

Solidarity

Issue No. 182 / April 2024

\$3/\$5

END THE LIES, CUT THE TIES

NO ARMS

TRADE WITH

ISRAEL



NUCLEAR SUBS

Labor doubles down despite AUKUS woes

ZIONISM

Antisemitism and the origins of Israel

WORKERS POWER

Portugal's revolution 50 years on

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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Melbourne

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

The depth of the horror surpasses our ability to describe it
James Elder, a spokesperson with the United Nations Children's Fund (Unicef), after travelling the length of Gaza in late March

We are trying to flood the area, to flood it with humanitarian aid
Israeli military spokesperson Rear Admiral Daniel Hagari on 14 March, two weeks before it murdered seven aid workers from World Central Kitchen in a drone strike

The portfolio I have, it's a job that I absolutely love. And every day I get satisfaction out of the opportunities I have to change people's lives.
Immigration Minister Andrew Giles—the problem is, most of those changes are for the worst

I can make more money from a ten minute phone call trying to save 10 per cent on a \$100,000 invoice for buying plant and equipment for my hotels than I can in a whole day doing medical consultations.
Jerry Swartz, cosmetic surgeon, and multi-millionaire boss of Australia's largest privately owned hotel group, Schwartz Family Company

Right now are the good times.
Billionaire coal baron, and property developer Brian Flannery, chair of White Energy, number 132 of Australia's richest 250

I have never liked islands. [Bedarra island resort] was on sale for \$10 million and I talked to someone else who had one and they said, 'Never buy a bloody island.'
Max Beck, almost billionaire property developer, number 161 of Australian's richest 250

100 per cent renewables doesn't mean we won't have gas, quite the opposite.
SA Labor Premier Peter Mailinauskas

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Israel relies on AI to bomb targets

AN INVESTIGATION by +972 magazine and Local Call has revealed the scale of Israel's use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) to pick bombing targets in Gaza.

An AI tool called Lavender, used particularly in the early weeks of the war, marked up to 37,000 Palestinians as targets.

A source told the reporters that human oversight was no more than "a rubber stamp" with only about 20 seconds devoted to approving each target before it was bombed. Often they simply checked whether the target was male and then gave the go ahead.

"This was despite knowing that the system makes what are regarded as 'errors' in approximately 10 per cent of cases", they wrote. It is also unclear what the Israeli military regarded as an error—with anyone involved in civil administration roles in Gaza also linked to Hamas.

Worse, the targets were systematically bombed after they arrived home at night where their whole families lived. Other automated tracking tools, including one known as "Where's Daddy?", were used to flag when they had entered their houses.

Two sources told them that the army had approved the killing 15 to 20 civilians for every Hamas operative targeted. On other occasions it approved killing over 100 civilians to bomb a high ranking Hamas target.

Australia pays maker of drone that killed aid workers

THE AUSTRALIAN government is paying \$900 million to the company that built the drone used to murder seven aid workers including Australian Zomi Frankom in Gaza.

Israeli arms company Elbit Systems manufactures the Hermes 450 drone used to fire missiles targeted at the aid workers' convoy.

The Defence Department awarded Elbit a \$917 million contract in February to build "advanced protection, fighting capabilities and sensors" for new Infantry Fighting Vehicles being built in Geelong.

Pine Gap aiding Israel's war



SPY BASE Pine Gap is almost certainly playing a key role feeding intelligence to Israel for use against Gaza.

Academic Richard Tanter has made a complaint to the Inspector General of Intelligence and Security, arguing that Pine Gap's operations mean Australia could be complicit in Israeli acts of genocide identified by the International Court of Justice.

Located just outside Alice Springs, Pine Gap has played a key role in the US intelligence gathering system for 50 years.

Pine Gap controls "four United States geosynchronous signals intelligence satellites", he writes, which intercept "foreign telecommunications and satellite phones" as well as "telecommunications towers through which many cell phone and internet connections are transmitted; air defence systems, radars and radio communications systems", among other things.

These ORION satellites, "sit over the equator in a row, ranging roughly from where Pine Gap is through to the middle of the Indian Ocean," he told an online forum in March. This allows them to intercept signals from a large area of the globe. "The westernmost three of those satellites cover Gaza completely."

Israel and its spy agencies have an "extraordinarily intimate intelligence relationship" with the US, he writes, with one 2013 secret US National Security Agency (NSA) document showing that, "NSA signals intelligence was to be made available to Israel en masse and in detail, including data captured by Pine Gap-controlled ORION satellites".

The US has passed on intelligence from Pine Gap to Israel during wars in the past. During the 1973 Yom Kippur war, "the United States unilaterally provided Israel with strategically significant Pine Gap-derived intelligence on the positions of Egyptian military forces pressing Israeli forces in the Sinai", he notes. "Pine Gap-derived intelligence enabled the Israel Defence Force to break through Egyptian lines, and encircle a substantial Egyptian force."

Canada ends arms sales to Israel

THE CANADIAN government has agreed to end arms sales to Israel after a vote in parliament. The motion calling on it to, "cease the further authorization and transfer of arms exports to Israel", was put by the New Democratic Party, which supports the Liberal Party minority government.

In the three months after 7 October, Canada approved \$28.5 million in arms sales, a record amount.

The Canadian government has subsequently attempted to get around the ban by saying that trade under existing arms export permits would continue.

A number of other governments including Italy, Spain, and Belgium have also blocked arms sales to Israel. In February a court in the Netherlands prevented exports of parts for the F-35 fighter jets it is using to bomb Gaza.

Billionaires richer than ever

"WHAT A year it's been for the planet's billionaires," the Forbes business magazine declared as it released its annual list of the world's richest people. There are now more billionaires than ever—a record 2781 people.

Over the last year they have increased their wealth by \$3.1 trillion to hold \$14.2 trillion between them. This is larger than the annual production of every individual country on Earth, except China and the US.

The rest of us have faced years of pay cuts and a cost of living crisis.

The 250 wealthiest Australians hold a combined \$591.31 billion, according to *The Australian*. In total there are 159 billionaires in Australia, the highest ever, with another 20 added in the last year alone.

Many of them have seen their wealth balloon after switching from where they made their initial money to "the even more lucrative real estate sector", according to the paper.

Technology billionaire Mike Cannon-Brookes is among them, "spending more than \$300 million on mansions in and around" Sydney. Mining baron Gina Rinehart remains in top spot with \$50.5 billion in personal wealth.

Palestinians get 12 per cent of calories needed

PALESTINIANS IN the north of Gaza have been surviving on an average of 245 calories a day since January, according to Oxfam. This is equivalent to one can of beans.

"The minuscule amount of food represents less than 12 per cent of the recommended daily 2100 calorie intake needed per person", it says. Over 300,000 Palestinians remain there.

Oxfam has also calculated that across Gaza the food aid deliveries Israel has allowed in since October were only enough to allow 41 per cent of the recommended daily calories per person across the entire population.

"Israel is making deliberate choices to starve civilians", Lyn Morgain, Oxfam Australia Chief Executive said.

"All whilst displaced, with little to no access to clean water or a toilet, knowing most medical support has gone and under the constant threat of drones and bombs."

EDITORIAL

Albanese keeps backing Israel even as aid workers murdered

AFTER SIX months of slaughter, Israel's atrocities in Gaza are becoming more and more obscene. After the calculated killing of aid workers, US President Joe Biden and Prime Minister Anthony Albanese made more critical noises—but they continue to arm and support Israel.

Penny Wong says that the government is "contemplating recognising Palestinian statehood", but the government won't call for a permanent ceasefire and the withdrawal of Israel from Gaza.

Israel's aggression is threatening to spread the war further, through bombing in Lebanon and the bombing of the Iranian consulate in Syria in a virtually unprecedented attack.

Gaza's Al-Shifa Hospital has been completely destroyed with up to 400 people massacred after a two week siege. "Most of the bodies were unrecognisable. Families could only identify them by their clothes," said Hossam Shabat, a Palestinian journalist who visited the site.

"There wasn't one full body... Many had their hands and legs tied behind their backs and were flattened by a bulldozer. Many of the bodies were burned and left to be crushed to pieces."

Eyewitnesses said that Israeli soldiers carried out executions and detained hundreds of men for interrogation.

Israel has withdrawn most troops from Gaza but Netanyahu insists that a date has been set for a ground assault on Rafah.

Aid workers

Children are continuing to die of starvation as Israel restricts the amount of aid entering Gaza.

It has banned the largest aid organisation in Gaza, the UNRWA, from entering Gaza's north, where over 300,000 people are facing famine.

Israel's targeted killing of seven aid workers, including Australian Zomi Frankcom, from the World Central Kitchen (WCK) charity is just the latest part of its campaign of terror that has seen 200 aid workers killed since October.

Francesca Albanese, the UN Rapporteur for the Occupied Territories, said, "Knowing how Israel operates, my assessment is that Israeli forces intentionally killed WCK workers so that donors would pull out and civilians in Gaza could continue to be starved quietly."

The killing was not "tragic", as



Anthony Albanese put it. It was deliberate murder. Albanese has appointed a former Australian Defence Force chief, Mark Binskin, as a special adviser to ensure full transparency from Israel's inquiry into the killings. It's a joke.

