest and most idealistic of the communist workers had, naturally, been amongst the first to leap to the revolution's defence and so perished on the Civil War's many frontlines. However, despite this bureaucratic degeneration that took place in the mid-1920s, **the USSR still remained a workers state based on the socialistic, collectivized economic system that was established after the Russian Revolution. This system brought terrific improvements to the education, health, cultural life and standard of living of the masses.** Nevertheless, the presence of a bureaucratic administration - with all its accompanying corruption and lack of real worker involvement in decision making - prevented the socialistic economy of the USSR from reaching its full potential and made the masses cynical about politics. All this made the USSR brittle in the face of the gigantic military, economic and political pressures it faced from the capitalist powers who were and still are determined to crush any workers state. When a small layer of capitalist counterrevolutionaries backed by Washington and Canberra, amongst others, made its bid for power in the USSR in 1991, the Soviet masses had, in fact, become so depoliticized that most of them did not resist in any effective way at all - even though many were, in truth, fearful of the consequences of capitalist restoration.



**Capitalist America versus Socialistic China.** Left: Delaware, U.S., September 2015 - four police officers shoot and murder in cold blood Jeremy McDole, a disabled black man who is paralysed from the waist down. U.S. police kill on average nearly 1,100 people each year - with the victims disproportionately black, Native American or poor. Right: A few of the delegates of ethnic minority background at last year's Communist Party of China national congress. Women and ethnic minorities have gained the most from socialistic rule in China.

## Russia: Before and ...



## ... After Capitalist Counterrevolution

**Above:** Soviet children and youth from various Asian, African and Middle Eastern countries hang out together at the Soviet Union's Artek international children's holiday resort in the scenic Crimea region. The photo on the left shows Soviet youth with youth from Guinea Bissau. The USSR was famous for its warm, friendly embrace of visitors and international students from developing countries. However, since capitalist counterrevolution destroyed the USSR in 1991-92, Russia, the Ukraine and other parts of the former USSR have seen a terrifying explosion in racist state and fascist violence against ethnic minorities, migrants and international students. **Right:** Fascists on the march in today's Russia.



*Having suffered so badly under neo-colonial domination, China was at the time of its 1949 Revolution massively poorer and more backward than the richest capitalist countries. Over the following seven decades she has caught up greatly but still has a per capita income some seven times lower than the U.S. Nevertheless in areas like health care and education for the masses, the Peoples Republic of China has almost completely caught up. In other areas like public transportation, socialistic China has surged ahead. Left: A typical long-distance train in today's U.S. Right: One of the many high-speed trains that today criss-cross throughout the extent of China. Red China has not only the fastest trains in the world but her high-quality, high-speed rail system is by far the most extensively used and longest high-speed network in the world with a length of over 25,000 km.*



## The Significance of Socialistic China's Success in Poverty Alleviation

When the 1991-92 capitalist counterrevolution destroyed the former Soviet workers state, propagandists for capitalism around the world declared that this was “proof” of the “superiority of capitalism over communism.” Indeed the big business-owned media, school curricula and mainstream politicians were so incessantly drumming this message that even many self-declared progressive-minded people would parrot the refrain that “communism is a great idea but it doesn’t work.” Most distressingly, they would parrot this supposed “theory” as if it were their own profound revelation! Yet the effects of capitalist restoration in the former USSR and the Eastern European countries demonstrate the complete opposite. Capitalist counterrevolution led to an unprecedented drop in the life expectancy of the people, the re-emergence of mass unemployment and a sharp drop in industrial output. The position of women dived in all the countries where capitalism was restored and the relative ethnic harmony of the peoples that existed in the socialistic days was replaced by inter-ethnic blood feuds and the growth of murderous, far-right racist gangs. What all this actually proved is how much more progressive the former socialistic system had been in comparison with the restored capitalist rule. This is the case even though the workers states that had existed prior to counterrevolution were – as the PRC is today – bureaucratically deformed.

