



International Women's Day We are Women! We are Fighting!

Over the past 100 years or more Australian women have made many gains but huge hurdles remain to be overcome. The struggle is far from won. International Women's Day is a time to reflect on these past gains and the struggles that lie ahead.

In 2022, men earned \$472 more per week than women in Australia. Australia has one of the worst government-funded paid parental leave schemes and one of the most highly gender-segregated workforces in the developed world.

In retirement, women continue to be disadvantaged, with the average superannuation payout for women being a third of that for men.

Workplace laws carry the legacy of a system designed around the idea of a male breadwinner without parenting and caring responsibilities.

Lack of access to secure family-friendly working arrangements, to high-quality, affordable early childhood education and care, and to adequate and equitable paid parental leave continues to undermine women's workforce participation and drive the gender pay and retirement income gaps.

Women can become de-skilled and unable to find similar work when they seek to return to the workforce. High childcare costs mean that women on low wages gain little financial benefit from paid work.

Our system doesn't work for women or modern families. Women don't freely choose to sacrifice their job security and careers in order to manage a disproportionate amount of care work.

Work predominantly performed by women such as aged care, nursing, early childhood education, cleaning, and teaching is lower-paid and less secure because of gendered assumptions and discriminatory views about the value and complexity of the work. This essential and skilled work must be properly valued by governments and employers.

The Communist Party of Australia (CPA) advocates for:

- The immediate introduction of equal pay for work of equal value;
- Part-time and full-time employment to be on a permanent basis with full rights to all entitlements;
- Reforms to aged care that address chronic workforce shortages, low pay, lack of access to training, and inadequate staff to resident ratios;

- Free, universal access to quality early childhood education and care, delivered by highly skilled, properly paid and securely employed educators, including after-hours, vacation, and occasional care, in communities, schools and workplaces;
- An end to social security payments based on relationship status, so that women have access to an independent income regardless of another family member's income;
- Anti-discrimination and affirmative action legislation to assist Indigenous, migrant, and disabled women to become economically independent;
- Paid parental leave for at least 52 weeks to be shared between parents at full-wage replacement (or the national minimum wage, whichever is greater);
- 10 days paid family and domestic violence leave per year as a minimum employment standard;
- Closure of the retirement income gap, including payment of superannuation on all unpaid care-related absences, and a legislated pathway to a superannuation guarantee rate of 15 per cent, expedited for women;
- The right of women to safe, free abortion;
- Increased public funding for women's housing, refuges, legal, and other services to meet needs;
- The enforcement of laws against sexual harassment.

The CPA recognises that only socialism promotes the dignity and value of all workers, including women. It promotes a balance between women's social contribution through work, their family life, cultural, and other pursuits, and their individual development. Only socialism is capable of structuring society to achieve this balance.

The CPA highlights the importance of women being active in struggle to improve their employment prospects and their conditions of work. The CPA recognises the importance of women joining trade unions in that struggle. Women must take a stand alongside male workers to fight for improvements together.

It was Mao Zedong who famously said, "Women hold up half the sky."

A woman's place is in her union!
A woman's place is in the Communist Party! ✳




International Women's Day 2021 Melbourne March. Photo: www.matthrkac.com.au flickr.com (CC BY 2.0)

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Put socialism back into IWD

The inspiration for International Women's Day arose out of the struggle of working-class textile women to form trade unions and for the right to vote in the USA. The actual proposal for such a day was put by Clara Zetkin in 1910 at a conference of socialist women in Copenhagen. "... the Socialist women of all countries will hold each year a Women's Day, whose foremost purpose it must be to aid the attainment of women's suffrage. This demand must be handled in conjunction with the entire women's question according to Socialist precepts," the motion put by Zetkin read in part. In the following years the concept was taken up by socialist women across Europe, including in Russia, as well as the USA. The date moved around but eventually settled on 8 March.

In the socialist countries, women have made great social and economic gains such as tackling discrimination; gaining access to paid employment, pay equity, paid maternity leave; provision of childcare; education; cultural and sporting programs; and much more. This put capitalist governments under pressure to give some concessions to women.

In capitalist countries such as Australia, women make up a significant section of the working class in lower-paid industries such as the care sector, hospitality, community work, as cleaners, and in the retail sector. Australia has one of the most highly gender-segregated workforces in the industrialised world.

Through their labour, women are exploited like their male counterparts, but they are subjected to additional exploitation and hardships. The most highly exploited and vulnerable are youth, immigrants, overseas students, other visa workers, and Indigenous women. Women are most at risk of domestic and family violence, sexual harassment, and make up a growing number of the homeless.