Israel has killed more than 33,000 Gazans in the last six months. We don't need an inquiry, we need the killing to stop. But Albanese won't call for that.

Joe Biden's hypocrisy is also on display. He calls for a temporary ceasefire and more aid for civilians, but is sending another 1800 MK-84 one tonne and 500 MK-82 half-tonne bombs to Israel as well as 25 more F-35 fighter jets to ensure its genocide can continue.

The Albanese government is also complicit, with Australian companies including Quickstep, Ferra and HTC producing parts for the F-35 jets bombing Gaza.

Albanese says he only supports a long-term ceasefire if Hamas gives up its weapons. Like Biden, he has given the green light to Israel's continuing killing and its campaign to eliminate Hamas.

But opposition to Israel's genocide is spreading.

There have been renewed protests in Jordan demanding the government break its peace treaty with Israel. Demonstrations have also re-emerged in Morocco and Egypt, despite the repression.

In the UK even senior Tory MPs are demanding an arms embargo on Israel for carrying out war crimes. Democratic members of the US Congress including pro-establishment fig-

Above: Israel deliberately killed seven aid workers in a series of drone strikes

ures like former Speaker Nancy Pelosi have called for the US to stop sending weapons to Israel.

We need to keep campaigning to spread support for Palestine into workplaces, unions and the broader community—and to build a wider understanding of Albanese's complicity in Israel's crimes.

A protest at the Victorian state Labor conference on 18 May will demand that the state Labor government cuts all ties with Israel, including its 2022 Memorandum of Understanding with the Israeli Ministry of Defence and its partnership with the Israeli weapons company, Elbit Systems. A union-backed resolution is also expected to be put to the conference.

In Sydney construction and maritime unions will stop work and march on 1 May—with a Palestinian speaker and a Free Palestine contingent on the day. As many unionists and Palestine supporters as possible should join it—to help build stronger support for Palestine within the union movement.

Campaigning to drop the charges against MUA members and officials and all those arrested at Sydney's ZIM shipping blockades is another way to draw more unions into explicit action for Palestine.

Protests targeting military links with Israel can help expose Labor's failure to ban weapons exports or impose the kind of sanctions that could put real pressure on Israel.

To Free Palestine we need to deepen the campaign to break the Albanese government's support for Israel and its alliance with US imperialism.

.....
We need to break the Albanese government's support for Israel and its alliance with US imperialism

Albanese's weakness risks LGBTIQ+ rights in schools

By Matilda Fay

IN A fresh demonstration of the federal government's cowardice, Anthony Albanese has sought Peter Dutton's support to take a bipartisan approach to religious discrimination laws that risk opening LGBTIQ+ people up to further bigotry.

Faith groups have lobbied for years to introduce legislation to protect religious people and organisations from discrimination. For some, this means demanding a continued right for religious institutions to discriminate against particular employees or school students.

Australia's Sex Discrimination Act dates back to 1984 and is in urgent need of reform. Under the Act, religious institutions currently enjoy broad exemptions to anti-discrimination law. A religious school, for instance, can make hiring decisions based on sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, intersex status, marital or relationship status and pregnancy.

The Australian Law Reform Commission (ALRC) has recommended that the section allowing these exemptions be scrapped. This recommendation has been welcomed by Equality Australia.

But the government has distanced itself from the ALRC recommendations, making it clear that while it commissioned the report its findings do not represent government policy.

This political saga dates back to the Morrison government's infamous Religious Discrimination Bill that would have pointedly excluded trans kids from discrimination protections in schools. The proposal was so callous that it lost Morrison support from five MPs in his own party, who crossed the floor to support an amendment to protect trans kids.

Even then, Labor's position was shaky. According to Independent MP Rebecca Sharkie, Labor rejected an amendment to also protect staff at religious schools.

Labor then went to the 2022 election promising to implement laws preventing discrimination based on religion, while also protecting LGBTIQ+ children from discrimination, and offering more limited protections to employees of religious schools.



Above: Opposition sunk Scott Morrison's religious discrimination laws before the last election

Now, by signaling his desire to work with the Coalition on any changes, Albanese has demonstrated just how shallow his support for the LGBTIQ+ community really is. Any input from Dutton on these laws would make them likely to enshrine further discrimination rather than prevent it.

Albanese is effectively giving the opposition, as Greens MP David Shoebridge put it, "A veto or a co-writer's credit on the reforms that decide if kids can be expelled or teachers can be fired for their identity."

Albanese has also floated the possibility of working with The Greens, but only if they are "willing to support the rights of people to

practise their faith". This is code for backing the right to discriminate.

Labor's efforts to pursue the middle ground have allowed the Liberals to absurdly posture as the defenders of Muslim and migrant communities, as though demanding respect for LGBTIQ+ rights is some kind of discrimination.

But as the many LGBTIQ+ people and groups that have supported the protests for Palestine show, there is a common interest in fighting racism and oppression.

For the countless kids and teachers who still can't come out at work or school, or risk being expelled or losing their jobs, it's high time that the government put equality before cynical political manoeuvring.

New protests for Palestine shake Jordan

MASS DEMONSTRATIONS supporting Gaza have returned to the streets of Jordan in recent weeks.

During Ramadan, protesters have gathered in the courtyard of the Kaluti Mosque, near the Israeli embassy, nightly from 10pm.

In March hundreds were beaten back by riot police after they tried to storm the Israeli embassy following the siege of Al Shifa hospital in Gaza. Protests have continued despite growing restrictions and a crackdown from the regime.

Hundreds have been arrested—some of them held in administrative

detention for days before release.

Jordan's dictatorship has maintained a peace treaty with Israel since 1994. But its people solidly support the Palestinians, with over half the population made up of Palestinian refugees.

The regime fears that Israel's onslaught on Gaza will unleash further mass protests. Revolt across the Arab world holds the key to bringing down the pro-US regimes that collaborate with Israel. This could deliver the kind of support for Palestine capable of ending Israel's genocide against the Palestinians.

Australia's defence industry is arming Israel's genocide

By Angus Dermody

RECENT MONTHS have seen an increasing number of protests directed at the arms industry in Australia and its role in Israel's genocide in Gaza.

Actions in Brisbane, Melbourne and Sydney have drawn attention to the fact that companies arming Israel are operating out of factories and campuses here.

Government records show that between 2018 and 2023, \$13 million worth of Australian-manufactured arms and ammunition were exported to Israel.

While Penny Wong claims that Australia has not supplied weapons to Israel for at least five years, the government has issued 322 defence export permits to Israel since the start of 2017, with 52 issued just last year.

Some of these may be “non-lethal” items like body armour or vehicle parts used by the Israeli military. But Australian companies also supply weapons components that are not included in the official count.

Many of the Australian companies arming Israel—including Ferra, HTA, Quickstep, L3Harris and BAE Systems Australia—do so through contributions to Lockheed Martin's F-35 Joint Strike Fighter Program. The completed jets are sold to Israel by the US.

Australian industry has played a role in the supply chain for the F-35 fighter jets since 2006 and more than 70 Australian companies have participated in the production of components.

This means every F-35A Lightning II that the Israeli Air Force has used to drop bombs on Gaza since 7 October involves components manufactured in Australia. As long as our government refuses to stop arming Israel, these companies will be profiting off genocide.

Ferra, HTA, and Quickstep

Since January, protesters in Brisbane have targeted the factory of Ferra Engineering. Ferra is the sole global manufacturer of the mechanism in the F-35 fighter jets that holds and releases the 900-kilogram JDAM bombs that Israel uses indiscriminately on civilians in Gaza.

The campaign, Shut Down Ferra, was launched on 8 January when activists stormed the factory. Despite intense police intimidation following the first action, there have been successful pickets on three occasions,



Above: An F-35 strike fighter is loaded with bombs to drop on Gaza

with more actions planned. Hundreds of activists have also participated in pickets at the factory of Heat Treatment Australia (HTA) in Melbourne. HTA provides heat treatment to strengthen the components in the F-35s and are described by the Department of Defence as, “Vital to the Australian supply chain for the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter.”

In Sydney a protest was taking place on 13 April at the Quickstep factory. Quickstep proudly boasts that, “Every F-35 Lightning II aircraft currently in production incorporates approximately \$440,000 of content built at its facility at Bankstown Aerodrome in Western Sydney.”

After the protest was announced, the company removed their signs from outside the factory in an attempt to hide their presence from the community.

Students have organised protests on campuses in Sydney, Melbourne and Canberra to highlight the ties that arms companies have with Australian universities.

At the University of Sydney, the Eggleton Research Group brings together Lockheed Martin, L3Harris, the Royal Australian Air Force, several government agencies and the university's Jericho Smart Sensing Laboratory for several research projects with military applications.

Australia's arms exports

These protests have helped expose Australia's links with Israel's genocide in Gaza. But it will take union bans or government-imposed sanctions to stop the companies from arming Israel completely.

The Labor government has no

intention of acting. Labor is fully committed to expanding the arms industry in Australia. Last financial year the defence industry saw growth of 4 per cent, after a staggering 18 per cent increase the year before.

