

Solidarity

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FIGHT TO FREE PALESTINE FROM THE RIVER TO THE SEA



ISRAEL BOYCOTTS

Zim shipping, blockades
and union action

CLIMATE CHANGE

COP28 and Labor's
new renewables plan

PALESTINE

Why two states
is no solution

Solidarity **WHAT WE STAND FOR**

Capitalism is a system of crisis and war

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

Workers power and socialism

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

What about elections and parliament?

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

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

We are internationalists

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

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

We oppose imperialism and support all

genuine national liberation struggles. We oppose Australian nationalism.

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

Oppression and liberation

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

Linking up the struggles

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

Educate, agitate, organise

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

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

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

SOLIDARITY MEETINGS AND BRANCHES

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Meeting 6.30pm every Thursday
Brown St Hall, 8-10 Brown St
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Melbourne

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

I welcome the initiative of the voluntary emigration of Gaza Arabs to countries around the world... The state of Israel will no longer be able to put up with the existence of an independent entity in Gaza
Israeli finance minister Bezalel Smotrich

What's needed here is an occupation. Israel's far-right National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir insists that Gaza should be occupied by Israel.

It's ridiculous to suggest or think that trade will be stopped because of the personal preferences of individual protesters.

Chris Minns seems to have forgotten the union bans against the Vietnam War, racist sporting tours from apartheid South Africa, and in support of East Timor when it was occupied by Indonesia

They've got plenty of time. I'm not saying they're unemployed, but they've got plenty of time
Malcolm Turnbull reflecting on the former PM's Scott Morrison and Boris Johnson's visit to Israel

I'm not suggesting we start a full-fledged war with Tehran. But I do think our posture has to be a little more aggressive than just strictly defensive, because one of these days, we're going to miss one of those drones.
Republican Senator Kevin Cramer

I became president because of my brand.
Donald Trump, on the stand in a trial that could see his brand banned from business in New York

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Income drop in Australia biggest in developed world

HOUSEHOLDS INCOMES in Australia fell by the highest level in the developed world over the year to June, dropping 5.1 per cent. Disposable income has been dropping for two years, and is now back to the levels of 2019, according to the analysis in the *Financial Review*.

Interest rate rises and inflation have seen the cost of housing, mortgages and essentials soar.

Foodbank Australia's latest report says 36 per cent of all households are struggling with food insecurity, the majority of them for the first time.

In total 3.6 million households went hungry, either reducing the size of meals or changing the kind of food they bought, or skipping meals altogether because they couldn't afford food.

The cost of housing saw half of all renters and a third of mortgage holders food insecure in the last 12 months.

Luxury car sales surge as the rich spend up big

NOT EVERYONE is feeling the cost-of-living crisis. Purchases of luxury supercars have continued to surge this year, with sales of high-end brands including Lamborghini, Ferrari, Porsche and Maserati up by 20 per cent nationwide compared to a year ago.

Sales are particularly strong in WA, according to *The Australian*, with McLaren recently opening a new showroom that is its largest in the southern hemisphere.

The company told it that, "We annually review both the supercar market and also the ultra high net worth individual population outlook, and one of the reasons why we set up in Perth was because we could see that population of people was exponentially growing."

The starting price for its models is more than \$400,000 and some can cost millions.

Maserati has also opened the first of its "new generation of dealerships" for the Asia-Pacific region in Perth.

Israeli military killed civilians during Hamas attack



Above: Burned out cars at the Israeli rave party that appear to have been hit by high powered munitions

ISRAEL HAS used claims about Hamas' attacks on civilians on 7 October to justify its onslaught on Gaza. But it's now clear that a number of the civilian deaths were caused by the Israeli military.

The Israeli *Haaretz* newspaper reported on 18 November that an Israeli military helicopter was responsible for some of the deaths of civilians at the Nova music festival where 364 people were killed. It said that, "According to a police source, an investigation into the incident revealed that an IDF combat helicopter that arrived at the scene from the Ramat David base fired at the terrorists and apparently also hit some of the revelers who were there."

There is also evidence that in the early panic as the Israeli military responded to the attack it fired on civilians elsewhere.

Another report in *Haaretz* on 11 October reported on testimony from a resident of the Be'eri kibbutz named Tuval who said that Israel commanders "made difficult decisions—including shelling houses with all their occupants inside in order to eliminate the terrorists along with the hostages".

The Israeli media outlet *Ynet* reported on a preliminary air force assessment of what happened which found that for the Israeli pilots "it was very difficult to distinguish between terrorists and [Israeli] soldiers or civilians" at first. "The frequency of fire at the thousands of terrorists was enormous at the start, and only at a certain point did the pilots begin to slow their attacks and carefully choose the targets."

Hamas likely did kill civilians as it attempted to kidnap people to take back to Gaza. But no one should believe Israel's account of the horrific crimes it says Hamas committed.

Australian companies supply Israeli jets bombing Gaza

AUSTRALIAN COMPANIES are supplying parts to F-35 strike fighters being used by Israel in its bombing of Gaza. Melbourne company Rosebank Engineering is the sole producer of the jet's "uplock actuators" that open and close its weapons bay, according to a report by Kellie Tranter in *Declassified Australia*.

It is one of 70 companies in Australia with a role in building or supplying the fighters, including Thales, BAE Systems and Ferra Engineering.

The F-35s are dropping 900-kilogram JDAM bombs in support of ground operations in Gaza.

Australia still top dog in Pacific spending

AUSTRALIA CONTINUES to dominate the Pacific islands, remaining the largest aid donor by far. It contributed \$ US17 billion in aid between 2008 and 2021, or more than 40 per cent of the total. By contrast China made up less than 10 per cent of aid spending.

The Australian government sees aid and other favours as a way of ensuring military control of the region and keeping hostile powers like China out.

Chinese aid has actually decreased, declining in 2021 as other countries made a record level of grants and loans during the height of the COVID crisis. That's the finding of the Lowy Institute's latest Pacific Aid Map report.

Although China has concentrated its efforts in a small number of island states in an effort to increase its impact, the Lowy Institute's Alexandre Dayant admitted that, "In no Pacific country has China been the leading source of ODF over the period analysed. By contrast, Australia is the leading source of ODF for nine Pacific countries, the United States for the three Compact states, and New Zealand for its two Realm territories."

Just 1771 more social houses in Victoria as 19,686 join wait list

SOCIAL HOUSING in Victoria is falling far short of need despite the promise of the state Labor government to build 12,000 new homes by 2024.

Since 2018 a net total of just 1771 social and public housing units have been added, taking account of the number of demolished or decommissioned houses.

In that period another 19,686 families have joined the waiting list. The wait time for housing has blown out to 18 months, tripling from 8.8 months to 23.6 months for those fleeing domestic violence.

Public housing stock has increased even less, by just 394 houses.

The \$5.3 billion plan was launched in 2020. Premier Jacinta Allen says 7600 houses have either been built or are in the planning stage.

EDITORIAL

Step up the fight as Albanese backs Gaza genocide

THERE IS blood on Anthony Albanese's hands over Israel's murderous assault on Gaza.

Israel is deliberately targeting the whole civilian population. Two-thirds of more than 15,000 dead are women and children.

Over weeks of horrifying attacks on hospitals, ambulances, schools and refugee camps, tens of thousands have taken to the streets every week to support Palestine.

Anthony Albanese has helped give Israel impunity to carry out its war crimes through blaming Hamas and declaring his support for Israel.

But the Labor government is starting to feel the pressure, shifting its language slightly.

Albanese has admitted there have been "too many civilian deaths in Gaza". Foreign Minister Penny Wong meekly suggested there should be "steps towards a ceasefire" and said she had some "concern" about Israel firing on hospitals, but still wanted to blame Hamas for Israel's war crimes.

But the government still refuses to call on Israel for a permanent ceasefire, let alone condemn Israel's apartheid policies and siege on Gaza.

More Labor backbenchers have begun to speak out. Federal Labor MP Maria Vamvakinou called out the "humanitarian disaster that is unfolding in Gaza" and alongside Labor MP Fatima Payman and The Greens backed the call for an immediate ceasefire.

Albanese, however, is making it clear that he does the bidding of the rich and powerful. Despite his previous support for the Palestinian cause he now sides with Israel and the US.

Labor is also backing the US alliance locally, spending \$368 billion on nuclear submarines and billions more on missiles, ships and fighter jets.

Albanese capitulated to racism after the High Court ruled indefinite detention of refugees illegal. He agreed to every rotten request from Liberal leader Peter Dutton in an effort to keep inflicting misery on those released and look for ways to put them back in prison.

He is letting mining companies open more coal and gas projects in the face of the climate emergency so they can keep making billion-dollar profits.

And he simply sits on his hands as the cost of living goes through the roof.

Reserve Bank Governor Michelle Bullock now says she may have to keep raising interest rates because people are still spending too much.



Above: Tens of thousands have taken to the streets in rage of Albanese's backing of Israel

This, she says, is stopping inflation falling fast enough.

So the Reserve Bank keeps making life hard for renters and anyone with a home loan.

But it is not everyone who is out spending. The rich still have savings on hand after the COVID crisis and can afford to keep spending. But most workers used up any savings they had long ago.