However, the most powerful refutation of the capitalist claim that “communism is dead” comes from the ongoing, living history of the PRC. The fact is that the world’s most populous country remains under socialistic rule. What’s more, under this system, the PRC has made terrific achievements in improving the health, education level and standard of living of its people. Indeed, **the overwhelming majority of the upliftment of people from poverty in the world over the last few decades has taken place within China.** Put another way, if you exclude the PRC’s progress in poverty alleviation, there has been very little net reduction in poverty in the world. Contrary to the triumphal claims of capitalist ruling classes 26 years ago when the USSR collapsed, today’s China, despite its imperfections, is proving that it is socialism that is the superior system. This has been most evident since the Global Financial Crisis and Great Recession hit the capitalist world nearly ten years ago. Since then much of the capitalist world continues to be mired by high unemployment or a large number of people working insecure, casual jobs with less hours than they want. Capitalist societies are seeing deteriorating social services, growing homelessness and a terrifying growth of racist attacks against ethnic and religious minorities. In the international arena, the world’s richest capitalist powers like the U.S., Britain, France and Australia are still more aggressively causing death and suffering around the world through predatory wars and sanctions. In contrast, the socialistic PRC charged through the period of the Great Recession with her economic growth rate never dropping below 6% per annum. She has spent the period since then massively increasing low-rent public housing, expanding coverage of health insurance to the whole population and spectacularly extending high speed rail throughout the country. Instead of waging predatory wars on poorer countries, the PRC

has been increasing aid, infrastructure development support and economic co-operation with African, Central Asian, Latin American, South Asian and Pacific countries.

The capitalist media have had a great deal of trouble “dealing” with the PRC’s obvious successes. They always try to find something on which to attack “Communist China.” One area that they thought they were on a winner on is pollution. China is the world’s biggest emitter of carbon dioxide gases. But this is only because China has the most number of people in the world! **Per person**, China’s emission of CO<sub>2</sub> gases is actually nearly two and a half times **less** than both the U.S. and Australia’s (see: <https://www.ucsusa.org/global-warming/science-and-impacts/science/each-countrys-share-of-co2.html#.WkT1Fd-WaUk> ). Then there is the obvious reality that while the PRC is diligently instituting policies to reduce pollution like promoting electric cars, favouring renewable energy and further expanding public transport, the leader of the capitalist “free world” rants – and tweets – that the concept of global warming is ... a conspiracy created by China!

At other times, the propagandists for capitalism have to grudgingly accept China’s development successes. Yet when they admit this they suddenly stop referring to “Communist China” but, instead, claim that these successes are due to “Chinese capitalism” or more recently to “state capitalism Chinese style.” As part of this big lie, they claim that China only started making progress after it started instituting market reforms in the late 1970s, which the Western media, when they need to, deceitfully equate with capitalist restoration. However, the truth is that the achievements that the PRC has made over the last four decades have been based on the terrific advances in health care, education and heavy industry development during the first three

decades of its existence. Thus, in the period from the founding of the socialistic PRC to the time that the pro-market, “reform and opening up” policy was first instituted, China achieved a miracle in health care improvement unprecedented in the rest of the world. In just these 29 years, the PRC increased the average life expectancy of its people from 34 years to over 67 years ... and this in the world’s most populous country!

What has made it easier for the Western media to avoid crediting socialism for China’s obvious success in poverty alleviation is the PRC leadership’s own reticence to stress the PRC’s socialistic character in international forums and meetings. As part of its policy of pursuing “friendly relations with all countries irrespective of their social system” – i.e. of attempting to have “friendly coexistence” with capitalist powers – China’s ruling bureaucracy seeks to avoid “offending” the capitalist rulers of the U.S.A, Australia and all the rest of them by speaking too proudly about its socialistic system in the international arena. Instead, they seek to stress any “common” features that China shares with the capitalist countries. They have tried to show that China, her system and her corporations are not all that different to those in capitalist societies.