In 2018, Liberal PM Malcolm Turnbull laid out a plan for Australia to become one of the world's top ten military exporters. Liberal PM Scott Morrison announced that the size of the Australian Defence Force would be increased by 30 per cent by 2040—the largest it has been since the Vietnam War.

Since taking office, Labor have been just as committed to this militaristic agenda. They have continued to ramp up Australia's ability to wage military conflict in the region with their roll-out of the AUKUS nuclear submarine program and their expansion of the domestic defence industry.

The Albanese government has just signed the single largest defence export agreement in Australian history with the announcement of a \$1 billion deal for Australian-made Boxer armoured vehicles to be made by Rheinmetall in Queensland and exported to Germany.

Rheinmetall has previously worked with Israeli arms company Elbit Systems, which make the drones used by the IDF in Gaza, including the one that killed seven aid workers.

Australia's growing role as an arms producer is a product of our rulers' commitment to the US alliance and to Australia's own imperialist interests.

We need to oppose all military lies with Israel not just to stop the slaughter in Gaza, but to lay the groundwork for a serious fightback against Labor's ongoing militarism and drive to war on China.

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Many of the Australian companies arming Israel do so through contributions to Lockheed Martin's F-35 Joint Strike Fighter Program

Labor governments set to throw more Indigenous kids in prison

By George Skinner

STATE GOVERNMENTS nationwide are stepping up their war on Indigenous kids, with measures that will see more children in jail.

NSW Labor Premier Chris Minns has imposed new law and order measures citing claims of rising “youth crime” in regional towns with large Indigenous populations including Dubbo and Moree. Last month he announced sweeping changes to bail legislation that will make it harder for those aged 14-18 to be approved for bail.

Alongside this is a new offence introducing an extra two years imprisonment for “advertising” an offence online, targeting kids who post video of themselves on social media.

These changes will see more young people in prison for longer. This will only make the problem worse.

There has been widespread criticism of the changes. Calling the move a “political stunt”, chief executive of the NSW Aboriginal Legal Service (ALS), Karly Warner, warned that, “Aboriginal children are going to bear the consequences”.

“Throwing our children in jail will actually make crime worse, not better. Locking up children has never worked and will lead to devastating outcomes for communities, families and those children,” she said.

Already more than half of the 4394 children sent to prison in 2023 in NSW were Indigenous.

There has also been significant dissent inside the Labor Party, with Inner West Mayor Darcy Byrne calling it, “heartbreaking to see the government seeking to put even more children behind bars”. He is planning to move an urgency motion to repeal the laws at the NSW Labor conference in July. Even members of Minns’ own caucus were critical, with Labor MP Cameron Murphy speaking against the changes in parliament.

Same approach

Other state Labor governments are following the same approach.

In Victoria, the state government has reneged on plans to introduce a presumption of bail for children, and has introduced a trial of electronic monitoring for offenders on bail aged 15-17. Attorney General Jaclyn Symes admitted this was a result of wanting to avoid the “concern that we are weakening bail”, and appeasing the



Above: The knee jerk response to youth crime will mean more kids trapped in the prison system

“public perceptions of a youth crime crisis”.

The introduction of electronic monitoring will bring police surveillance into the homes of children and as Victorian Aboriginal Legal Services executive Nerita Waight pointed out, “Electronic monitoring has been tried... It does not work. It is a failed idea that only the most desperate politicians cling to when they are too scared to make the right decision”.

The Victoria government has also offered its support for only four of the 46 recommendations of a First-Nations led Yoorrook Justice Commission inquiry released in early April. The inquiry into the state’s child protection and criminal justice systems found evidence of ongoing systemic racism and gross human rights abuses against First Peoples.

Among the rejected recommendations was a call to stop imprisoning children under the age of 16 and to immediately increase the age of criminal responsibility from 10 to 14. Instead it will stagger the increase in the age of responsibility, lifting it to 12 by the end of this year and 14 in 2027.

Queensland too is seeing an appalling contest over law and order in the lead up to the October state election.

Last year the state Labor government overrode Queensland’s Human Rights Act to make breaching bail conditions a criminal offence for children. It is building more youth prisons and has a special police taskforce

that has boasted of over 1000 arrests targeting “youth crime”.

LNP opposition leader David Crisafulli has now vowed to remove the principle of “detention as a last resort” from the Youth Justice Act should he win October’s election.

In the Northern Territory, an emergency curfew was put in place for all under-18s in Alice Springs in response to crime. The NT’s Australian of the Year Blair McFarland warned that this “knee-jerk” response will only cause harm, making the “kids angry and disaffected”.

Crime in Alice Springs is a result of the poverty and deprivation caused by the NT Intervention. More police and punitive measures will only fuel the crisis.

Funding for services and support is desperately needed instead to keep Indigenous children out of prison across the country. In NSW the ALS has called on the government to abandon its punitive policies and, “fast track the community-based services and supports they promised under Closing the Gap.”

They are calling for funding for after-school, evening and weekend activities that engage at-risk young people, and targeted programs and responses with appropriate referral services for those that need them.

During the Voice referendum last year Labor promised to listen to Indigenous people. Instead it is doing the opposite. We have to demand money for services instead of spending on more police and prisons.

.....
Already more than half of the 4394 children sent to prison in 2023 in NSW were Indigenous

Palestine protesters block Port Botany demanding sanctions against ZIM shipping

By Ian Rintoul

NINETEEN PEOPLE, including the Secretary of the Sydney branch of the MUA Paul Keating, the MUA branch organiser, an International Transport Workers Federation inspector and other MUA members, were arrested in confrontation with scores of police on 24 March, as around 300 pro-Palestine protesters attempted to block the entrance to Sydney's Port Botany where the ZIM ship "Ganges" was docked.

The entrance to the Patrick terminal and the roads leading to the dock were blocked for an hour after protesters, with MUA flags in the lead, marched out of the park and occupied the area. The protest drew support from contingents from Students Against War, Teachers and School Staff for Palestine, ASU and PSA Unionists for Palestine, nurses union members, Sydney Uni BDS committee, and the Palestine Justice Movement (PJM).

Hundreds of people crossed the road, marching to the entrance to the Patrick terminal in an effort to block the Patrick night shift.

After 20 minutes blocking the entrance and cutting all traffic in and out of the terminal, police moved on the group of MUA members at the head of the protest.

Just as in the Sydney ZIM protest last November where 23 were arrested, the police have used NSW's draconian anti-protest laws to charge the 19 arrested. They have been charged with disruption to a major facility in Port Botany as well as obstructing traffic and failing to comply with a police direction, and will face court on 8 May.

The anti-protest laws carry a maximum penalty of a \$22,000 fine, two years jail, or both.

Union support

In the run-up to the protest the MUA had organised workplace meetings in Patrick to raise the issue of Palestine with the Patrick wharfies. The day before the protest every wharfie in Sydney got a text message indicating the union support for the community picket and encouraging workers to join the protest.

A ZIM fact sheet written for wharfies, explaining why Palestine is



Above: Protesters blocking the road outside the Patrick terminal at Port Botany in Sydney

union business, had also been circulated among the Patrick wharfies.

Thousands of "Block the Boat" leaflets had been distributed at the weekend Palestine rallies encouraging people to sign up for the ZIM protest SMS alerts.

The ZIM protests have been part of efforts to raise awareness amongst workers and build union action to target government support for Israel.

The call to get ZIM shipping out of Port Botany is part of demanding sanctions on companies that aid and abet Israel's genocidal attack on Gaza. Breaking Australian economic and military links would bring real pressure to bear and help isolate Israel.

ZIM has also been targeted by protests in Fremantle and in Melbourne, where protesters held up a ZIM ship for four days in January, as well as by port workers internationally.

The task now is to campaign to build deeper roots in the union movement and the confidence for workers themselves to take industrial action to sanction Israeli companies.

Paul Keating's arrest has raised the profile of union action in the Palestine campaign, and provides a focus to build wider union support. Motions of support have already come from CFMEU ACT delegates, workers at Ausport and Sydney Ferries, the Hutchison delegates committee in Sydney, and the International Dockers Union.

We should build union support for protests outside the court including on 8 May when the ZIM arrestees will

have to appear, and on 22 April when arrestees from the earlier ZIM protest are in court. Unions NSW is already committed to opposing the anti-protest laws—and demanding the state Labor government repeal them.

The same NSW Premier Chris Minns who bathed the Opera House in the colours of the Israeli flag last October has praised the police for the brutal arrests at the ZIM protest. Now there is a chance to connect the fight against the NSW Labor Premier's support for Israel with his continued use of anti-protest laws against unionists and protesters.

In the 1960s and 1970s during the campaigns against apartheid in South Africa and against the Vietnam War, maritime workers placed bans on ships. But such action is now illegal. The laws that prevent workers taking industrial action outside a bargaining period or taking industrial action in support of other workers also prevent workers taking action in solidarity with Palestine.

The Albanese Labor government that refuses to call for a permanent ceasefire has also done nothing to remove the shackles on the union movement. Workers and unions will have to confront the Labor government's anti-strike laws to take action for Palestine—bad laws have to be broken.