The government could tax the rich to help take pressure off inflation—but instead Albanese just lets the Reserve Bank increase mortgage pain. And he is still supporting the handouts for the rich through the Stage Three tax cuts.

Palestine solidarity

The outpouring of support for Palestine has been a major source of hope. We need to keep building the protests and demand an end to all ties with Israel.

In the past six years, the Australian government has approved 350 individual "defence" export items to Israel, including 52 this year alone.

The Albanese government refuses to reveal details of any of these military sales. Greens Senator David Shoebridge says Australia has "one of the most secretive and unaccountable weapons export systems in the world".

The links with Israel go back a long way. As NSW Premier Chris Minns bemoaned in relation to the protest at Sydney's Port Botany against an Israeli shipping company, ZIM, Israel is "a long-standing trading partner and an

ally of Australia".

Organising in the unions can help spread the support for Palestine and take the argument into workplaces. The workplace photos and other actions by teachers, university staff, construction workers and other unionists have been a big success.

Greater support in the unions will also add to the pressure on Labor. There is growing disgust at Labor from within the Arab and Muslim communities in particular, many of them long-term Labor supporters.

More than 5500 Labor voters have signed a petition to NSW Premier Chris Minns in Sydney over his strident support for Israel. Many are considering supporting The Greens or independent candidates in future.

But deepening the protest movement is the best way to build the pressure on Albanese. The protests against Zim shipping made a serious impact in disrupting the company and targeting links with Israel. In Sydney police violently arrested 23 protesters at Port Botany.

We need to defend our right to protest and come back in even bigger numbers. And we need to work towards the kind of union bans that would mean even greater disruption.

Hundreds of thousands of people are watching Israel's murderous rampage with horror. There is an opening to turn that into a powerful movement, and build the power from below can take on the whole system.

.....
The Labor government is starting to feel the pressure, shifting its language slightly

Unionists take Palestine solidarity into schools and workplaces

ORGANISING FOR Palestine in the unions continues to step up.

Union contingents at the Melbourne protests have drawn several hundred, including members of the ASU, health workers unions, AEU, PSA, NTEU, CFMEU and MUA. Cranes on many of city's large construction sites are flying Palestinian flags.

Meetings for members of individual unions have included a Melbourne ASU meeting with 70 people, meetings at university campuses, and among teachers.

Healthcare workers have held vigils outside hospitals, including at Westmead in Sydney and a 200 strong protest in the Parkville hospital precinct in Melbourne. The NSW nurses union is now officially supporting a ceasefire and taking union flags to rallies.

Unionists for Palestine in Sydney is holding a protest at NSW Parliament, demanding Premier Chris Minns scrap the anti-protest laws that led to arrests at the Zim protest at Port Botany. ASU NSW Secretary Angus McFarland will address the rally.

Teachers and School Staff for Palestine in Sydney and Melbourne have held solidarity photos in schools and a vigil in Melbourne. Sixteen schools in Sydney have participated so far, and almost 200 teachers have now joined their Whatsapp organising group.

But the Victorian and NSW Education Departments sent circulars declaring schools were "neutral places" that could not be used to advance "controversial issues".

The NSW government that imposed this policy on schools is not neutral. Premier Chris Minns lit the Opera House for Israel, and says Israel has a right to bomb Gaza. The policy is being used to suppress voices for Palestine and for peace. The Victorian Education Minister threatening teachers for being "inflammatory" flew to Israel earlier this year to promote weapons and development partnerships.

Gabby, a teacher at a school in Western Sydney, explained how she has pushed for action, "I mentioned that we'd be meeting and discussing rank-and-file action and ways of supporting the kids.

"I was told to go through the appropriate channels to get a meeting organised of Teachers Federation members, even though I tried to be



Above: The union contingent at one of the Sydney rallies for Gaza

clear that it was rank-and-file action.

"The meeting went ahead anyway, about ten teachers came, mainly concerned about how to approach the issue in the classroom.

"I work in a school where there's heaps of Middle Eastern kids, and I'm frustrated with teachers shutting down conversations, saying it's too political to talk about in a classroom.

"The way that it's been shut down and the way that the school has chosen to address it is making teachers hesitant to say something out loud."

Another teacher who works at a different school told *Solidarity*, "We've had some students wanting to draw flags or just write messages or letters, and one teacher who ripped up anything associated with Palestine, threw it in the bin and told the class off for even thinking about it during learning time. Everything has been blocked off.

"Everybody's trying to stay neutral. Unfortunately to be able to do our jobs properly, we have to show compassion.

"Many of the students that we teach are of Palestinian background, very aware and very exposed to what is going on. Some students have family stuck in the West Bank and Gaza," a colleague added.

For the week of action, "The principal told all the teachers wearing the Keffiyeh to remove it as she didn't want it to become a political thing. There were quite a few teachers wearing it who were pretty upset.

"But we did take pictures and

send them. There is fear because a lot of people need this job. So there only ended up being myself and three other ladies who went ahead to be in the photo.

Organising in schools has helped push the NSW Teachers Federation to take a stronger stand.

At its council meeting in November the executive proposed a motion on Palestine and education for peace in schools. There was overwhelming support and several amendments passed unanimously.

The union's Senior Vice-President Natasha Watts argued that teachers should promote social justice and pointed to the union's long anti-war history, including its support for teachers who wore "Vietnam War Moratorium" badges into classrooms against Department directives in the 1970s.

The motion committed the union to continue to encourage teacher contingents at the weekly Gaza rallies, where the union now regularly takes flags.

It also pledged to, "work with the Department to ensure that teachers will be free to work with, and show support to, their colleagues and students affected by the humanitarian catastrophe in Gaza without fear of reprisal or code of conduct action" and "assert the right of members to wear the Palestinian scarf, the keffiyeh, at work".

The same fight is taking place in unions across the country, as the rank-and-file takes the initiative to use our workers' power for Palestinian liberation.

Teachers and School Staff for Palestine Sydney forum
6pm Wed 6 Dec
Bankstown Arts Centre
'Organising for Palestine in our Schools: Why teachers can't be neutral'

Protest blocks Zim boat in Sydney action against Israel's genocide in Gaza

UP TO 500 people staged a snap protest at Port Botany in Sydney on 21 November, significantly disrupting the *Calandra* owned by the Israeli shipping company, Zim.

Twenty-three people were arrested after they defied police orders to clear the port entrance to allow the late shift in to work on the *Calandra*.

The protest to "block the boat" was called by Unionists for Palestine and Palestine Justice Movement Sydney via a rapid response text message list after the *Calandra* docked in the early hours of the morning.

Protesters sat down on the road leading into the terminal where the ship was docked. One of the Hutchison MUA delegates spoke to the protesters. Paul Keating, Secretary of the MUA Sydney branch, also addressed the crowd offering the union's support for the protest.

After about an hour, riot squad and mounted police moved violently against the crowd. Police punched, tackled and kicked protesters as they cleared the road.

One protester's shirt was ripped and several were punched in the head. One child had to be lifted over the crowd to safety.

Many of those arrested were charged with disrupting the use of a "major facility" under the NSW anti-protest laws introduced last year, which can attract maximum penalties of \$22,000 or two years' jail.

Police had been stationed on the wharf all day, and trucks delivering for the *Calandra* had been told not to enter the port terminal in Sydney on Tuesday and Wednesday to avoid protests.

Zim fact sheets had been distributed inside the dock and the afternoon shift was prepared for the action in case there was disruption from the protest.

On the night, all truck slots at 8pm and 9pm were cancelled, while earlier trucks used the emergency exit at the separate Patrick terminal to bypass the protest. According to police approximately 100 heavy vehicles were queued on Foreshore Road due to the disruption.

The protest sent the Palestinian dish Maqluba into the night shift as a solidarity gesture.

The protests in Sydney and earlier in Melbourne have forced costly de-



Above: Protesters sit down on the road outside Port Botany

Photo: Aman Kapur

lays onto the Israeli shipping line. The *Calandra* was stuck at sea for days trying to avoid a protest in Melbourne on 8 November, which blocked trucks carrying Zim containers. It didn't dock in Sydney until almost two weeks later, drifting and sitting out at anchor in an attempt to dodge further protests.

In Sydney, one of the *Calandra* crew told wharfies that the ship's captain had said he wanted to avoid protests and to get out of Port Botany as soon as possible.

These disruptions are a major win for the campaign to impose Boycott Divestment and Sanctions on Israel, and for building union action in solidarity with Palestine.

Workers in Spain, Italy and Belgium have also taken action against ships and planes transporting arms to Israel.

Zim is deeply implicated in Israel's war crimes and occupation, including the current genocide in Gaza. The company immediately offered all its ships and infrastructure to serve the "national needs of Israel" when the current war began.

It is Israel's oldest shipping line and has transported weapons including white phosphorous, which Israel uses against civilian areas in contravention of international law. Its commercial shipping operation regularly docks at Australian ports.

From blockades to bans

We need to keep building for even

larger numbers at the rallies and expand support for actions at the ports. This is the best defence against the police and the anti-protest laws.

This must be combined with systematic efforts to encourage discussion amongst workers at the port.

Workers' action was crucial in the movements against the Vietnam War and apartheid South Africa.

In 1966 the Seaman's Union of Australia refused to sail the cargo ship the *Boonaroo* which was carrying barbed wire and ordnance to Vietnam.