The capitalist class continues to find ways to take advantage of and perpetuate the historical inequality of the sexes. Industries comprised of predominately women workers pay workers more poorly than equivalent male dominated ones and are more likely to be casualised. Their qualifications, experience and skills are not fully recognised. Corporations make larger profits where they are able to recruit workers who have no choice but to accept low wages. Such people commonly include female immigrants, those on working visas, youth, and Indigenous women. These are among the most exploited groups in society.

In capitalist countries, economic oppression of women in the workplace is facilitated by a mass media that continues to portray women in subordinate roles to men. Religious institutions and conservative political parties have traditionally promoted the idea of women as the nurturer of the family, as opposed to being a breadwinner. At the same time, the capitalist class realises that bringing women into the workforce creates a larger base of workers to selectively exploit. It is for this reason there has been some progress with paid maternity leave and childcare. But capitalism cannot provide solutions to the problems that women encounter because the system as a whole is driven by the profit ambitions of private companies and not the social needs of the community.

A socialist society aspires to enhancing the position of women in society, particularly those women who form part of the working class, and to ending all exploitation of working women and men.

IWD has been largely hijacked by social democrats and capitalist enterprises; its socialist essence has been lost. The media concentrate on "glass ceilings," senior executive positions, boardrooms, and MPs while ignoring the plight of working-class women. Social democrats call for reforms within capitalism.

The Communist Party of Australia supports the call for equality with men but stresses that we cannot stop at this demand. The primary impediment to women's freedom under a capitalist system is the exploitation of their labour. Women should be afforded the real value of their labour, and not simply the same wage as the exploited opposite sex. It is time to end exploitation and put socialism back into IWD.

International Women's Day

All over the world women are not safe. Women are not equal. Women are not respected. This year, we're saying enough is enough! Join us as we show bosses, governments, and the media that women are speaking up and demanding change.

Melbourne

Wednesday 8th March

5:30pm to 7:30pm rally Old Treasury Building

Sydney

Saturday 11th March

11am Town Hall rally "Raising Up for Equality"

Adelaide

Wednesday 8th March

5.00 to 5.30 pm march – start Tarndanyangga/Victoria Square

Perth

Wednesday 8th March

5.30pm Forrest Chase



Adelaide Lunch

INTERNATIONAL WOMENS DAY

SPEAKER: CHERYL SAUNDERS
Coordinator of the Grannies Group

Wednesday, March 8th
12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.
66 Wattle St, Royal Park, SA

All Welcome
Light lunch provided
RSVP: 0438 850 359

PUBLIC MEETING

Sunday, 19th March, 4.30pm
MARRICKVILLE TOWN HALL

WE LIVE IN TROUBLED TIMES...

CAN
WAR
BE AVOIDED
OR
WILL OUR
PEACE
BE SHATTERED
?

Speakers:
Prof. Bob Carr (former NSW Premier and Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs)
Senator David Shoebridge (NSW Greens Senator)
Dr Alison Broinowski (President of Australians for War Powers Reform)
Col. Lawrence Wilkinson (Assistant to US Secretary of State, Colin Powell, in 2003)

Facilitator:
Mary Kostakidis (journalist and former 'Face' of SBS)

MPG
IPAW
An Initiative of the Marrickville Peace Group and the Independent and Peaceful Australia Network.
Contact Nick Deane 0430 536 929

GLOBAL CLIMATE STRIKE

12pm Friday 3rd March
Sydney Town Hall

On 3rd March, students, workers, teachers, parents and grandparents will take to the streets of Sydney as a part of the Global ClimateStrike! The climate crisis has not disappeared with the defeat of Scott Morrison's government. 2022 was a year of climate breakdown. Climate extremes are happening at an increased pace across Australia – the disastrous floods in the Kimberley are just the latest example.

The Albanese government's current 43 per cent target is inadequate and relies on an emissions trading scheme that allows polluters to buy their way out of reducing emissions. Alarmingly, the government is also supporting a series of major new fossil fuel projects like the Scarborough gas project in WA, the Middle Arm gas hub in the NT and the Santos Narrabri Pilliga Gas Project in NSW.

RIGHT TO HOUSING PUBLIC FORUM

A CONVERSATION ABOUT THE STATE OF PUBLIC AND COMMUNITY HOUSING IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA

5-MARCH
2PM

PRESENTED BY:
WORKERS SOLIDARITY WA

SUPPORTERS:

FOR MORE INFORMATION:
E: PERTH@CPA.ORG.AU
M: 0407699094

ADDRESS: TRADES HALL
TRAINING ROOMS
32 BEUFORT STREET



Talking About Land Rights

Hannah Middleton

To sustain life people have to produce food, clothing, shelter and other necessities.