Deepening connections between the Palestine campaign and the union movement can build the possibilities for industrial action as a crucial part of building the struggle to Free Palestine.

Paul Keating's arrest provides a focus to build wider union support

Dutton's nuclear push intended to delay climate action

By Chris Breen

THE COALITION'S Peter Dutton has launched a push for nuclear power—but not because he expects it to come on-line any time soon. The move is a product of hostility to any serious increase in renewable energy such as solar and wind.

The AUKUS nuclear subs deal has also opened the door to Dutton. Labor's support for AUKUS means it is downplaying the issues around nuclear waste and nuclear safety, since it already plans to acquire 11 nuclear reactors on board the subs.

Even on Dutton's own claims a nuclear Small Modular Reactor (SMR) is more than ten years away. According to Dutton it would cost \$5 billion for a small 470MW plant.

Because of its own appalling commitment to nuclear-fuelled warfare, Labor is wrongly focused solely on the logistical problems with nuclear energy. But it is right that nuclear doesn't stack up on either cost or time.

Minister for Climate Change and Energy Chris Bowen claims it would cost around \$387 billion to replace every Australian coal plant with SMRs—a technology that doesn't exist commercially. One SMR has been built in Russia and one in China, both with capacities of less than 300MW.

A demonstration plant backed by Bill Gates in Wyoming with a proposed capacity of 345MW, a quarter of that of most coal-fired power plants, will cost \$6 billion and won't be ready until 2030—if it isn't plagued by the delays and cost blow outs that have affected other Western nuclear efforts.

The most successful time frame in recent years to build a nuclear power plant was 16 years in the United Arab Emirates, which has no meaningful environmental laws or labour protections.

AGL's Coopers Gap Wind Farm has a similar capacity at 453MW, cost six times less at \$850 million, and took just two years to build.

Wind and solar are orders of magnitude cheaper and faster to construct, without the nuclear waste or safety issues.

Nuclear power plants have a history of accidents—and any disaster can carry catastrophic consequences.

There is no safe limit for exposure to radioactive material, which can cause cancers, auto-immune issues,



fertility problems and death.

The Chernobyl disaster in 1986 caused between 35,000 and 150,000 deaths, while the Fukushima meltdown a decade ago saw Japan “on the verge” of having to evacuate Tokyo's 50 million people.

Labor's renewable transition

So why is Dutton proposing nuclear power? It is mainly a climate delaying tactic, to keep aging coal-fired power stations open beyond their expected life, and oppose Labor's support for renewables.

Promoting nuclear power also allows the Nationals to continue to campaign locally against the wind turbines and new transmission lines needed for the large scale renewable roll-out, whilst still claiming they support net zero emissions by 2050.

A large part of Dutton's job will simply be poking holes in Labor's story, which is littered with failures.

Labor says it wants renewable energy to provide 82 per cent of Australia's power by 2030. This was based on a projection about what would happen if the government simply left it to private companies to invest in energy generation, with most of the country's coal power plants due to be replaced.

But a collapse in investment saw only \$1.5 billion in new projects confirmed in 2023, down from \$6.5 billion the previous year. This needs to rise dramatically to meet their targets. Labor is hoping its new “ca-

Above: Clean up workers after the Fukushima nuclear disaster in Japan

capacity investment scheme” will speed things up.

But already NSW Labor is looking to spend up to \$400 million of public money a year to keep the Eraring coal-fired power station running.

And far from Labor meeting its reduction targets, carbon emissions increased last year by 3.6 million tonnes.

Dutton's campaign for nuclear power is also a pitch to workers in fossil fuel industries over jobs, even if these will never materialise. Labor still lacks a plan for workers in the existing fossil fuel industry.

Albanese's latest tack was the promise of \$1 billion for solar panel manufacturing, some of it on the site of the decommissioned Liddell coal power station in NSW.

Albanese made hints that the plan could provide regional jobs wherever coal power is shutting down—but there were no guarantees and few details.

Dutton's nuclear push needs to be opposed, but Labor offers no alternative when it is paying lip service to climate action, at the same time as overseeing a massive expansion of fossil fuels.

Since the federal election it has approved five coal mines that will create almost 150 million tonnes of carbon emissions.

We need public investment in renewable energy with job guarantees for existing fossil fuel workers if we are going to transition at the speed the climate crisis requires.

Wind and solar are cheaper and faster to construct, without the nuclear waste or safety issues

AUKUS and the nuclear subs: delayed, dirty and dangerous

By Adam Adelpour

The AUKUS military pact is burning huge sums of money and has the potential to make Australia a global destination for nuclear waste, as well as accelerating the drive to war between China and the US.

This March marked one year since the announcement of the extraordinary \$368 billion price tag attached to the AUKUS nuclear submarines.

But in the days leading up to the anniversary the Pentagon's new Defence Budget revealed massive construction delays. It has halved next year's planned procurement of Virginia-class nuclear-powered boats, producing just one in 2025, rather than two.

Under existing plans the US said they would deliver Virginia-class subs from its existing fleet to Australia in 2032 and 2035 and a newly built third submarine in 2038. But the sale to Australia hinges on the ability of the US to meet its own requirements.

Construction problems mean it has been building only 1.3 submarines per year. This needs to increase to 2.3 annually for there to be enough submarines available.

US Deputy Secretary of State Kurt Campbell has unmasked the aggressive intent of the submarines, highlighting that they are designed to bomb China and to, "deliver conventional ordnance from long distances... including in cross-strait circumstances" around Taiwan.

The real danger from another Donald Trump presidency is not that he would ditch AUKUS but that he would adopt even more aggressive actions against China.

But none of this is shaking the Albanese government's commitment to AUKUS. Instead it is dumping billions into the stressed submarine industrial base in the US and UK. Australia has agreed to invest \$3 billion in US shipyards and will give Britain \$3.1 billion toward designing AUKUS subs and expanding a Rolls-Royce plant that builds nuclear reactors for submarines.

AUKUS will continue to rip money away from schools, hospitals and cost-of-living relief, shovelling it into the pockets of arms manufacturers like BAE Systems who won the contract to build the SSN AUKUS subs.

Nuclear nightmare

New "nuclear safety" legislation tabled in parliament has further high-



Above: A Virginia-class nuclear submarine, which the US is struggling to produce in the numbers it wants

lighted the nuclear waste nightmare that will accompany the AUKUS subs.

Under the AUKUS pact Australia has committed to disposing of all high-level waste from its planned fleet of nuclear subs.

When a submarine is decommissioned highly radioactive spent fuel the size of a small hatchback has to be stored in a special facility, isolated from the environment for at least 100,000 years.

Richard Marles has not said where exactly this waste will be stored, except that it will be in a yet-to-be built facility on "current or future" Defence land. This almost certainly means trying to bulldoze Indigenous opposition to waste dumps on country.

But even worse, the new safety legislation opens the door to Australia being a destination for high-level nuclear waste from other AUKUS countries.

The Australian Conservation Foundation's Dave Sweeney told a senate enquiry that the bill could open "a poison portal to international waste". The legislation opens the way for facilities "managing, storing or disposing of radioactive waste from an AUKUS submarine".

But an "AUKUS submarine" is defined in the legislation as either an Australian or a UK/US submarine, and "Includes such a submarine that is not complete (for example, because it is being constructed or disposed of)."

Under the legislation Australia could become a destination for nuclear waste from the US and UK which both currently have no permanent disposal

solution for the high-level nuclear waste from their submarine fleets.

Defence Minister Richard Marles has protested that Australia will not accept high-level waste from other countries. But his government has already committed to accepting "low-level" radioactive waste from US and UK nuclear subs that rotate through Australian ports.

Japan joins AUKUS

AUKUS continues to accelerate the drive to war in our region. In an announcement this month it has been revealed that Japan will join the "second pillar" of AUKUS focused on technology sharing.

Anthony Albanese described this escalation of the effort to encircle China as a "natural evolution" of AUKUS.

The trajectory in the region is incredibly dangerous. At the end of 2022 Japan announced it would begin its biggest military build-up since the Second World War, with a \$320 billion plan that would see it acquire missiles capable of hitting China.

The genocide in Gaza has exposed the sham of the "rules based order" that AUKUS was supposedly set up to defend against China. The US, UK and Australia are central supporters of Israel's genocide.

This, along with the huge cost of AUKUS, the danger it is creating in our region and the nuclear waste nightmare it will unleash are all reasons to build a movement that can tear up the AUKUS agreement and smash imperialism in our region.

Australia could become a destination for high-level nuclear waste from the US and UK

Despite Labor's claims, cost of living still rising faster than wages

By James Supple

WORKERS ARE still feeling the cost of living crunch, with Anthony Albanese refusing to do anything that would make a real difference.

Albanese is hinting that the May budget could extend last year's power bill relief—but that only went to pensioners and people on income support.

Treasurer Jim Chalmers has tried to take credit for figures showing that wages are finally rising, after years of effective pay cuts due to prices rising faster than wages. On average wages increased 4.2 per cent through 2023, a fraction higher than the inflation rate of 4.1 per cent.

But in reality workers are still going backwards.