By 1970 hundreds of thousands joined the Moratorium marches and went on strike under the slogan "Stop work to stop the war". In December 1971 Liberal Prime Minister John Gorton announced all troops would be withdrawn.

When the South African rugby team the Springboks landed in Australia in 1971 they were met by mass protests and union bans. Airline workers refused to fly the team and unions banned them from clubs and hotels.

The Waterside Workers Federation banned South African ships and 4000 wharfies in Melbourne went on strike against the tour. The Springboks didn't return until apartheid had fallen.

This tradition of mass protest and union militancy must be rebuilt today. We need stronger union action to target and build the boycott of Israeli companies, weapons manufacturers, to stop the bombing and break all ties with Israel.

.....
Workers' action was crucial in the movements against the Vietnam War and apartheid South Africa

Israeli state and settler ethnic cleansing and violence grows in West Bank

By Jordi Pardoel

THE SO-CALLED truce did not end the violence against Palestinians in the West Bank, where Israeli settlers and troops are terrorising and killing with impunity.

Raids, arrests, murders and the destruction of life sustaining infrastructure shows Israel's intent on ethnically cleansing not only Gaza but the West Bank as well.

"You wanted war, so wait for the Great Nakba," read leaflets distributed by Israeli settlers in one West Bank village. Settlers are fulfilling their threat of a second Nakba, the catastrophe inflicted by Israel which displaced 850,000 Palestinians from their homes during the establishment of Israel.

While the media portray this as a war started by Hamas on 7 October, the effort to drive Palestinians off their land to make way for Israeli settlements started 75 years ago and has not stopped since.

Settler violence, which was already at record levels, has escalated dramatically to seven attacks a day according to Liz Throssell, spokesperson for the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights. In more than a third of these attacks, firearms were used.

Attacks have resulted in the murder of 239 Palestinians, including 52 children, since 7 October.

"Since 7 October, the Israeli army has arrested over 3000 people. We don't know where they are. We don't know if they are alive or tortured to death," a Palestinian who lives near Jerusalem told *Socialist Worker*.

Nearly 800 Palestinians have been driven out of their homes and communities in the West Bank, according to UN monitoring group OCHA.

"Every night, the army is invading towns and cities. Nothing will stop it. We are under the complete control of the Israeli military. More people are being arrested, and it is killing people every day."

Israeli forces have besieged the city of Jenin in the West Bank. In late November Israeli soldiers killed five Palestinians after they surrounded and raided the Jenin Governmental Hospital. Eight others were murdered the following day including a 14-year-old. Soldiers also demolished homes, uprooted Palestinians olive trees, destroyed water sources and bulldozed land in the village of Birin.

Settlers are also increasingly



confident to attack Palestinians and drive them off the land. They have carried out nearly 170 attacks against Palestinians since 7 October, according to OCHA.

Two of those killed by Israeli settlers in the Qusra village in the West Bank were father Ibrahim Wadi and son Ahmed. They were attending the funeral of another person shot by settlers a few days earlier, when settlers blocked the funeral procession and shot them.

Netanyahu's government has encouraged this violence. National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir has distributed 10,000 firearms to volunteer security squads and ordered the loosening of regulations on Israeli civilians acquiring firearms.

All this is aimed at pushing Palestinians from their land. In South Hebron Hills the Safi family has been just one of hundreds forced from their homes and farms in Khirbet al-Ratheem due to threat of settler violence. "We were threatened at gunpoint after they vandalised our properties," Abu Safi, told OCHA. "Leaving was the only option for me to protect my family."

Since 1967 700,000 settlers have taken up land through forced evictions and displacement of Palestinians in the West Bank and East Jerusalem.

Apartheid policies mean Palestinians are not allowed to enter the heavily guarded settlements unless they have been pre-approved, usually as gardeners, cleaners and construc-

Above: Israel's Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir is distributing weapons to volunteer squads across the country to use to repress Palestinians

tion workers.

Criminalising resistance

The release of Palestinian prisoners from Israeli jails as a result of hostage negotiations has created a brief moment of joy. Some families and friends were reunited after over seven years.

But at the same time Israel has arrested almost as many Palestinians in the occupied West Bank again. Around 8000 Palestinians remain in Israeli custody, including more than 2200 held without charge or trial, enduring cruelty and torture in detention.

In 1970 the Israeli government established military courts, essentially outlawing all forms of Palestinian resistance to the Israeli occupation as "terrorism". Since the outbreak of the second Intifada in 2000, Israel has detained more than 12,000 Palestinian children. The most common charge is throwing stones, punishable with a prison sentence of up to 20 years.

Israel is not acting in self-defence but attempting to realise the complete ethnic cleansing of all of historic Palestine.

But the Israeli army has come up against fierce Palestinian resistance in places like Jenin. The resistance planted homemade bombs on Israeli military vehicles that were being used to invade the town. The scale of the solidarity with Palestine must continue and grow in order to end the ethnic cleansing, end Israeli occupation and apartheid and win the right to return for all Palestinians to their homeland.

Settler violence, which was already at record levels, has escalated dramatically

Israeli terror state plans savage new assault on Gaza's south

By Lucy Honan

ISRAELI PRIME Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has vowed to continue to decimate Gaza “with full force” following the brief ceasefire. “I want to be clear. The war is continuing,” he said before the pause had even begun.

Agriculture minister Avi Dichter was latest to openly declare Israel’s genocidal intentions, saying, “We are now rolling out the Gaza Nakba.”

Having flattened between 40 and 50 per cent of buildings in northern Gaza, and killing more than 15,000 Palestinians, the next Israeli target is Khan Younis, a city in the Gaza’s south. It is now packed with 700,000 people, half of them displaced from the north.

Israel has shelled the surrounding suburbs of Khan Younis and leafleted residents warning them to evacuate, but there is nowhere to go.

In total more than 1.7 million Palestinians have already been driven from their homes.

Israel has continued to kill Palestinians throughout the pause in Jenin and elsewhere in the occupied West Bank.

Israel also opened fire on people in Gaza trying to return to their homes in the north when the ceasefire began, killing two and wounding 11, confirming fears that Israel wants to permanently expel Palestinians from the north of Gaza.

The trickle of aid—no more than 250 trucks by day three of the ceasefire—is so thin that a humanitarian disaster is inevitable once fighting resumes.

Israel’s goal of eliminating Hamas is still distant. Hamas and its military wing, the al-Qassam Brigades, maintain wide popularity amongst Palestinians.

Hamas retains a coherent fighting force and has conducted favourable prisoner exchange negotiations. Israel failed to produce any serious evidence of the “terror facility” that it said justified the siege and then destruction of the Al Shifa hospital.

Even if Israel could destroy Hamas, the scale of its brutality against the Palestinians means that new resistance organisations will inevitably emerge in its place.

It is still unclear what will be left in Gaza once Israel finishes bombing. While the US has suggested the Palestinian Authority be given control



Above: Israel has also struck residential neighbourhoods in the south of Gaza after raining terror on its north

of Gaza after the war, Netanyahu has dismissed such an outcome, insisting on direct Israeli “security control” in Gaza for “as long as necessary”.

This would mean Israel continuing to send in troops to raid Gaza whenever it wanted.

Continuing the killing

The US is now publicly suggesting Israel take a more “targeted” approach, that “accounts” for civilians as it continues the war. This is just one of several signs that the global movement for a free Palestine weighs heavily on the minds of the warmongers.

The Arab leaders, however, have continued to betray Palestine and their own people. While Qatar tries to claim credit for brokering the ceasefire, the surrounding Arab states have done nothing beyond issuing statements.

In mid-November they rejected an Iranian proposal for an oil embargo and to cut diplomatic ties with Israel, as well as calls from Algeria to close US bases on their territory, during a summit of 51 Arab and Islamic countries.

They would rather continue to profit from collaborating with the US and Israel than help the Palestinians.

Turkey, despite its talk of support for Hamas, continues to expand trade with Israel, including in steel needed for military purposes.

Even Iran and its allies including Hezbollah have held back from any military support for Gaza.

The risk of Israel sparking a broader regional war has not yet ma-

terialised, despite its reckless violence. The US and Israel have both repeatedly bombed Syria since 7 October, killing at least eight soldiers. Israel dropped white phosphorus on Lebanon between 10 and 16 October.

US President Joe Biden could end the atrocities in an instant if he wanted to. This is a genocide underwritten by the US and its allies like the Australian government.

The US has allocated \$14.3 billion in additional support to Israel since 7 October, and stationed a second US aircraft carrier strike group in the region, two amphibious navy ships plus thousands of US troops on standby to move to the region if required.

As White House national security spokesperson John Kirby has declared, the US has approved Israel’s genocidal actions, refusing to set “red lines” for Israel.

Nor is there any reliable element of restraint within Israel. Protests from within Israel against Netanyahu have focussed on Israeli hostages to the exclusion of all else, sometimes campaigning against ceasefire and even aid to Gaza.

The temporary ceasefire was secured by the resistance of Hamas and the movement of millions of people around the world demanding an end to Israel’s slaughter. From Egypt to Australia, people are rejecting the system of profit seeking and imperialist alliances that has produced the genocide.

Our protests and pressure on our leaders must escalate—the lives of Palestinians are in the balance.