Fortunately, this practice is starting to change to some degree. For the recent 200th anniversary of Karl Marx’s birth, China donated a giant bronze statue of Marx to his hometown of Trier in western Germany. The anniversary itself was given a very high profile by the Chinese government and official media. This included a grand commemoration meeting involving all of China’s top leaders at the Great Hall of People. Speaking in front of a giant portrait of Marx that faced his audience of 3,000 participants, PRC leader Xi Jinping stressed the importance of maintaining Marxism as China’s guiding ideology. He also called for Chinese communists to study, learn and practice Marxism. Furthermore, one of the notable aspects of the 19th Congress of the Communist Party of China congress that was held late last year was that it signalled that the PRC’s ruling party would start speaking more proudly about its socialistic course in the international arena. Indeed, official Chinese statements have, for the first time in decades, even advocated the path of “socialism with Chinese characteristics” as a model for other countries – albeit only for other “developing countries.” This is still a long way from an internationalist policy of supporting revolutionary class struggle of the working class masses in the capitalist countries. Nevertheless, what this partial shift means is that it will now be harder for the capitalist-owned media to insinuate that China’s social achievements have no connection to socialism.

Moreover, as the open hostility to China of the U.S. and Australian ruling classes intensifies, the mainstream Western media and capitalist politicians have themselves found it more necessary to speak of “Communist China” as they launch one anti-China scare campaign after another. Despite this, most of the socialist left in Australia – including the three biggest far-left groups: Socialist Alliance, Socialist Alternative and Solidarity – claim that the PRC is just another capitalist country. This bogus “analysis” forms a convenient excuse for these groups to avoid the difficult and often unpopular task of defending the PRC against capitalist attacks. Instead, the “China is capitalist” “analysis” enables these groups to join the U.S. and Australian rulers in supporting anti-communist, anti-PRC movements. For example, Socialist Alternative’s report on the 19th Congress of the Communist Party of China (see: <https://www.socialistalternative.org/2017/11/20/xi-jinping-strong-chinas-strongman/>) attacks the PRC with many of the same arguments used by the most right-wing Murdoch media hacks. They cover the anti-socialist essence of their position by, of course, claiming that China is just conducting another form of capitalism. Yet they can’t help exposing the fundamentally right-wing content of their stance. For example, their article hails the now dead, Western media-lionised, *neo-conservative* “dissident” Liu Xiaobo and his wife. An ardent supporter of the 2003 U.S. invasion of Iraq, **Liu Xiaobo’s Charter 08 calls for the privatisation of China’s dominant state-owned enterprises**, while masking the capitalist restorationist essence of his platform with calls for “democracy” – “democracy” intended to enable pro-capitalist forces to gain greater “rights” to leverage their wealth to grab back power. Indeed, the article published by Socialist Alternative attacks the imperialist powers for not having done enough to back Liu Xiaobo and his ilk. More generally, sounding like hard right-wing neo-cons themselves, they berate Western capitalist governments and media for not standing up to China and even for “political subservience” to her! Let’s get real! Western capitalist regimes have been sending their war ships thousands of kilometres from their own shores to provoke China in waters near her coast. They have provided massive funding for anti-communist Chinese NGOs, “dissidents” and exile groups and given huge arms shipments to the anti-PRC, capitalist Chinese enclave of Taiwan. In Australia, joint U.S.-Australia spy bases and the U.S. military base in Darwin, as well as Australia’s own military build up are aimed largely against the PRC and her socialistic North Korean neighbour and ally. Meanwhile, the mainstream Western media



have launched one anti-China propaganda campaign after another – most recently focussing on buttressing the Turnbull government’s claim that China is “interfering” in Australian affairs. And yet we have supposedly socialist groups claiming that Western

capitalist governments and media are “politically subservient” to China and her ruling Communist Party. Those sort of loony claims would make outright fascist groups like Jim Saleam’s Australia First Party or Nick Folkes’ Party for Freedom proud!

## Let’s Worker Harder to Advance the Struggle For Socialism!

The success of the Peoples Republic of China in lifting people out of poverty and improving their lives is undeniable. The capitalist media try to distract from this by attacking China over any issue they can dredge up. As a huge country with one in five of the world’s people and one where the basic socialistic order is contradicted by insurgent capitalist elements, one can of course find many true, negative stories about China. Indeed, you could probably find *tens of millions* of them. Yet, one will find *hundreds of millions* of positive stories! When the capitalist media and governments are forced to acknowledge the positive social advances in China they try to credit “capitalism” or “Chinese-style state capitalism” for it. *Those wavering socialist groups that claim that China is capitalist in order to avoid having to defend her are actually helping the capitalist media in this bid to promote the capitalist system. They are saying that the hundreds of millions of people so quickly pulled out of poverty by China, the provision of low-rent public housing to tens of millions of Chinese people over the last few years and the roll-out of an excellent country-wide high-speed rail system by a country that 70 years ago was one of the poorest on earth have all been achieved ... under capitalism!*

Yet as people say: the proof of the pudding is in the eating. And as Tables 1 and 2 above prove, if we test what China’s society has produced versus what

capitalist societies have, we see not only how much better China’s system is for the masses but how different it is to that of comparable capitalist societies.