That's because the official inflation rate, measuring increases in the cost of living, has a major flaw. Housing costs, both increases in mortgage repayments and rent increases, are simply left out.

Yet housing costs are one of the main reasons behind the surge in the price of living.

In the last two years the Reserve Bank has handed down 13 increases to interest rates, massively hiking home loan repayments. Monthly costs on the average mortgage have jumped \$1500 as a result.

That produced a 40 per cent increase in repayments in the last year alone.

In Melbourne and Sydney, many people are spending half of their income on their home loan, according to AMP's deputy chief economist Diana Mousina.

Rents were also up 8.3 per cent nationally in the last 12 months, and by more than 10 per cent in Melbourne, Sydney and Perth.

The result is that the cost of living for wage earning households climbed 6.9 per cent in 2023, far higher than both the official inflation rate and wage rises. This is based on the Bureau of Statistics' own figures, which also calculate living cost indexes separate to the inflation rate.

Nor is the rising cost of housing just a result of the Reserve Bank jacking up interest rates. House prices have been rising dramatically for the last 20 years, from around three times annual income to over eight times income.

The surge in prices began after John Howard's Coalition government



introduced new tax breaks for housing investors, through changes to negative gearing and capital gains tax.

Housing became a speculative investment tool as investors rushed into the market, outbidding people looking for a place to live. Neither of the major parties have been prepared to do anything to fix this.

Labor promised modest changes to the tax breaks for investors at the 2016 and 2019 elections. But Anthony Albanese dumped these when he became leader.

Labor is determined to make sure housing investors never see prices fall—guaranteeing many young workers will never be able to afford a house.

Just since December 2019 house prices nationally are up a staggering 36 per cent.

Going hungry

Foodbank's chief executive Brianna Casey told the ABC that it was no longer simply those on income support looking for emergency assistance, "We know that those who are experiencing hunger for the first time are increasingly younger, young professionals in particular," she said. "They're employed, they're actually in the mid- to high-income bracket."

Anyone on income support is seriously struggling to get by. "Almost three-quarters of people receiving income support are eating less or skipping meals due to the low rate of payments and rising cost of living," according to the Australian Council of

Above: The rental and housing crisis are driving increases in the cost of living

Social Service.

Single parent households in Queensland relying on income support are \$250 a week behind what is needed for basic living expenses, a recent Queensland Council of Social Service report estimates.

A Senate Committee has now received over 900 responses from people on their experiences of the cost of living crisis. The responses show that constant stress about paying the bills, and the inability to afford to go out or take a holiday, is having a major impact on many workers' lives.

"We have gone without most discretionary items. There is definitely no budget for a holiday, new clothes, or new appliances," one person reported.

The cost of living crisis has had "a massive impact on our mental health. It's been really difficult and [I] have sleepless nights thinking about how I'm going to pay the next bill", he said. "We work hard and have a mortgage that is well below the median mortgage for Melbourne. We live in the outer suburbs, but only see a pretty bleak future at the moment."

Many said the cost of petrol stopped them from going out. One person had not seen their family, who live 800 kilometres away, for three years as a result.

Labor could act to increase Job-Seeker payments above the poverty line, build public housing and end the speculative rush into the housing market. But that would mean taking on the rich—and that's something Albanese is determined to avoid.

The cost of living for wage earning households climbed 6.9 per cent in 2023, far higher than inflation

Modi's Islamophobia on full display as India faces election

By David Glanz

PRIME MINISTER Narendra Modi is on track to win India's upcoming election, giving him a third term in office and allowing him to cement his reactionary and racist agenda.

Almost 970 million Indians head to the polls from 19 April in an election that runs for six weeks.

An opinion poll published on 3 April shows that Modi's National Democratic Alliance coalition could win 399 of the 543 seats in the lower house while his Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) alone is projected to win 342.

The main opposition party is the Indian National Congress, which governed India from 1952 to 1989 with just a three-year break. The poll indicates it will win a record low of 38 seats. Overall, the opposition coalition is on track for just 94 seats.

Modi's politics are those of Islamophobia and authoritarianism.

His political roots emerged from the far-right, Hindu nationalist Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), meaning National Volunteers Order.

Modi has built his career by deliberately stoking communalism—targeting Muslims as an “enemy within”.

In 2002, as governor of the province of Gujarat, Modi allowed racist thugs to rampage through Muslim areas and kill more than 2000 people.

As prime minister, he has supported a program of conversion to Hinduism, fomented hatred against so-called “love jihad” relationships between Muslims and Hindus, and passed a law that offers a path to Indian citizenship for persecuted religious minorities in Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Pakistan—but not for Muslims.

This could be used to deport thousands of Muslims, the majority of those who have fled to India seeking protection, such as Rohingyas from Bangladesh and Afghan Hazaras

Underpinning all this is the concept of Hindutva (“Hindu-ness”), the idea that the only authentic expression of India is Hindu in nature and origin and that the Hindu majority should impose its will on the rest of society.

Modi's BJP has long been associated with a sometimes bloody campaign to build a Hindu temple at Ayodhya in the northern state of Uttar Pradesh on land long used for a mosque.

In January, Modi turned the



Above: Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi gives a speech at the opening of the Hindu temple at Ayodhya built on a demolished mosque

consecration of the new temple into a massive national event, underscoring the way that India is increasingly becoming a Hindu supremacist society.

There was little mainstream dissent—Modi has muzzled the media and used the courts to crush opponents.

Bonanza

Modi is committed to building Indian capitalism. He has presided over cuts to welfare spending, privatisation and restrictions on unions, while cutting corporate taxes and abolishing wealth tax. The result has been a sharp increase in inequality.

For some Indians, his rule has been a bonanza. Since Modi first came to office in 2014, the value of India's stock market has trebled and India's economy has almost doubled.

Oxfam reports that there are 119 billionaires in India. Between 2018 and 2022, India was estimated to be producing 70 new millionaires every day. Yet 90 per cent of the population gets by on less, often much less, than \$5300 a year.

Modi has kept the support of many of the poor, however, through a combination of Hindu chauvinism and highly subsidised food and cooking gas.

He has also presided over an infrastructure expansion that includes LED lights in villages and cheap phones and mobile data. He argues that building highways and airports shows that India is becoming a modern power.

Encircling China

A Modi win will be greeted by An-

thony Albanese, who has gone out of his way to associate himself with the Indian leader.

Partly this is about Labor chasing votes among migrants. But it also reflects the fact that India is part of the Quad, an alliance with Australia, the US and Japan which is aimed at encircling China.

It will also be greeted by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. In 2017, Modi became the first Indian prime minister to visit Israel. He was one of the first global leaders to support Israel after 7 October.

Modi and Netanyahu share a commitment to ethnonationalism and religious supremacism, along with rampant Islamophobia.

The links are economic, too. Israel is in the process of recruiting 20,000 Indian workers. The Indian business giant Adani has bought the Israeli port of Haifa.

The two countries are also involved in plans, delayed by the Gaza crisis, to establish a rail and shipping corridor from India to the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Israel, Jordan and Europe.

Modi may look all-powerful but he continues to face opposition from below.

In 2020, about 250 million Indian workers took part in a one-day general strike.

And hundreds of thousands of farmers protested against laws that would strengthen big agriculture companies—and won.

The future of India will not be settled at the ballot box but in struggle, on the streets and in the workplaces.

Modi has built his career by targeting Muslims as an “enemy within”

ANTISEMITISM AND THE ORIGINS OF ZIONISM

Zionism emerged as a response to antisemitism in Europe but its aim of building a state with the support of imperialist powers has proven disastrous, writes **Jacob Starling**

IN EARLY 1905 a ferocious debate took place in Warsaw’s Great Synagogue. On one side was David Ben-Gurion, a member of Poale Zion and the future founder of the state of Israel. On the other was a young Jewish Socialist known as Shmulik, a representative of the General Jewish Labor Bund.

The subject of the debate was Zionism and the emancipation of the Jewish people.

The Bund argued that Jewish emancipation could be achieved only through socialist revolution, defeating the ruling class which stoked antisemitism and ushering in a tolerant and secular society.

Poale Zion by contrast dismissed the rising Russian revolutionary movement as a matter for Russian Gentiles and claimed that the only thing that could ensure the security of the Jewish people was a Jewish state in Palestine.

Socialism was far more popular among the Jewish communities of Eastern Europe than Zionism at the time.

In 1905 the Bund had 40,000 members across the Russian Empire. Two years earlier, the Zionist activist Chaim Weizmann had conceded that Zionism’s hardest struggle was against the Bund.

Today, after the horrors of the Holocaust, it seems like Zionism has won the argument. But the brutality unfolding in Gaza shows how disastrous Zionism has been.

Antisemitism and the Jewish State

It is impossible to understand the origins of Zionism without appreciating the pervasive and intensifying antisemitism in Europe at the end of the 19th century.

In the Russian Empire, home to the majority of the world’s Jewish population, the assassination of Tsar Alexander II in 1881 led the regime to begin a brutal antisemitic campaign.

Through the establishment of

far-right militias known as the “Black Hundreds”, it carried out vicious pogroms against Jewish people to divert peasant unrest.