.....
Israel’s goal of eliminating Hamas is still distant

Labor still expanding fossil fuels as world heads for ‘hellish’ heating

By James Supple

A STARK warning from the UN has revealed the world is on track for a “hellish” three degrees of warming this century.

This year has already been the hottest for 125,000 years, with sea ice and water temperature readings off the charts.

A bushfire destroyed 18 homes in the northern suburbs of Perth in late November as temperatures hit 39 degrees.

This comes in the lead-up to this year’s COP28 global climate summit, which farcically is being hosted by the petro-state of Qatar.

The Albanese government is fully behind efforts by the coal and gas companies to keep opening new projects.

The latest demonstration was their Sea Dumping Bill, which eventually sailed through the Senate with Liberal support, after Labor’s Penny Wong told them voting it down would mean, “You said ‘no’ to Santos ... ‘no’ to Woodside ... ‘no’ to Inpex.” This was a giveaway on what the bill was all about—and Labor’s priorities.

It is designed to allow the export of carbon dioxide from Australia to other countries so it can be buried using failed carbon capture and storage (CCS).

This “is a trojan horse to facilitate new fossil fuel projects in general and one gas project in particular—Santos’s massive new Barossa project off Darwin”, as Ebony Bennett of the Australia Institute explained.

Santos wants to bury carbon dioxide released during mining in the depleted Bayu-Undan gas field beneath the waters of Timor Leste.

Unless it can do so the project can’t go ahead. The huge \$5.8 billion project would be one of the most polluting in the world due to the high carbon dioxide content of the gas deposit.

CCS is little more than a fig leaf for the oil and gas companies to continue polluting in the face of the climate emergency.

After years of development and billions in funding it is still failing. Chevron’s Gorgon gas hub off WA runs the world’s largest CCS project and is a key test of the process.

It has been dogged by failure and after eight years in operation buried just 34 per cent of the carbon dioxide



it captured in the year to June.

Global summit

This year’s COP28 talks are being led by Sultan al-Jaber, head of the state-owned Abu Dhabi National Oil Company. It plans to spend \$150 billion to increase oil production to five million barrels per day by 2027.

He has paid lip service to climate action, saying the “phase down” of fossil fuels is “inevitable” and “essential”. But he is also promoting fake solutions like CCS and wants fossil fuel bosses to be “included” in the search for climate solutions.

This speaks volumes about why world leaders have continually failed to agree the action needed to avert catastrophe.

The Climate Council has reiterated the need for much higher targets of 75 per cent emissions reduction by 2030 and net zero by 2035. The technology exists to do this. Yet Australia’s renewable energy rollout is still stalling.

Energy Minister Chris Bowen has announced new plans to assist renewables, admitting that the government’s renewable energy for 2030 is in serious trouble.

This is a result of relying on the private sector to fund renewable energy on the basis of whether it can make a profit.

The government says its new “capacity investment scheme” will support nine gigawatts of storage and

Above: High school students at Sydney’s Climate Strike in November

23 gigawatts of wind and solar energy in the hope of meeting the target. It will underwrite a minimum price for the power they produce, using government money to ensure companies are paid at least that amount.

This is designed to attract private investment by guaranteeing a minimum return.

The government will also run a tender process to seek the cheapest bids from private companies on the projects. But like other forms of privatisation, this will encourage cost cutting, including on workers’ wages and conditions.

That is not the way to ensure a just transition where workers who move into the renewable energy sector have jobs as well-paid as those in fossil fuels.

Government investment in renewable energy would allow proper planning in the energy system and public control of the power industry.

Public renewables were one of the demands as high school students hit the streets again on 17 November in another School Strike for Climate. It will also be a feature of Sydney’s rally during the COP28 summit. More than 1000 people also joined a blockade of the Newcastle coal port in late November.

In the face of Labor’s inaction we need to step up the protests to demand the end of new coal and gas and the urgent transition that’s necessary.

The COP28 talks are being led by Sultan al-Jaber, head of the Abu Dhabi National Oil Company

Australian grab for regional domination behind Tuvalu climate treaty

By David Glanz

LABOR IS framing its new treaty with the tiny Pacific nation of Tuvalu, which will allow 280 people a year to move to Australia, as an act of climate change solidarity.

But the primary motivation is to strengthen Australian influence in the South Pacific and block China's search for allies.

The new treaty gives Australia a veto over Tuvalu's ability to make, "any partnership, arrangement or engagement with any other State or entity on security and defence-related matters.

"Such matters include but are not limited to defence, policing, border protection, cyber security and critical infrastructure, including ports, telecommunications and energy infrastructure."

It comes 19 months after China signed a security pact with the Solomon Islands—a move that sparked panic in the Australian ruling class, which regards the region as its own.

Prime Minister Anthony Albanese and Tuvaluan Prime Minister Kausea Natano announced the agreement at the Pacific Islands Forum meeting, with Australia making it clear the option was open for other countries in the region to sign similar agreements.

Falepili Union

Tuvalu, a British colony until 1978, consists of nine islands about halfway between Australia and Hawaii. It has a population of about 11,200 and, at its highest, is just 4.6 metres above sea level.

Albanese said that Tuvalu's, "very existence is threatened. I believe developed nations have a responsibility to provide assistance".

Under the treaty Australia will offer Tuvaluans a "human mobility pathway" to allow them to live, study and work in Australia, with access to education, health, and income and family support on arrival.

The two countries also commit "to work together in the face of the existential threat posed by climate change". Australia will spend \$16.9 million to expand land areas of Tuvalu's main islands by 6 per cent.

But these are empty gestures while the Albanese government continues to approve new coal and gas projects.

As the Tuvalu Climate Action Network points out, "Offering residence or citizenship rights to Tuvaluans, though



Above: Tuvalu is made up of low lying islands that threaten to disappear due to climate change

a compassionate response, does not halt the inexorable rise in sea levels."

Academics Taukiei Kitara and Carol Farbotko report that many Tuvaluans have no interest in leaving their homes.

They write, "Research indicates that, with adaptation measures, the habitability of atolls can continue into the 21st century, despite rising sea levels ... The treaty should not be interpreted as an indication that the worst-case scenario has arrived or is imminent."

They add, "Our gravest concerns about the treaty are that it sidesteps the important question of Australia's commitment to phasing out fossil fuels."

While Australia should open its borders to climate refugees, the priority should be to stop global heating.

Labor refuses to stop new fossil fuel projects because of the massive role coal, gas and oil play in the Australian economy. In 2022, coal exports alone were worth \$142 billion.

Cold calculation

Behind Labor's posturing about climate solidarity is a cold calculation about the importance of binding Tuvalu to Australia and preventing China extending its influence.

Tuvalu's land mass is tiny but its exclusive economic zone is almost 750,000 square kilometres—similar in size to NSW.

It is currently one of the few countries in the Pacific that still maintains a diplomatic relationship with Taiwan, rather than China.

Nine countries have switched allegiance to China since 2016, leaving

Taiwan with just 13 allies worldwide.

Now Australia wants to lock island nations into treaties in order to lock out China.

As *Solidarity* reported when the Solomon Islands signed a security agreement with China in April 2022, establishment commentators warned the deal, "would give the People's Liberation Army navy an operating base deep within Australia's strategic hinterland" and "would signal a pretty significant failure of Australia's long-term security policy".

Albanese and Foreign Minister Penny Wong have been working hard since then to ensure China makes no further progress.

Australia has been the regional power in the South Pacific since the 19th century. From the point of view of Australian capitalism, it is crucial to control the shipping lanes that run through the region.

Malcolm Fraser's Coalition government quadrupled aid to island nations in 1976 as a direct response to the feelers the Soviet Union was extending to some of the newly-independent island nations.

Today, our rulers fear interference by China—ignoring, of course, the much more substantial stake in the Pacific held by the US and France.

The treaty with Tuvalu pays lip service to humanitarian aims but is, in reality, another step by Australia to shore up its power.

Ordinary people in Australia and Tuvalu have nothing to gain from this rivalry. Instead we need to unite for real action on climate change.

Australia wants to lock island nations into treaties in order to lock out China

DP World workers strike against attack on rosters and pay

By Erima Dall

WORKERS AT all four DP World port terminals around the country, members of the Maritime Union of Australia (MUA), took strike action on 16 November as part of their escalating bargaining campaign.

Sydney wharries stopped for two hours across the shift changeover, so workers at neighbouring ports Patrick and Hutchison could join them in solidarity. The Transport Workers Union and the Rail Tram and Bus Union also joined the rally.

DP wants to impose a new roster that would mean more weekend work as well as hefty pay cuts. Workers want a decent pay rise given workers at competitor Patrick earn 11.5 per cent more—but DP is offering a below inflation pay rise of just 2.5 per cent.

DP are taking a hard line approach to bargaining. The union has already been in negotiations for over six months but the company are clearly trying to delay discussions and stare the union down.

In response, wharries are escalating industrial action. The bargaining team has resolved that they will not pull actions when the company offers to meet for negotiations—last time this became a trick for management to simply offer a meeting, agree to nothing, and buy themselves another five-day notification period before further protected industrial action.

This is a good step forward and all terminals should adopt this approach in future.

Workers are into their eighth week of industrial action. Six 24 hour stoppages were taken in the first month alone. Two further 24 hour stoppages were planned the week Solidarity went to press.