## Socialistic China Compared With ...



**Above:** China: People of all ethnicities enjoy the delicious food and buzzing atmosphere at a packed night market in the Muslim Quarter of the Chinese city of Xian. However, because racist fear and ignorance is so rife in capitalist Australian society, many white Australians are reluctant to frequent at night areas in Sydney equivalent to Xian’s Muslim Quarter - like Auburn and Lakemba – thus missing out on enjoying the tasty food and diverse cultures. Instead, the racist divide and rule agenda of the Australian ruling class has emboldened racist rednecks and far-right groups. **Below Left:** White supremacists spread hatred at their 22 November 2015, “Reclaim Australia” rally in Sydney. **Below Right:** Violent rednecks bash any person of Middle Eastern or coloured appearance that they can find at the thousands-strong December 2005 white supremacist rampage at Sydney’s Cronulla beach. Photo Credit (above photos): Trotskyist Platform

## ... Capitalist Australia



So what conclusions should we draw from these comparisons in terms of our practical work? Firstly, we must acknowledge that these comparisons prove that the ascendancy of a workers state in China in 1949 represents a great advance for the masses relative to capitalism. Therefore, the working class of the world must unconditionally defend China and the other socialistic states (Vietnam, Cuba, North Korea and Laos) – as bureaucratically deformed and/or weakened by capitalist intrusion

as they are – against capitalist military threats and pro-capitalist political and economic forces. Secondly, the comparisons show that, even when in a distorted and incomplete form, socialistic rule is far more progressive than capitalism. That proves how much better a fully socialist world will be for the masses than the capitalist-dominated one that we live in today. So, from Australia to Indonesia to India to Russia to the United States, let's re-double our efforts to fight for world socialist revolution!

## Anti-Communist Hostility to China and Racism Go Hand in Hand



In order to mobilise support for its drive to help put the military and political screws on socialistic China, the right-wing Australian government have been running a scare campaign to accuse the Peoples Republic of China (PRC) of “interfering” in Australian politics. As we go to press, the Liberal-National coalition and the ALP have agreed to ram through draconian new anti-“foreign interference” legislation. This legislation will not only threaten most people’s rights, but will especially target anyone with sympathies for Red China, while at the same time ensuring that anti-PRC NGOs and activists harboured and nurtured by Australian and U.S. authorities face minimal opposition. As has always been the case, those most rabid in leading the anti-communist scare campaign have often been the same politicians in the forefront of spreading racism and hostility to workers unions. Thus spearheading the anti-China drive is Liberal MP Andrew Hastie. On May 22, Hastie used parliamentary privilege to launch a hysterical rant accusing the Chinese Communist Party of covertly seeking to influence Australia’s media, universities and politics. This same Andrew Hastie, was the previous month at the forefront of the hard-right, racist campaign for a special intervention to give white South African farmers refugee status on the ridiculous basis that they are being “persecuted.” Not only do these white farmers not suffer a rate of criminal attack any more than other people in South Africa, they are also a capitalist layer notorious for brutal exploitation of black farm workers on land that had been earlier stolen from the black people of that country. Some of these privileged farmers also form the key support base of the terrorist, South African fascist group the AWB and other, even more violent white supremacist extremists. **Right:** Last year two white South African farmers were found guilty of attempted murder and kidnapping after video emerged showing them forcing a terrified young black man into a coffin and threatening to set him alight as they closed the coffin lid on him. **Left:** Lakelands, WA: Andrew Hastie warmly greets racist supporters of “refugee status” for white South African farmers at a forum he organised to support their “cause.”

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