The regime published the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, an infamous forged document which purported to reveal an international Jewish conspiracy, a few years later. To this day, the far right continues to repeat its conspiratorial claims that Jews control the world through a secret cabal.

In France, the 1894 trial of Alfred Dreyfus, a Jewish army colonel, led to a shocking eruption of antisemitism. In 1898, violent antisemitic riots erupted in Paris and 22 professed antisemites were elected to the French Parliament.

It was the Dreyfus Affair in particular which shaped the views of Theodor Herzl, the father of Political Zionism. Herzl was an Austrian journalist who had become deeply disillusioned by the extent of antisemitism in Europe.

In 1896 he published *The Jewish State*, which outlined the core principles of Zionism. He argued that antisemitism was the inevitable result of Jews trying to integrate into wider society. Therefore, the only possible method of Jewish emancipation would be mass emigration to a new “Jewish State.”

Declaring antisemitism ingrained and incurable, Herzl said that he could now “understand and pardon it”. He concluded that not only was it a waste of time to fight antisemitism, but that it was in the interests of the Zionist movement to collaborate with antisemites.

Knowing that many Jews would not want to leave behind their lives in Europe, he needed to use the antisemitism in Europe to compel them to migrate.

In 1903, several months after the Kishinev pogrom in which 50 Jews were murdered, Herzl met Vyacheslav von Plehve, the Tsarist Minister who had organised the massacre.

Zionism’s aims would be possible only with the support of imperialism

When Plehve complained about the Bund, and the growing Jewish socialist movement, Herzl reassured him that they had a common interest in weakening it.

The Bund rightly accused him of collaborating with the regime to help it “disgorge its unwanted Jews”.

Zionists continually collaborated with antisemites. In 1933, the Zionist Congress of Germany sent the newly appointed Chancellor Adolf Hitler a memorandum of support. They reassured Hitler that they had a common interest in forcing Jews from Germany and that the Zionist movement would oppose the international anti-Nazi boycott.

Ben-Gurion himself opposed plans to help Jewish children emigrate from Germany to Britain.

He reasoned that if he had to pick between two options, one in which all the children in Germany could emigrate to Britain, and one in which half would die but half would emigrate to Israel, he would pick the second option. For Ben-Gurion, Jewish lives mattered less than the survival of his Zionist colony.

This reveals a contradiction at the heart of Zionism. The purported basis of Herzl’s Jewish state was that it would end antisemitism and ensure the safety of the Jewish people.

Yet Zionism has supported and refused to challenge antisemitism, increasing the danger that it poses to Jewish people.

Zionism and colonialism

Zionism’s aims would be possible only with the support of imperialism. Zionism was to be a colonial movement.

In *The Jewish State*, Herzl argued that the British Empire would benefit from a Jewish state in Palestine, describing it as a “rampart of Europe against Asia, an outpost of civilisation as opposed to barbarism”.

During the First World War, Britain and France secretly arranged to split the Middle East between them.

France was to have a major stake in Palestine.

It was in this context that Chaim Weizmann pitched the idea of a Jewish state in Palestine to British Prime Minister David Lloyd George. He assured him that it would solidify British control of the Suez Canal and prevent Palestine falling into French hands.

Thus, in 1917, the Imperial War Cabinet published the Balfour Declaration, promising a “national homeland” for the Jewish people in Palestine.

The fact that this “national homeland” would be founded in a land already inhabited by the Palestinians did not faze the Zionists or their imperial patrons.

According to Lloyd George himself, “Zionism ... is of far profounder import than the desires and prejudices of the 700,000 Arabs who now inhabit that ancient land.”

Britain allowed larger numbers of Jewish settlers to migrate to Palestine, which saw the Jewish population of the area increase from 5 per cent in 1914 to 30 per cent by 1945.

The Zionists’ aims would be realised in the Nakba of 1948, when more than 850,000 Palestinians were violently expelled from their homes in order to found the state of Israel.

As a colonial project, Zionism has always rested on racism and brutality. In a grotesque inversion of justice, Zionism claims that the security of one people can only be achieved by the disenfranchisement of another.

Zionism and “Eretz Israel”

Zionism isn’t just an inherently racist endeavour; from the outset it also pursued an expansionist agenda.

In 1918 the World Zionist Organisation submitted a map of “Eretz Israel” which extended north into the Golan Heights and South Lebanon, east into the West Bank and West Jordan, south into a small part of Saudi Arabia and west into the Gaza Strip and Eastern Egypt.

This map is based on a pseudo-historical reading of the Old Testament and claims to depict the Biblical Kingdom of David and Solomon at its greatest extent.

Although Ben-Gurion and the other Zionist leaders were largely non-religious, they recognised that religion could give legitimacy to what amounted to a crude land grab.

Understanding that the Palestinians and the surrounding Arab states saw the Zionists as European colonial invaders, Israel also set out to crush



Above: A Palestinian in the West Bank overlooking an Israeli settlement attempting to annex the land

Arab resistance through military might.

Even when Ben-Gurion agreed to the UN Partition of Palestine in 1947, he secretly declared that Israel would not limit itself to these borders.

In 1948, Israel seized an area 38 per cent greater than under the UN partition plan, and in 1967 it went further, occupying the West Bank, the Golan Heights, the Gaza Strip and the Sinai Peninsula.

Although Israel agreed to leave the Sinai Peninsula in 1979, and withdrew its settlements from Gaza in 2005, the Likud Party, to which current Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu belongs, still views these as parts of Eretz Israel. And Israel’s blockade of Gaza means that its occupation of the Strip never really ended.

Although Israel aims to occupy as much land as possible, it also needs to ensure a demographic majority of Jews within its territory to maintain itself as an ethno-state.

Thus, the Indigenous inhabitants of the land must be removed, either through ethnic cleansing or outright extermination.

This was the motivation behind the Nakba of 1948 and today motivates the genocide in Gaza.

It is also why the West Bank has been held under Israeli military occupation for more than 50 years, as Israel has moved in Jewish settlers, forcibly expelled Palestinian villages and gradually colonised the area.

The socialist challenge

While Herzl’s conclusion from the Dreyfus Affair was that antisemitism was too pervasive to be defeated, the left’s response showed the opposite. In 1896, author Emile Zola released a ferocious open letter accusing the French government of antisemitism and arguing that Dreyfus’s conviction was a miscarriage of justice.

Zola was forced to flee the country, but his letter ignited an international campaign calling for the re-trial of Dreyfus.

This was a critical moment in the development of the socialist left. A popular movement forced the French Government to eventually exonerate Dreyfus. From this point on, the left would see antisemitism as one of its most dangerous opponents.

Zionism’s push for Jewish people to separate from their societies in Europe through establishing their own state in Palestine has been a dead end. It has produced ethnic cleansing and seen Israel become a violent oppressor of the Palestinians.

In the past six months, descendants of those who experienced the Holocaust have carried out a new genocide against Gaza.

Zionism has been a disastrous response to antisemitism. Anti-Jewish racism can be fought—as the history of Jewish radicalism and the left shows. It is rebuilding the socialist tradition that holds the hope for ending the colonial violence of Zionism and racism in all its forms.

PORTUGAL'S REVOLUTION 50 YEARS ON HOW COLONIAL WAR LED TO REVOLUTION

The revolution in Portugal beginning in 1974 with a revolt in the army, saw workers take control of hundreds of factories, writes **Luke Ottavi**

PORTUGAL WAS swept by revolution after junior army officers led a military coup against fascist dictator Marcelo Caetano on 25 April 1974.

The coup came as a result of protracted and costly wars against national liberation movements in the Portuguese colonies of Guinea, Mozambique and Angola.

The colonial wars were sapping government expenditure and more than 13,000 Portuguese soldiers had died—more than the country had lost in any conflict since the Napoleonic wars.

The junior army officers felt humiliated by their inability to suppress African armed resistance and were becoming increasingly hostile to a regime that wanted to see total victory in Africa.

The wars in Africa led to a revolution at home.

Portugal had been living under fascism since 1932, first under Antonio Salazar and then Caetano.

Workers had no right to strike nor a right to form unions, political parties were banned and there was extreme press censorship. Criticism of the regime resulted in imprisonment and torture by the notorious secret police.

Wages were low and a large peasantry lived in the north of country, some in serf-like conditions.

Portugal desperately needed to modernise its economy and foreign companies were eager to take advantage of low wages and a well-controlled workforce.

Since 1961, Portugal's colonial wars had resulted in the mobilisation of 200,000 soldiers in a country of eight million people. At their height, this consumed 8 per cent of GDP and 40 per cent of government expenditure.

Portugal wanted to cling onto its withering empire as it was a source of cheap raw materials and secure markets for Portugal's industrial goods.

With the onset of the colonial wars, recruitment to the officer academies fell as the wealthy young men who had traditionally led the army sought to avoid dying in war.

The men now coming through the officer corps were from a lower social and class background than previously. Many were from the provinces or overseas colonies.

It was from this strata that the Armed Forces Movement, the MFA, would draw its support.