Workers have also imposed bans on shift upgrades, late call-ins, overtime, and imposed stoppages at the end of shifts so wharries go home early. There are alternative vessel and road-and-rail bans during the week, and ships are not worked until eight hours after they are tied up.

Industrial action has been focused on weekdays, allowing workers to take better paid weekend shifts to help keep money in their pockets. Casuals are getting very little work—however workers were encouraged to save up in advance.

Many of DP’s usual customers are contracting ships to Hutchison ports. Hutchison wharries are less than



Above: Workers on strike at DP World in Melbourne
Photo: Victorian Trades Hall Council

enthusiastic to work them, but anti-strike laws make it illegal to undertake “secondary boycotts” in solidarity.

New intractable bargaining laws mean the company could stall and then apply to the Fair Work Commission

for arbitration after nine months of negotiations. The MUA is determined to make DP feel the pain and move on key issues well before this. The task now is to stick to their guns and be prepared to keep escalating.

SA teachers strike again for more staff and pay

THOUSANDS OF South Australian teachers, members of the Australian Education Union (AEU), went on a state-wide strike again on 9 November against a poor pay agreement offered by the Malinauskas Labor government.

It was their second full-day strike, following the earlier action on 1 September.

More than 170 schools and pre-schools were closed and 201 schools offered only “modified” programs.

Thousands of teachers dressed in black filled the streets and marched, demanding a real pay rise and proper funding for education. Alongside the dozens of home-made signs, some larger placards drew attention to the things the State Government would rather fund than schools, including nuclear submarines and a destructive university merger.

Teachers have rejected the government’s offer of a below-inflation pay rises over three years. A state-wide ballot saw 83 per cent vote to take strike action.

Poor pay and conditions have created a teacher shortage crisis, as in other states, with 35,000 students

going without a teacher every day according to the union.

Inflation is currently running at 5.4 per cent, after hovering around 7 per cent for the last six months of last year.

SA’s Education Minister Blair Boyer is offering teachers only 4 per cent this year, 3 per cent in the second and 2.5 per cent in the third year.

The union called for an inflation-busting 8.6 per cent pay rise this year and 5.5 per cent increases in the next two. But in the face of government intransigence union officials have revised down their demands to a call for 15 per cent over three years.

President of the AEU, Andrew Gohl, said the latest offer, “actually sends some people backwards compared to the second offer.”

Minister Boyer thought that saying the offer was “worth \$1.4 billion and amounted to the largest ever made to teachers in South Australia” was a good selling point. But all it shows is the chronic underfunding of schools and teachers’ wages in the state.

.....
Workers are into their eighth week of industrial action

US and NATO prolonging a bloody stalemate in Ukraine

By Tom Orsag

THE WAR in Ukraine has become a bloody stalemate that continues only because both Russia and the US are pouring in weapons to continue the killing.

Six months since Ukraine launched its much anticipated counter-offensive, using billions of dollars worth of US and NATO weapons, it has advanced just 17 kilometres.

In early November, Ukraine's commander-in-chief, General Valery Zaluzhny, admitted to *The Economist* that hopes for the counter-offensive had failed, "Just like in the First World War we have reached the level of technology that puts us into a stalemate... There will most likely be no deep and beautiful breakthrough."

One of Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky's closest aides also told *Time* magazine that Zelensky was "deluded" in thinking he could still win the war, "We're out of options. We're not winning. But try telling him that."

Several months ago the *New York Times* reported that the number of Ukrainian and Russian troops killed or wounded since the war began was already nearing 500,000.

The US has been more than happy to sacrifice Ukrainian lives to achieve its own imperialist ends.

The US has blamed Ukraine's slow progress on not herding enough conscripts into human wave assaults through the heavily fortified Russian minefields.

A US intelligence briefing reported in the *Washington Post* several months after this year's counter-offensive began criticised the Ukrainian government's failure to accept higher casualties, "as the cost of piercing through Russia's main defensive line".

After Russia's invasion in February 2022 the US and NATO poured in arms and financial support to allow Ukraine to keep fighting. It quickly became a proxy war between Russia and the West.

In April last year, US Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin declared that Washington, "wanted to see Russia weakened militarily and unable to recover quickly."

Both Russia and the US aimed to pull Ukraine into their respective spheres of influence as part of a struggle for control over Eastern Europe. Both are murderous imperial-



Above: The stalemate in Ukraine now resembles the gruesome trench warfare of the First World War

ist powers out for their own profit.

Since the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991 the US has expanded its European military alliance NATO eastwards to pull away a raft of former Russian allies including Czechia, Hungary, Poland, Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia. It has further expanded since the war in Ukraine began.

Gaza and Ukraine

Despite the bloody stalemate the US still wants to keep the war going. Lloyd Austin made an unannounced visit to Kyiv in late November in what Associated Press called, "A high-profile push to keep money and weapons flowing to Ukraine even as US and international resources are stretched by the new global risks raised by the Israel-Hamas conflict."

The Israeli war on Gaza has "forced the US to divert time and resources away from Ukraine", the *Financial Times* notes.

"In some cases, there is direct competition for munitions. Ukraine has been desperately short of shells and now is competing with Israel for scarce supplies. Air defence systems are also needed by both Ukraine and Israel."

US President Joe Biden is also struggling to secure more funding for weapons to Ukraine in the face of opposition from elements of the Republican Party in Congress. He has requested another \$61 billion for Ukraine as part of a \$106 billion funding package that also includes money for Israel.

But there are now signs that the

US and NATO are starting to accept that Ukraine cannot completely defeat Russia and reclaim all the territory it has lost since 2014.

In late November a German government source told the *Bild* newspaper that, "Zelensky should realise that it can't go on like this. He needs to, of his own free will, turn to face his nation and explain that there is a need to negotiate."

The US administration was also planning to scale back weapons deliveries and wanted eventual negotiations, it claimed.

But Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky wants Ukraine to become a permanently militarised society propped up by Western arms on Russia's border. Last year he said he wanted the country to become a "big Israel" with "all institutions, supermarkets, cinemas" guarded by "people with weapons".

The need to secure the country against Russia meant it would not be able to emulate "a liberal European democracy", he said. This is no future for workers and ordinary people in Ukraine.

It's increasingly becoming clear that for Ukraine to have true self-determination the workers of Ukraine will have to rid themselves of the authoritarian Zelensky as well as the embrace of US imperialism.

We need to oppose the Australian and US government's efforts to keep sending weapons and prolonging the war. Anti-war movements are needed in both Russia, Ukraine and the West to demand all our governments put an end to the slaughter.

.....

There are signs that the US and NATO are starting to accept that Ukraine cannot completely defeat Russia

WHY TWO STATES IS NO SOLUTION FOR PALESTINE

Israel has never been willing to allow any kind of Palestinian state. The solution is to fight for a single democratic state with equal rights for Jews and Arabs argues **Luke Ottavi**

WESTERN POLITICIANS continue to pretend that a two-state solution can end Israel's violence against the Palestinians.

US President Joe Biden talks of the "need to renew our resolve to pursue this two-state solution" and Australian Foreign Affairs Minister Penny Wong tells us that the "two-state solution is the only way the Israel-Palestine conflict can be solved."

But the US and the West have known for years that the two-state solution has been dead in the water.

In July this year Netanyahu told an Israeli parliamentary committee that Palestinian hopes of establishing a sovereign state "must be eliminated."

The two-state solution is nothing but a fig leaf to cover for the West's continuing support for the apartheid regime of Israel.

The Oslo Accords

Plans for a two-state solution emerged from the Oslo peace process, formalised with the signing of the Oslo Accords in 1993 between the then leading resistance group, the Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO) and Israel.

Many Palestinians hoped that after years of struggle and sacrifice, real progress was being made towards an independent state.

But as Palestinian academic Edward Said argued at the time, the Accords were "an instrument of Palestinian surrender."

The only reason Israel began serious negotiations was because of the First Intifada in 1987, and because the following year the PLO made the major concession of recognising the state of Israel and its "right to exist."

The First Intifada erupted after decades of occupation and oppression. The rebellion lasted nearly five years and inspired similar revolts across the Middle East.

Palestinians revolted against the misery of occupation, taking Israel, the US, and the PLO by surprise.

Palestinian youth threw stones against armoured cars, hundreds of thousands mobilised in the streets of the Occupied Territories, and networks of local committees sprung up to provide health care and education.

Palestinians inside Israel itself—those who had not been forced out during the Nakba—joined a general strike in solidarity with striking workers in the Occupied Territories.

The scenes of oppressed Palestinians rising up against their oppressor started to break Israel's carefully cultivated image of being a plucky David facing an Arab Goliath. Israel continues to falsely claim that they are the victims as they massacre men, women, and children in Gaza with thousands of bombs and white phosphorous supplied by the West.

But the PLO would betray Palestinians' hope for liberation by ceaselessly compromising with their oppressor.

Concessions

When the PLO recognised the Israeli state in 1988, it abandoned the goal of liberating the whole of Palestine.

This meant giving up the 80 per cent of Palestinian land occupied by Israel since 1948, and in return hoping for a Palestinian "mini state" alongside it based on the West Bank and Gaza, occupied by Israel since 1967.

But the Oslo Accords left fundamental questions unanswered, such as when Israel would withdraw from Gaza and the West Bank and when a Palestinian state might be formed.