The process of production takes place within the interaction between human society and nature and involves three elements – human labour; the tools human beings create in order to produce; and the land and other natural resources that people use to meet their needs.

Land is the main means of production, the main source of life. For capitalists, it is the primary source of profits.

Land is a major source of wealth – its use for sheep, cattle and farming; the natural resources in and on it (gold, oil, bauxite, copper, diamonds, timber and so on); as real estate and for tourism.

All this and more makes land one of the country's most valuable assets.

INDIGENOUS LAND

For Aborigines land means something different. It provides sustenance and it is also mother, hearth, home, the source of identity, the basis of culture and spirituality.

Aboriginal land ownership is inalienable: It cannot be bought or sold for, it is not a possession but an enduring source of life as well as a responsibility for a particular community.

Aboriginal land is owned communally, by a whole community.

Private ownership for private profit is not the only way things can be done – there is an alternative of collective ownership for the benefit not of an individual but of a group.

THE FIGHT FOR LAND

The first big land grab took place at the time of white settlement in 1788, when the continent was seized without recognition from the original owners – the Aboriginal people.

Since then, capitalist governments and corporations have continuously conspired, manoeuvred and propagandised to ensure that land is not returned.

However, since 1788, Aboriginal people have defended their lands and waters and asserted their rights to their homelands. These are some examples of their resistance.

Pemulwuy, a Bidjigal man, led the fight against British settlement from 1788 to 1802.

The “Black War” in Tasmania continued for over a decade. The “Fighting Gunditj-mara” in south-west Victoria were resisting takeover of their land in the 1800s.

The Kalkadoon warriors of north-central Queensland and the Bunuba people, led by Jandamarra's warriors, in the Kimberley region continued fighting to protect their land in the 1890s.



Invasion Day 2016, Perth. Photo: Gerry Georgatos

In 1946 Aboriginal communities left the stations where they were working in the Pilbara region, and went on to wage the longest strike action in Australia's history.

In 1963 the Yolgnu people from north-east Arnhem Land presented the Australian Parliament with a bark petition. In 1966 over 200 Gurindji men, women and children walked off the Vestey-owned cattle station and occupied their traditional land at Daguragu.

In 1968 the people of Yirrkala lodged the first legal claim for recognition of Aboriginal land title.

The Aboriginal Tent Embassy was set up on the front lawns of Old Parliament House on 26th January 1972.

THE THREAT FROM LAND RIGHTS

For the owners of capital, land rights are both an immediate threat to their economic interests and also a dagger aimed at the very heart of capitalism.

For Aboriginal communities to own even part of the land sets a dangerous precedent to monopoly corporations who are intent on owning or leasing all the resources of this country in order to make the most profit possible.

Aboriginal control of their land makes it harder for corporations to rip out Australia's wealth for private profit. Aboriginal land rights can help reduce foreign ownership of Australia's natural wealth.

Because Aboriginal land is communally owned, it presents the alternative of collective ownership for the benefit of all community

members and suggests that private ownership for private profit is not the only way things have to be done.

It can even suggest the revolutionary idea that all the valuable assets in Australia could become the collective property of all the people and be used not for private profit but to meet the needs of the people.

The CPA has pointed out: “The land rights campaign is a significant element in the struggle for socialism and these Aboriginal demands lay the basis for the transition to social ownership by all the people, black and white, of land and other resources in a socialist Australia.”

THE WAY FORWARD

The CPA fights for communal, inalienable land rights for Aborigines based upon traditional ownership, religious association, long occupancy and/or need. These are rights which must be returned; they are not gifts to be bestowed by the dominant society.

Aboriginal land title must include full rights to minerals and other natural resources as well as to all sacred sites, heritage areas and areas of traditional significance.

Another essential feature is the establishment of autonomous areas for communities on the basis of their communally owned land where they can develop their own economic, social and cultural life.

Autonomous areas would be comparable to the States and have an equivalent representation in the Australian Federal Parliament.

The Aboriginal Provisional Government (APG) says: “the areas would be scattered far and wide around Australia and would be the land needed by local Aboriginal communities.

“While some have scoffed at the peculiar boundaries such a division of land would create, it is not unusual in international circles. For example, the United States is a nation yet is separated completely from its territory in Alaska. Its territory in Hawaii is halfway around the other side of the world. This has not been seen as a reason to laugh at the jurisdiction of the United State.”