During the course of the African wars, a phrase went round the new Portuguese officers, "If I was a black man, I too would be a terrorist." One young captain who went on to play a prominent role in the MFA, Diniz Almeda, went so far as to say that "we had no reason to fight".

The Armed Forces Movement

Initially, 136 officers held a secret meeting in the Portuguese countryside.

Due to the need for secrecy, the officers ostensibly met for a "special farmhouse barbecue". This was the inaugural meeting of the MFA. By April 1974 it had a network of 300 supporting officers.

The MFA were not radicals. They wanted a "democratic, modern, mixed economy" akin to other Western European states. This dovetailed with the needs of prominent Portuguese capitalists who recognised the need to modernise the economy.

The MFA led its successful coup on 25 April 1974.

Officer Otelo de Carvalho, who helped plan it, stated that the main purpose was to "reconquer the prestige of the Army and the Armed Forces".

The MFA never intended to govern Portugal, even temporarily. Instead, they called upon a group of eminent soldiers, led by General Spínola—himself a close associate

Workers' commissions were formed in factories that held mass meetings to push forward their demands

of Caetano—to govern. This military junta set up the first provisional government.

Unexpected strikes

Public reaction to the coup was initially cautious but slowly crowds gathered in Lisbon where the coup took place.

The slogan "the MFA is with the people, the people are with the MFA" was soon chanted enthusiastically by the crowds. Joyriders rode on tanks around the city and red carnations were stuffed into the barrels of the soldiers' guns and became a symbol for the revolution.

There was only one factory on strike on the day of the coup but when workers get word of it they soon started celebrating at work.

Management wanted to continue production but workers wanted to bring the revolution into the workplace. Not only were demands for higher wages made, but also the purging of fascist managers and secret police informants—known as "saneamento".

These demands were taken up in workplaces across the country.

Between 25 April and May Day—which was declared a public holiday for the first time—there was a festival of the oppressed.

Some 200,000 workers went on strike across key industries including shipbuilding, textiles, electronics, hotels and catering and banking.

Workers' commissions were formed in individual factories that held mass meetings to push forward their demands.

Many managers fled or were kicked out by the workforce and hundreds of workplaces were put under workers' control.

The strikes, occupations and land seizures terrified the ruling class.

One participant in the revolution, Clara Queiroz, recounts how, "Under

fascism everyone had been afraid of their neighbours, of being informed on. But now came the explosion and people came to the streets. The informers had vanished.”

On 29 April 100 families living in shanty towns occupied a new government housing project on the outskirts of Lisbon. Soon, more than 2000 houses were occupied around the country.

Students in high schools and universities held frequent general assemblies. In one high school, students made a list of teachers and pupils who were thought to collaborate with the secret police.

Participant Bruno Ponte tells how, “There were meetings in all the universities that kicked out lecturers associated with the old regime and invited back all the expelled students.”

Two high-profile examples of workers’ control were in the media. *Republica* newspaper, owned by a member of the moderate Socialist Party, was being forced to become a mouthpiece for the party.

Workers went on strike against job cuts and to demand an independent political position for the paper. They elected a workers’ committee to run it. The owner called in the army—but they refused to help him sack the workforce and handed control back to the workers’ committee.

Radio Renascença was run by the Catholic Church, which had supported fascism.

The workers took it over and programming was done by a general assembly. Reports of workers’ struggles were regularly broadcast and a microphone was hung in the street to broadcast from demonstrations passing by.

Eventually the government resorted to terrorism by literally blowing it up.

Popular power

But simply occupying the land and factories did not mean that workers now ran the country. The crucial question of who wielded political and social power—the working class, the MFA or the ruling class—was not yet settled.

For a year and a half there were continuous demonstrations, spreading workers’ control in the factories. Several attempted right-wing coups tried to rein this in but were stopped through massive workers’ mobilisations.

But the popularity of the MFA led most workers into thinking that the army would act in their interests.

Revolutionary socialist Chris Har-



Above: Joy-riding on a tank after the military coup that toppled the Portuguese dictatorship in 1974

man describes how the workers were disarmed, “Because they looked to the armed forces to act for them, and inside the armed forces the rank-and-file looked to the progressive officers for a lead.”

The junior officers that led the 25 April coup had privileges inside the army that working class revolt—and especially organisation among the rank-and-file soldiers—would take away.

Officers were paid 12 or 20 times more than rank-and-file soldiers.

The MFA had no interest in smashing the conventional army structure as they had a privileged position within it. But this left the army under the control of senior officers who wanted to stamp out radicalism in the army and bring workers’ control in the factories to an end.

The scale of workers’ struggles and the widespread workers’ control in the factories meant there was a possibility of fighting for a socialist revolution to put the whole of society under the democratic control of the working class.

For this happen the workers’ committees and inter-factory commissions needed to unite into suburb and city-wide workers’ councils. This would lay the basis for an alternative workers’ government that could challenge for state power. But there was no party within the working class organising for this to happen.

The largest force on the left was the Communist Party (PCP). It had been operating illegally for decades and many respected it for its role in fighting against fascism.

At the time of the coup the PCP had about 5000 members and some influence in the working class.

However, its Stalinist politics meant the PCP doggedly held to a stages theory of revolution. According to them, Portugal was too “backwards” to allow for a successful socialist revolution and so the first task was to build the country’s industrial base.

The PCP exhorted workers to “save the national economy” and to not strike. Indeed, the PCP was involved in many strike-breaking efforts.

By November 1975 indiscipline among the troops was widespread, and working class struggle was still growing. The army command moved to break the MFA and its influence in the army.

Radical soldiers and officers were purged from the army by “moderate” generals and officers in the MFA.

The hold that left-leaning MFA officers had over the army and government was broken.

In the election held on July 1976 the reformist Socialist Party—abject collaborators with the right-wing of the army—swept to victory and its leader Mario Soares became prime minister. The Socialist Party was able to restore capitalist normality and wind down the struggle of the working class.

There was no going back to Caetano’s fascist regime. The colonies gained their independence and the ruling class put its hopes in a parliamentary democracy to develop the economy and further integrate Portugal into Europe.

But Portugal provides an important example of how war can lead to revolution and the power the working class has to threaten the rule of capital.

HOW INDONESIA'S PEOPLE FOUGHT COLONIAL RULE

A new book by author David Van Reybrouck reveals a fascinating history of resistance to colonialism in Indonesia, writes **Simon Basketter**

REVOLUSI IS the epic story of Indonesia's independence struggle, in particular the four-year fight from 1945-49 that took on British and Dutch troops. The bravery of the freedom fighters enthused anti-colonial movements around the world.

David Van Reybrouck has produced an ode to revolution. He argues the declaration of independence in 1945 stirred and divided a world debilitated by war.

The revolution was no bolt from the blue. Its events were direct consequences of the racism and brutality that characterised Dutch-occupied Indonesia.

The Dutch East Indies were initially conquered by the Dutch East India Company (known by its Dutch initials VOC), which sailed to the archipelago in the early 1600s to hunt for natural resources such as spices that would make it a corporate giant.

For three centuries the VOC—and then the Netherlands—fed off Indonesia with ruthless exploitation, massacre and genocide. The mercantile project became territorial as the VOC took possession of swathes of spice-growing terrain.

It took territory by force, meting out genocidal “punishments” to people who got in the way. Van Reybrouck captures the hypocrisy of the venture when assessing the directors of the 17th century VOC.

He writes that these, “seventeen pipe-puffing white-collared worthies who expressed themselves in baroque sentences would have preferred the monopolies to be acquired with a little less bloodshed”.

But it backed slaughter because it, “was good for the bottom line”.

When the company went bankrupt, the islands fell prey to state colonialism of the British, French and Dutch. The Java War of 1825-1830 saw 200,000 killed and devastated the land. As they did later in the Middle East, imperialists drew lines on maps to divide up the spoils.

For the next half-century, with over another 100,000 killed, the Dutch

seized the rest of the archipelago.

By 1914, a nation of less than six million controlled more than 40 million people. But it could not hold onto it.

For Van Reybrouck the sinking of a passenger ship in 1936 was symbolic. The passengers were a microcosm of the stifling race and class divides in the colony.

On the lowest deck were the masses—a dehumanised and brutalised workforce.

One deck higher, barred from rising but looking up, were those categorised as “higher” classes and races. On the first deck, languorously soaking up the sun, those who ruled were waited upon by virtue of being European.

Nationalist struggle

It was emigre intellectuals that founded the first nationalist organisation in 1908.

The socialist Indies Social Democratic Organisation (ISDV) was formed in 1914. Sarekat Islam (SI) was founded in 1911 to protect merchants but soon became more militant.

By 1916 SI had hundreds of thousands of members, was raising self-government, and the socialists joined it. This transformed it into an Indonesian organisation that could lead struggles.

Rail worker and Marxist Semaun led the Semarang branch of the SI, which in 1916-17 grew from 1700 members to 20,000.

There were a series of strikes and protests. But after a soldiers' and sailors' revolt, the Dutch expelled ISDV leaders and gave soldiers' leaders 40 years imprisonment.

Membership of SI peaked at over two million in 1919. At the same time a union federation consisting of 22 unions and 70,000 workers was formed.