There was merely a "declaration of principles" for future negotiations.

Israel never had any intention of allowing the establishment of a Palestinian state—no matter how small and

.....
Israel has been relentlessly moving settlers into the occupied territories and driving Palestinians off the land

powerless.

Israeli leaders have always wanted complete control of the West Bank and Jerusalem. Since 1967 Israel has been relentlessly moving settlers into the occupied territories and gradually driving Palestinians off the land.

Immediately after the "peace process" began in 1993 Israel rapidly built large city-like settlements in the West Bank, annexing the surrounding land.

In the following ten years Israel increased the number of settlers in the West Bank at twice the rate of the previous 20 years.

The Israeli settler population in the West Bank in 1993 was 110,000, but there are now over 700,000 settlers living in the West Bank and Occupied East Jerusalem.

Israel defends the settlements with ruthless military force and controls roads and checkpoints across the West Bank. Palestinians have their freedom of movement restricted. They must pass Israeli military checkpoints to go to work, school, see family, or go to hospital.

The settlements and associated infrastructure, the Israeli-only highways, and the 700-kilometre concrete apartheid wall, means that Israel controls over 60 per cent of land in the West Bank.

Israel also controls the major aquifers in the West Bank and Gaza, completely determining

how much freshwater Palestinians have access to.

Israeli settlements and outposts are so widespread across the West Bank that, if left in place, they would guarantee a permanent Israeli military presence in any future Palestinian state.

The Palestinians would at best be left with a series of small, disconnected enclaves with Israel in complete control of movement between them.

The extent of Israeli control means it is impossible for an independent Palestinian economy to exist in the West Bank, let alone Gaza.

Before the Intifada, one third of Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza worked in Israel. By 1996, as a result of Israeli restrictions, that had collapsed to 15 per cent. Earnings from work in Israel dropped from 25 per cent of Palestinian GDP to 6 per cent.

Israel can impose border closures to prevent Palestinians from exporting goods to regional and international markets.

In Gaza, periodic Israeli bombing has killed livestock, uprooted olive trees, and wiped food factories off the map.

The siege of Gaza meant half the population before October 7 were unemployed, and almost 70 per cent suffered food insecurity.

Israel and the West always claim that Hamas is the barrier to peace. But it is Israel that has sabotaged any “peace process”.

Hamas has made it known for years that it would accept a Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza and was open to negotiations with Israel. It made this explicit when it updated its Charter in 2017, although it has never given up its commitment to resistance or recognised Israel’s legitimacy as a state.

The Palestinian Authority (PA) established under the “peace process” was given limited control in the West Bank and Gaza. This was presented as a step towards a Palestinian state. Instead Israel demanded the PA take on the role of policing Palestinian resistance in the West Bank on behalf of Israel and suppressing political protest and expression.

Accepting this has transformed the PLO into abject collaborators with Israeli occupation and apartheid.

The PA has arrested dozens of journalists and union organisers and beat to death the prominent Palestinian activist, Nizar Banat, due to his exposing of PA corruption.

A poll in June 2023 found that 63 per cent of Palestinians in the Occupied Territories considered the PA operated in Israel’s interests.

A recent poll conducted during the war on Gaza found that support for the PA amongst Palestinians in the Occupied Territories has plummeted to just 10 per cent.

PA President Mahmoud Abbas was elected once in 2005, but has refused to hold another election for the last



Above: Israel’s apartheid wall dividing East Jerusalem from the West Bank village of Anata

16 years. In 2006 his party, Fatah, lost an election to Hamas but managed to keep control in the West Bank with US and Israeli support, while Hamas took control in Gaza.

Israel regards the PA as a crucial mechanism for maintaining its apartheid system in the West Bank. Netanyahu says that Israel “needs the PA... we cannot allow it to collapse... It does our job for us.”

Attempting to impose the PA in Gaza once Israel’s direct military occupation and bombardment has finished would solve nothing, even if it were possible. Palestinians have no interest in supporting a collaborationist political body that enforces apartheid, and seeks favour with the US who gives Israel the bombs to massacre Palestinians.

One state

The impossibility of a two-state solution has meant there is greater interest in, and acceptance of, a one-state solution.

Israel is a fundamentally racist society. Its very existence is premised on the ethnic cleansing and oppression of the Palestinians, and its self-proclaimed status as an exclusively Jewish state.

The Zionist foundations of Israel require maintaining a state with an overwhelming Jewish demographic majority.

Virulent racism towards Palestinians—captured succinctly by Israeli Defence Minister Yoav Gallant’s proclamation that Israel is fighting against “human animals”—is used to justify 75 years of occupation as well as the genocide presently unfolding before our eyes.

Any solution that does not entail the dismantling of Israeli apartheid and the right for Palestinians expelled from Israel in 1948 to return to their homes will not deliver justice.

The only real solution in Palestine is a single secular democratic state where Jews and Arabs live with equal rights and equality before the law.

This may seem like an impossible dream.

But the heroic fight against apartheid in South Africa shows how such a racist system can be dismantled.

However, unlike in South Africa where the Black working class held enough economic power to break apartheid, Israel systematically excludes Palestinians from its economy and is propped up by Western imperialism—principally the US. Palestinians, alone, do not have the economic or military strength to defeat Israel. But their resistance inspires struggle across the Middle East.

To break Israeli apartheid will require revolutionary struggle in the Arab countries surrounding Israel, particularly Egypt, to end the imperialist control of the region, alongside an international solidarity movement that breaks the US and Western governments’ support for Israel.

Anything less will mean the continued slaughter of Palestinians and the continuing of the occupation.

The breakout of Gaza on 7 October showed to the world that Israel is not invincible. Since then mass demonstrations around the world opposing the horror Israel is inflicting on Gaza, including in Israel’s key sponsor the US, have pointed to the power that makes revolution possible.

HORROR IN GAZA AND THE SYSTEM HOW RESISTANCE CAN LEAD TO REVOLUTION

Ending the domination of Israel in the Middle East and the Western imperialism behind will require revolution, writes **James Supple**

THE HORROR unfolding in Gaza shows not just the brutality and racism of the Zionist Israeli state. It shows the barbarity of the global capitalist system as a whole.

Israel's actions would not be possible without the funding, arming and support of the world's most powerful governments, including the US, Britain and the European Union, as well as their partners like Australia. They are facilitating an effort at genocide unfolding in real time.

This is the result of the imperialist competition for wealth, power and profits that is a product of capitalism. The US and its allies like Israel are prepared to unleash hell in order to maintain Israel's military dominance in the Middle East, and wider US control over the whole region.

Israel was humiliated by the Hamas attack on 7 October and wants to reassert its absolute military superiority.

Control of the Middle East has been a major concern for the global powers since the importance of its oil reserves became clear during the First World War.

They are the source of enormous wealth and major states including China, South Korea and Japan rely heavily on them to run their economies. This means that whoever controls the oil, and the ability to shut it off, has the power to cripple them.

The genocide in Gaza is just one of the catastrophes that capitalism is creating.

The world's powerful countries are also feeding the continuation of war in Ukraine, where the US and its NATO allies see a chance to weaken their rival Russia.

Australia is pursuing a massive military buildup as part of US preparations for conflict with China, including the \$368 billion nuclear submarines.

We are also facing climate catastrophe, with record global temperatures, fires and extreme weather events sweeping the globe.

World leaders have totally failed to take the action needed, despite almost 30 years of global summits to discuss the problem of global heating.

The Australian government is still pouring fuel on the fire through allowing new coal and gas projects.

To end these outrages we need to fight the system as a whole.

Mass movements

There has been widespread disgust with Anthony Albanese and the Labor government for backing Israel. It's obvious to the tens of thousands on the streets each weekend that change will not come from inside parliament.

If the rich and powerful can use their control of the big companies that dominate the economy to impose their will on the Labor Party over Palestine, climate, and any other issue, then we need more fundamental change than what elections can offer.

In Australia, business sees support for US power as vital to securing their own profits and power as an imperialist power in the local region. This is why both Labor and Liberal governments are united on supporting the US and Israel.

Real change comes from mass movements and revolts outside parliament.

The worldwide protests in solidarity with Gaza have been an inspiring example of resistance. Tens of thousands have defied efforts to ban protests in France, Germany, the UK and in Sydney.

There have been enormous crowds week after week in the biggest anti-war protests since the Iraq War

The genocide in Gaza is just one of the catastrophes that capitalism is creating

in 2003.

Here, unionists are developing rank and file networks out of the rallies, taking workplace action and build stronger union solidarity for Palestine.

This has to grow into action on another level in order to break governments from supporting Israel's war.

The movement that forced Australian troops out of the Vietnam War involved enormous mass demonstrations, disruptive action that broke the law, and strike action on a wide scale as workers joined the weekday Moratorium marches.

But ending Israel's military dominance will require revolution across the Middle East to topple the dictatorships in countries like Egypt, Jordan and Saudi Arabia that collaborate with Israel.

Ending a world system based on imperialism and war means a revolution to get rid of capitalism completely.

Revolutions

Revolutions have been remarkably common over the last century. Often they have been triggered by the horror of war.

Portugal's colonial war in Angola was ended by a revolution in 1974, as army officers brought down the dictatorship.