UNITY IN ACTION

The CPA works for unity in action to be built between black and white Australians, stressing that:

“The working-class movement must realise that part of their movement is made up of Aboriginal and Islander workers and that the national liberation and working-class movements are allied. The revolutionary and anti-monopoly content of the land rights campaign is as important for the white workers as it is for the Aborigines and Islanders.”

The working people of Australia suffer at the hands of the same rapacious transnationals and monopolies, the same political forces which have inflicted so much injustice on the Aboriginal and Islander people. We have a common struggle.

Aborigines battling for land and mineral rights, white workers fighting to save their jobs – two sides of the one coin, two groups fighting the same battle against the same enemy. It's not a question of “helping” or “supporting” Aborigines. It's a matter of solidarity in the common struggle.

As Karl Marx wrote: “Labour in the white skin can never be free while labour in the black skin is in chains.” ✪

Mining fatalities

“Hold mining companies to account”

Last week two mineworkers, Dylan Langridge and Trevor Davis, were killed at work at the Dugald River zinc mine in north-west Queensland.

Just prior to the tragedy the Mining and Energy Union issued the following statement of concern over mine safety in Queensland:

Queensland mineworkers have had enough of coal companies and senior mine executives going unpunished over serious and fatal workplace accidents.

The union is calling on the Queensland government to get serious about prosecuting coal companies and individuals whose actions have led to workers being killed or severely injured at work after a series of tragic fatalities in the industry.

The union has launched a

campaign urging mineworkers and community members to write to the [Queensland] Minister for Resources, Scott Stewart, and Minister for Industrial Relations, Grace Grace, asking for justice for their colleagues killed at work.

“I'm sick of sitting down with the families of members we've lost and trying to explain why no one has been held accountable,” says Stephen Smyth, MEU Queensland District President.

“Grieving families and communities hear time and time again that no charges are laid, or charges are laid and dropped, or cases are indefinitely held up.

“In 2020 five miners at the Grosvenor Mine were horrifically burned in an explosion and despite a Board of Inquiry finding Anglo American knew gas emissions

generated by the rate of production exceeded drainage capacity no one has been prosecuted.

“After David Routledge was crushed by a wall at Middlemount Mine in 2019 charges initially brought against a senior manager were dropped.

“Charges laid against the mine operator and a senior mine executive after the death of Brad Duxbury at the Carborough Downs Mine in 2019 were rejected due to a legal technicality.

“In 2021 Graham Dawson was crushed by a collapsing roof at Crinum Mine and despite risk management plans falling short and the failure to deploy strata monitoring devices no charges have been laid.

“It's time for Ministers in the Queensland government to get serious about prosecuting companies

whose workers are killed on the job as everyone has the right to return safely from work each day.

“We want guidelines for prosecutions to be reviewed and to take into account the need for mining workers, families and communities to see justice pursued over fatalities in their industry. And when charges can't be laid, or charges are dropped, we want the relevant authorities to provide a clear explanation,” said Smyth.

Graham Dawson's daughters Katrina and Leesh added their voices to the campaign, saying: “Our father lost his life working underground. For families like ours, the consequences of a tragic workplace accident burden us every day. We're supporting the Justice for Miners campaign and urging the government to ensure mining

companies are held accountable when they allow death and injury to occur on their watch.”

THE FIGURES

After Western Australia, Queensland is the second biggest mining state in the country. Over the 141 years, from 1882 to the start of 2023, there have been 441 deaths in Queensland's coal mining sector, while 1,065 people have died in the mineral mining and quarrying sector, according to Resources Safety & Health Queensland (RSQH).

Since 2015, 14 people have died in the state's coal mining industry and nine lives have been lost to the mineral and quarrying sector. ✪

Nurses and midwives are hurting

Shaye Candish

Nurses and midwives are hurting. Working a double shift or extra hours has become the norm, and two days off in a row is considered a luxury. They are digging deep, trying to provide patients with safe care but are constantly arriving at work to find their emergency department, ward or maternity unit is short-staffed yet again.

Patient care under these conditions is being compromised and it is taking a toll because as trained clinicians, nurses, and midwives want to give everyone the best care possible – but currently they can't. What they are increasingly describing is psychological injury, an experience of knowing the right actions to take ethically but being systemically constrained from doing so.

The NSW health minister has previously dismissed this as hyperbole. That somehow nurses and midwives are immune to suffering trauma themselves, when in fact they often experience it in the form of guilt from letting their patients down. This has been compounding, shift after shift, removing their sense of job satisfaction and motivation to practice.