In 1920 the Communist Party of the Indies (Perserikatan Kommunist di India, PKI) was launched. But in the unions and in the SI tension

between right and left came to the fore as several strikes were defeated. Conservative religious forces withdrew from militant politics.

By 1925 Dutch repression reduced the communists' legal role to vanishing point. So communists launched an insurrection without much backing. Over 13,000 people were arrested, though it took the Dutch 18 months to quell the risings.

Eventually some 3000 communists were banished to the malaria-infested Boven Digul penal colony. The nationalists filled the vacuum somewhat ineffectually.

World War

It took the Second World War to transform the situation again.

The colony had become an even more treasured part of the Netherlands' economy, not least given the discovery of rich deposits of oil.

The Japanese were welcomed at first as the occupation supported the nationalists. But during Japan's four-year rule, four million civilians died mainly from starvation and disease.

During the war the most popular of the nationalists, Sukarno, headed a Japanese-imposed puppet regime.

In August 1945, following the atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, when the Japanese surrendered and no allied “liberator” had yet arrived, Sukarno proclaimed independence.

So the British occupied Indonesia. In Semarang, this was met with fierce resistance that only ended after six days of street fighting.

In the port of Surabaya British troops threw grenades into a crowd of Indonesians and a full scale revolt broke out.

The British sent 20,000 troops to Surabaya and began a three-day bombardment of the city. It was only retaken after bloody street fighting that saw 900 British soldiers dead. In Indonesia it is known as Heroes Day to this day.

The ferocity of the resistance convinced the British military that ef-

fective reconquest and occupation was not viable.

So the British gave Indonesia back to the Dutch—it didn't cross their mind to give it to the Indonesians. Armed by the British Labour Party the Dutch tried to hold on to Indonesia over the next four-and-a-half years. Some 200,000 Indonesians and 50,000 Dutch were killed.

The Australian government fully supported their effort at re-occupation, with the Dutch government-in-exile based in Australia during the Second World War.

But trade unions here imposed a ban on all Dutch shipping, paralysing the effort to reimpose colonial rule on Indonesia in the crucial early period after the war.

Indonesian, Indian, Chinese, Malay and Australian seafarers all united in an effort to support Indonesian independence.

Dutch soldiers committed appalling war crimes, repeatedly massacring civilians. The British-trained Captain Westerling would herd people into a village square. He'd force people to squat before they were shot in the head. The village would then be burnt to the ground.

But the Dutch colonial troops' violence, summary executions, systematic rape and torture could not stop the revolt. The reason was the young fighters who made up militias.

One said, "We were starving a lot of the time. When we came to a village, we'd ask for food. If there were no villages, we'd look at what the monkeys were eating. If there were no monkeys, we'd fast.

"We couldn't quench our thirst with coconuts, because if we'd climbed up into the trees, the Dutch would have seen us and shot us. We just drank water from the river.

"I didn't have a uniform. Just a red-and-white headband. They patrolled on foot and were better armed than we were—automatic rifles, whereas we could only fire one shot at a time! But we had scouts everywhere."

Suradi Surokusumo, who was 22, said, "I would have been ashamed not to fight the Dutch. I was proud of being a nationalist, proud of being Indonesian, proud of our national anthem 'Indonesia Raya'."

Toernowo Hadiwidjojo was 24 and worked as a telegraph operator for the railways. "I already had a two-year-old son but took part without a second thought... Independence was a must! I had no fear. I preferred war to colo-



Above: Indonesian independence fighters in Java in 1949

nialism!" he said.

According to Van Reybrouck, "The three-way split between Islamists, nationalists and communists was of lesser importance—the Revolusi had brought them all together.

"Some recited verses of the Koran during their improvised training exercises, others sang Indonesia Raya, yet others whistled The Internationale."

Nationalist leader Sukarno was released from prison, and on 27 December 1949 he flew to Jakarta to deliver a triumphant speech on the steps of the governor-general's palace.

Communists

Independence did not mean an end to protest and revolt. Despite having launched another disastrous coup attempt in 1948, the communists were on the rise again.

So when Sukarno replaced elections by "guided democracy" the communists accepted seats in the appointed parliament. Sukarno saw them as a counterweight to the military.

He rightly argued that the PKI "would be more controllable inside the government than outside". By 1965, the PKI had a membership of three million.

At the same time Sukarno became a leader of the international Non-Aligned Movement of nationalists. In the eyes of the US government, nonalignment meant support for the "communist camp".

So when a group of army officers attempted a coup in October 1965,

Indonesian military leaders—under General Suharto with US backing—embarked on a bloody civil war against the PKI and the left.

As many as one million Indonesians were slaughtered. The army set out to destroy the base of the communists in the villages, and again, there were villages burned.

Francisca Pattipilohy was born in 1926. She lived through four different eras—the colonial era, the Japanese occupation, the independence struggle and the 1960s.

She ended up exiled to the Netherlands when her husband, a journalist, was arrested by the Suharto regime and disappeared.

She recalled, "No matter how well you spoke Dutch, how educated you were, how hard you tried, you were always a native. In court, a native always had to sit on the ground. That was a way of drumming that humiliation into you."

She concludes, "We never actually became independent. We thought we could make things fairer, but we were three centuries behind. That makes it a difficult struggle.

"The other side was stronger, the capitalist system has established itself everywhere. But as long as this system carries on, the whole world will be wrecked and the environment devastated."

Revolusi: Indonesia and the Birth of the Modern World by David Van Reybrouck, translated by David Colmer and David McKay Bodley Head, \$36.99

Socialist Worker UK

LABOR WANTS TRUMP-LIKE POWERS TO DEPORT REFUGEES

By Ian Rintoul

A *SATURDAY Paper* puff-piece with Immigration Minister Andrew Giles recounts how, in 2015, both he and now Prime Minister Anthony Albanese opposed turning back asylum boats. Not any more, both of them now openly support it.

It's not the only principle that Giles and Albanese have thrown overboard. Nauru is now holding 64 asylum seekers in offshore detention.

Giles told *The Saturday Paper* he likes to think of himself "as deliberate in how I do my work." There is no doubt that Giles has deliberately thrown his principles overboard. And that Labor is just as deliberately attempting to outflank Dutton from the right over refugee policy.

Labor has maintained every aspect of Operation Sovereign Borders and has now introduced its "Migration Amendment (Removal and Other Measures) Bill" to overcome the High Court's NZYQ decision that finally struck down indefinite detention.

Instead of welcoming the decision, Labor is now moving to establish a legal framework that would allow them to hold non-citizens who refuse to cooperate in their own deportation in prison.

The Bill would apply not only to refugees affected by the NZYQ decision, but also to certain bridging visa holders. In particular it will apply to the 10,000 asylum seekers who were failed by the fast track assessment system.

"We are looking at anyone who has no right to remain in Australia being removed... That wasn't something that was done for the last decade. It's something that we will be really focussed on," Andrew Giles told reporters prior to the legislation being introduced.

If passed, Labor's Bill will impose a mandatory jail sentence of one to five years and a fine of up to \$93,900 on asylum seekers or refugees if they refuse to cooperate with their own removal.

It is currently stalled, after the



Above: Any of the 10,000 asylum seekers rejected under the Fast Track processing system could be deported under Labor's new laws

Liberals refused to pass the legislation and joined The Greens to send it to a committee. It will come back to the Senate in May, when the Liberals may well support the draconian powers.

Visa bans

The Bill also gives the Home Affairs Minister Trump-like powers to impose visa bans on any country designated as a "removal concern country" targeting countries such as Iran that do not cooperate with Australia to accept deportees.

Such a ban could prevent travel of any kind all between the designated country and Australia. The Bill also gives the Minister power to review the actual protection decision of someone they want to remove.

The new Bill is Labor's latest shocking, and desperate, measure to trash refugee rights.

In mid-April, the High Court will consider the case of ASF17, an Iranian man detained for ten years, who has understandably declined to cooperate with the government's attempt to remove him. The High Court will have to rule if there is any "prospect of his removal in the reasonably foreseeable future". If not, he will have to be released along with an estimated 170 others in detention.

The person is bi-sexual and fears persecution if he is returned to Iran. Forcing him to meet Iranian officials would be enough to raise concerns about his safety if he was subsequently removed to Iran. The government wants to be able to jail anyone who refuses to cooperate.

Why is the government determined to remove people to Iran? The human rights abuses there are well established. Hundreds were killed during the "Woman, Life, Freedom" protests in 2022. Similar considerations apply to Sudan, Somalia, Iraq or Sri Lanka, to name just a few.

Home Affairs has employed 46 lawyers explicitly to deal with the government's "renewed focus on removals" in the aftermath of the High Court ending indefinite detention.

But Labor has done nothing to re-assess the cases of the 10,000 who were rejected under the fast track system.

When Albanese was elected he said Labor could be "strong on borders without being weak on humanity". It was always a glib phrase and Labor, just like the Liberals, has shown itself to be just as committed to racist legislation and just as lacking in humanity.

Labor's new Bill is another nail in its humanitarian coffin.

Labor's Bill will impose a mandatory jail sentence on refugees if they refuse to cooperate with their own removal

Solidarity