The First World War was also ended by revolution. Russia pulled out of the war after the revolution of 1917, and Germany finally ended the war the following year after mutiny in the armed forces and mass revolt toppled the Kaiser's government.

The Middle East also has a rich history of revolution, from the wave of revolts that threw off European colonial rule after the Second World War to the revolutions of 2011 that brought down the regimes in Tunisia

and Egypt.

More recently revolution in 2019 toppled a dictator in Sudan.

So what makes a revolution possible?

Revolutions begin when the mass of the population start to take their own action in response to social crisis.

They require mass protests and strikes on a truly gigantic scale. In Egypt in 2011 it is estimated over 16 million people took part directly in strikes and demonstrations.

Most of the time those taking to the streets do not start out demanding a revolution.

They move into action over more immediate concerns.

So in Russia in 1917 the revolution began when thousands of women textile workers began striking over the shortage of bread. This quickly developed into a movement against the war, which was crushing living standards, and the autocratic government behind it.

In Tunisia, the first of the revolutions of 2011, it was the desperation of unemployed youth that began the revolt.

When Mohamed Bouazizi set himself on fire after government officials confiscated the food cart he was selling in an effort to make a living, it triggered mass protests.

Demands around living standards can quickly develop into calls for the fall of the regime.

A mass movement on a revolutionary scale poses a threat to any government, which means they often respond by using the police and the army against them. Such actions show those on the streets that toppling the regime is necessary to win their demands.

Revolutions do not simply result from grinding poverty and oppression. They also require masses of people to break the barriers of hopelessness and fear that stop them acting to change society.

In 2011 the success of revolution in Tunisia inspired mass revolt in Egypt and then across the whole region.

It provided millions of people across the Arab world with the confidence to take to the streets against autocratic regimes.

Palestinian resistance has also played this role in the past.

The First Palestinian Intifada in 1987 helped inspire an uprising of workers and the poor in Algeria the following year. Solidarity with the Second Intifada in 2000 produced



demonstrations in Egypt that helped launch the opposition movements that played a key role in the 2011 revolution.

The current Israeli onslaught on Gaza is radicalising millions.

The scale of the protests in solidarity can build the confidence of tens of thousands of people about the possibility of fighting for change. This can feed into an ongoing movement to challenge the system.

Workers

Building the movement for Palestine in the unions and the wider working class is vital.

Workers have been central to all the most powerful revolutionary movements.

This is because workers' strike action has the power to disrupt the flow of profits on which capitalism and the ruling class depend.

Workers' action can paralyse transport, the electricity system, factories and the operations of government. A mass strike movement also disrupts society on such a scale that it can bring down any government.

Workers' involvement on a large scale was a key reason for the success of the revolutions of 2011 in Tunisia and Egypt, compared to other revolts that year in places including Syria and Bahrain.

Similarly in Sudan in 2019 the Sudanese Professionals Association,

Above: Revolution in Sudan toppled the regime in 2019

based among doctors and teachers, played a key role in the mass protests that brought down the dictator.

But the working class is also the only force capable of ending capitalism and replacing it with a different kind of society based on democratic control of the economy and the wealth currently in the hands of a small elite.

The failure of the Arab revolutions of 2011 to develop into social revolutions that put workers and the poor in power resulted in their eventual defeat.

In Egypt an even more brutal military dictatorship emerged to stamp out the revolutionary movement.

Similarly in Sudan, after the revolution removed the dictator in 2019, some sections of the revolutionary movement compromised with the military in the hope they would grant democratic reforms. Instead the military has sought to maintain full control.

The direction a revolution takes depends on the level of workers' struggle and the strength of socialist organisation in the working class.

We need to build socialist organisation through every struggle that can develop workers' consciousness and confidence to fight.

This is the power that can free Palestine and put an end to imperialism and all the horrors and catastrophe that capitalism is bringing us.

AFTER THE VOICE REFERENDUM WHAT CAN WE DO ABOUT RACISM IN AUSTRALIA?

Matilda Fay looks at where racism in Australia comes from and what we can do about it

FOR MANY, the results of the Voice referendum were a source of anguish, painting a dire picture of public opinion on the rights of Aboriginal people. For many Indigenous people hopeful that a Voice to Parliament could deliver change, it felt like ordinary people had rejected them.

While there were many factors behind the failure of the Yes campaign, it's clear that racism played a major part. The responsibility for this racism, however, lies at the top of society, not amongst ordinary people.

Racist ideas are crucial for the ruling class in Australia, who propagate racism through the media and all major institutions in order to justify and maintain their power and sow the seeds of division amongst working people.

The No campaign was backed by one of the two major parties and had the support of a raft of right-wing opinion writers, shock jocks and mainstream media outlets.

They pushed openly racist narratives relentlessly. Coalition leaders Peter Dutton and Jacinta Price promoted myths about child abuse perpetrated by Aboriginal men in Indigenous communities, harking back to the disgraceful, disproven claims about “paedophile rings” peddled by the Howard government to justify the Northern Territory intervention.

Prominent No campaigner and former Labor MP Gary Johns made disgraceful comments about Indigenous people in remote communities living in a “stupor”.

At the centre of the No campaign was the conservative campaign organisation Advance, with billionaire backers and the likes of Tony Abbott on its advisory board. Significant resources were plunged into this campaign by ruling class conservatives with an interest in stoking racism.

For its part, the mainstream Yes campaign, backed by the Albanese government, did nothing to seriously challenge the foul racism coming from

the hard right.

Albanese was happy to support the “Voice to Parliament” proposal precisely because it was tokenistic, offering no real power to Indigenous people or challenge to the government’s racist agenda in Aboriginal Affairs. He consistently denied it would lead to more Indigenous rights to land or to compensation for dispossession, emphasising the continuation of “parliamentary supremacy” even with the Voice.

Throughout the campaign, Albanese continued on with a policy platform that includes explicitly racist controls over Aboriginal lives, such as the Income Management system in northern Australia that quarantines welfare payments and race-based alcohol bans in Aboriginal communities.

State Labor governments also continued to fan a panic about Indigenous “youth crime” while expanding police powers and prisons, reinforcing the stereotype of Indigenous people as criminals.

In Queensland the Labor government has built new youth prisons and overridden the Human Rights Act to allow children as young as ten to be kept in police watch-houses.

There was prominent support for the Yes campaign from mining giants such as BHP and Rio Tinto. But they only supported this tokenistic reform because it would not have interfered with their ability to profit from exploiting stolen Aboriginal lands. While the Yes campaign rolled on, the Albanese government was backing resource giants to continue dispossessing Aboriginal people across the country to facilitate the expansion of fossil fuels.

This included Labor government support for decision by the Native Title Tribunal, who in late 2022 ruled in favour of Santos to extinguish a Gomeri native title claim preventing gas mining in the Pilliga. This institutionalised racism, enacted through

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Time and again working class resistance has demonstrated that it is possible to challenge racist ideas

the courts and the police and based on a fundamental denial of Indigenous rights and humanity, has been baked into Australia’s foundations since the initial British invasion of 1788.

Racist foundations

By the time of the colonisation of Australia, racism had been honed into a fully developed ideology.

The idea that non-white people were less than human was a product of the rise of capitalism in Europe in the 17th century and the sprawling European empires which fed the capitalist system, relying on extreme violence against Indigenous peoples and the brutal system of chattel slavery.

This was also a time of popular revolution in Europe, with events like the French revolution proclaiming supposedly universal, Enlightenment principles like democracy and the “rights of Man” against old feudal hierarchies. These ideas stood in stark contrast to the reality of hundreds of thousands of Black people subjected to inhuman bondage during the slave trade.

Overcoming this contradiction saw the emergence of an ideology with scientific pretensions that argued Black people were less than human.

In 1771, the English philosopher David Hume wrote, “I am apt to suspect the Negroes to be naturally inferior to the Whites... There never was a civilised nation of any other complexion than white. No ingenious manufacturers among them, no arts, no sciences.”

Soon theories developed which categorised peoples as “white”, “black”, “brown”, “red” or “yellow”, with whites at the top.

As the Black historian Eric Williams wrote, “Slavery was not born of racism—rather, racism was the consequence of slavery.”

From the earliest days of colonisation, the idea that Aboriginal people were less than human allowed the British authorities to justify control of

land on the basis of “terra nullius”—that the land belonged to no one.

The early administrators of Australia were steeped in the racism that underpinned the British Empire. The Governor of the New South Wales colony from 1810 to 1821, Lachlan Macquarie, often portrayed as an enlightened administrator, had inherited wealth from the slave trade and was a veteran of British Army conquests in India. Macquarie declared martial law in 1816 that led to massacres of Aboriginal people as he pushed for expansion of the colony.

As the colony expanded with squatters seeking more Aboriginal land to expand their profits, the NSW Mounted Police, whose institutional successor still inflicts violence upon anti-racist demonstrators today, was established in 1825 with an explicit goal of quashing Aboriginal resistance.

The White Australia Policy was a founding pillar of Federation in 1901. For the Australian ruling class this was driven by their concern to justify their rule and to maintain an imperialist outpost in Asia. But it was also a powerful tool to tie white workers to nationalist ideas to persuade them they had a common interest with the white bosses who exploited them.

Resistance

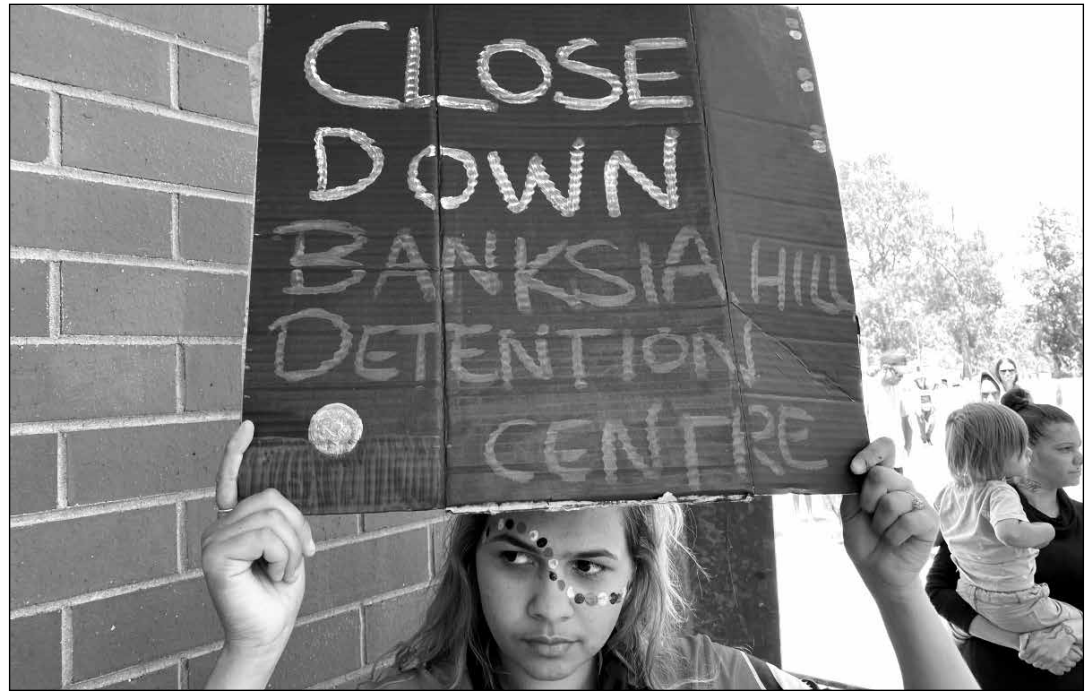
Despite Australian capitalism sowing racist ideas, time and time again working class resistance has demonstrated that it is possible to challenge these ideas and resist efforts to divide and rule.

In the 1934 canecutters’ strike in Queensland, militant workers challenged racism against Italian migrant workers to ensure a united fight for safety on the job to prevent the outbreak of Weil’s disease.

The Colonial Sugar Refinery (now CSR) had a “gentleman’s agreement” with the Australian Workers Union to preference non-migrant workers. As disease broke out, the union and the sugar bosses blamed migrant workers.

Communist Party members among the canecutters resisted this, calling meetings that united migrant and non-migrant workers and leading strikes. Union meetings were co-chaired by an Italian and an English speaker. By uniting across racial lines, they broke the deliberate tactics of the sugar bosses to use racism to quash union resistance and strengthened their collective conditions in the long run.

Similarly, strikes by Aboriginal workers have seen landmark victories for Aboriginal rights and increased anti-racist consciousness among non-



Above: Protesting against the soaring rates of imprisonment of Indigenous children, a product of institutionalised racism

Aboriginal people.

The Pilbara strike of 1946 won freedoms for Marrngu people from bondage on stations, where wealthy pastoralists exploited their labour for the wool industry and police kept them in line through brute force.

Marrngu people organised, went on strike and formed links with non-Aboriginal working class militants in cities around the country who supported their actions. They won the right to move freely between stations and challenged police brutality, even halting forced removals of children in the Pilbara during the strike.

Twenty years later, the Gurindji strike in 1966 built upon this, launching the movement for land rights, demanding self-determination and deepening links between Aboriginal workers and unions around the country.

Workers have a direct interest in fighting racism, which is used to divide ordinary people and distract attention from our real enemies in the ruling class. Workers, Indigenous people, Muslims and all the oppressed have a common enemy in the rich and powerful who benefit from our exploitation.

The anti-racist tradition in the trade unions and the working class remains crucial to building organisation that can wield industrial power to challenge systemic racism today.

Much of the mainstream commentary since the Voice proposal was defeated has focused on “conversations” as the key to shifting racist ideas.

This is the same strategy that was sold to us by the Voice campaign: educating people to gradually learn that Aboriginal people deserve recognition, and relying on an assimilationist rhetoric that claims “we’re all the same”.

This strategy brought us the TV ad to the tune of John Farnham’s *You’re the Voice*, in which an elderly white man slowly realises racism is bad after decades of watching Aboriginal players in his favourite AFL team. Conversations are needed, but it is the systemic racism that must be confronted.

Ideas can change rapidly in moments of collective resistance. In these moments, masses of non-Aboriginal people can realise that racism does nothing for them, and in fact that this racism works to undermine their working conditions and their safety from war and climate devastation.

To present a serious challenge to the powers that maintain anti-Aboriginal racism—the police, the courts, the media and the wealthy corporations that profit from Aboriginal land—will take a united anti-racist fight from the vast majority of people on this continent.

That fight is well and truly alive in the thousands of people who rally each year on Invasion Day, the people now rallying for Palestine, and indeed in the thousands of people who rallied for the Voice.

Through these actions people realise what anti-racism looks like: standing side by side against the brutality of capitalism and imperialism. And as our leaders support prisons, child removals and the genocide in Palestine, it’s clearer than ever that this fight is up to us.

LABOR'S GROVELLING TO DUTTON FAILS CHARACTER TEST

By Ian Rintoul

On 8 November, the High Court ruled indefinite immigration detention unlawful, overturning a 20-year-old precedent.

The NZYQ decision, as it is known, ended the fiction that immigration detention was “administrative” and not “punitive” and that therefore non-citizens could be held in immigration detention, potentially forever, if they could not be deported.

Indefinite detention was inherently racist and discriminatory. It applied only to non-citizens because their visas could be cancelled and, without a visa, they could be held in immigration detention.

Worse, “character grounds” were enough for non-citizens, many of them asylum-seekers and refugees, to have their visas cancelled. Any conviction for an offence committed while in immigration detention was grounds for visa cancellation or refusal.

Criminal convictions could be deemed to be “a substantial criminal record” (as little as two convictions with a cumulative sentence of 12 months’ prison) and therefore fail the character test.

But the Minister could also cancel visas on character grounds based on “general conduct”. This meant that visas were cancelled on Ministerial whim (that could not be appealed) even though people were not convicted or charges against them were dropped.

This violated one of the central tenets of criminal justice—you do the crime, you do the time. Non-citizens are often doing more time in immigration detention than any sentence they served in prison.

It was shocking enough that the Labor government went to the High Court arguing to maintain indefinite detention. But in the aftermath of the High Court’s decision, Labor has grovelled to Peter Dutton’s demands for more punitive laws including hysterical calls for those released from detention to be re-detained.

Labor has passed laws requiring electronic ankle bracelets and curfews to be imposed on those previously held



Above: Labor is scrambling to keep refugees and non-citizens in indefinite detention potentially forever

in indefinite detention, and promised new preventative detention laws to allow some to be put back in prison.

Home Affairs Minister, Clare O’Neil, enthusiastically joined the “hang ’em, flog ’em” cries from the Coalition, declaring, “If it were up to me, none of these people would have been released from detention and if I had any legal power, all of them would be right back in detention.”

Indefinite detention is the flip side of the same racist and exclusionary policies that underpin mandatory detention and border protection to systematically discriminate against asylum-seekers, refugees and other non-citizens.

Hard on the heels of Labor’s capitulation to Dutton came the revelations in the *Sydney Morning Herald* of NSW police efforts to use immigration detention as extra-judicial punishment.

NSW police lobbied the then Immigration Minister to indefinitely detain Moses Kellie, a refugee from Sierra Leone, when murder charges against him were dropped. Moses suicided in Villawood in January 2019.

Labor’s absolute commitment to Operation Sovereign Borders and offshore detention was also reaffirmed in late November when a boat carrying 12 Pakistani and Afghan

asylum-seekers was discovered on the Kimberley coast. All 12 have been sent to Nauru.

Meanwhile British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak says he will overcome a Supreme Court ruling that sending asylum-seekers to Rwanda is unlawful by following Australia’s example of offshore detention on Nauru and PNG more closely and using compliant countries more under Britain’s control.

Australia’s Operation Sovereign Borders, to deny, deter and detain, has become the quintessential example for governments around the world seeking to keep out refugees.

Socialists oppose all immigration controls because those controls are fundamentally racist and inextricably linked to maintaining the national borders that uphold the capitalist state.

Labor’s support for indefinite detention is just an extension of its anti-refugee policies—boat turnbacks, mandatory and offshore detention. Like Labor leaders Gillard and Rudd did before him, Anthony Albanese has become the latest Labor leader to try to outflank the Liberals from the right.

Not for the first time, Labor has failed the political character test. Understanding that failure is crucial to building a movement to keep up the fight against Labor’s Operation Sovereign Borders.

Labor has grovelled to Peter Dutton’s demands for more punitive laws

Solidarity