So much so, over half of almost 3000 public sector nurses and midwives the NSW Nurses and Midwives' Association surveyed late last year indicated they intend on leaving their current role within the next five years and of those, over 20 per cent plan to leave the profession entirely. Many told us they are fatigued or burnt out and around 15 in every 100 reported post-traumatic stress symptoms at a clinical level.

This precious workforce is now feeling acutely overworked.

As activity and elective surgery levels in public hospitals continue

to surge, the prevalence of psychological harm amongst health workers has also grown. A study from last November into psychological injury claims to the NSW workers' compensation system revealed a rapid rise, with nurses and midwives highly impacted. Stress and anxiety were the most common injuries, accounting for two-thirds of cases.

An NSW Auditor-General's review into the health, safety, and wellbeing of nurses and junior doctors in late 2020 also found "the Ministry had not dedicated sufficient resources to assess system-wide health and safety data and develop initiatives to address state-wide risks, in particular risks to nursing staff."

Despite this growing evidence, governments have failed to intervene effectively or have opted for an "individual resilience" approach, placing the burden of a broken health system back onto the distressed nurse or midwife – the individual with the least control over their working environment to change their situation.

Nurses and midwives are still being told to "be more resilient" or "find a less stressful role," once again increasing their anxieties about work and prompting them to seek alternative employment.

This cannot continue. Rather than trying to normalise the trail of destruction that COVID-19 has left so far, a system-wide solution-driven focus is needed.

We must see improvements in working conditions, as well as urgent investment in services, such as robust physical and mental health supports, job control, and childcare.

One area in critical need of reform is staffing. Nursing and midwifery staffing levels have declined over the course of the pandemic, with many senior clinicians leaving



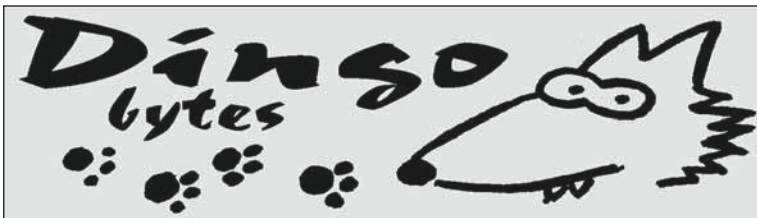
Photo: Aleksahgabrielle – Wikimedia Commons (CC BY-SA 4.0)

or opting for less demanding roles that offer more job control.

Those remaining at the bedside are required to fill these gaps through increased overtime and increased responsibility. Early career staff are suffering the loss of their experienced peers most, missing out on mentorship and support, and adding to the stress and expectations being placed upon them.

Plugging staffing gaps with first-year new graduates is not the answer, it is a band-aid solution and not sustainable. Given Australia also has one of the highest rates of graduate nurses per capita, the issue is less about local supply and more about retaining valuable experience across the workforce.

Shaye Candish is the General Secretary of the NSW Nurses and Midwives' Association
The Lamp ✨



A report released from The McKell Institute titled *A decade of wages lost* has found that the average real wage of an essential worker is lower today than it would have been at any time since 2011. Nurses and midwives are some of the worst affected, taking a real pay cut of almost \$3,000. According to the report: "A first-year nurse working for NSW Health in 2022 earned an annual wage of \$76,403.60. When adjusted to 2022 dollars, that same first-year nurse working in 2012 earned \$79,184.68. A nurse is \$2,825.33 worse off today than they were in 2012." The report also stated that Australia's low wage growth is a caused by a "deliberate result of government policy architecture," with some of the most detrimental policies being: Public sector wage freezes; support for a reduction in penalty rates; inaction on wage theft and underpayment; and opposition to increases in minimum wages.

Last week aged care workers rallied outside of the Fair Work Commission (FWC) in Perth, Brisbane, Adelaide, and Sydney to highlight their ongoing concerns about the industry. On 4th November last year the FWC determined an interim 15 per cent wage increase for aged care workers, but have not finalised a decision on whether workers will receive the full 25 per cent workers were calling for. United Workers Union aged care director Carolyn Smith said all aged care workers needed some certainty. "Last year aged care workers were breathing a sigh of relief after the Commission announced a 15 per cent boost to their pay packets," Smith said. "While workers are yet to see that increase reflected in their pay, for many it provided the first glimpse of hope in more than a decade. We would like to see the Commission go a few steps further by implementing the full 25 percent and ensuring that the pay rise is applied to everyone working in the aged care industry." Since last year's announcement, the union has collected more than 1000 stories from workers who have varied concerns about the industry, the people they work alongside and the people they care for. Mandy, an aged care worker said, "The 15 per cent pay rise is a step in the right direction, but our work has not been properly valued for years, so I see it as more of a pay correction than a pay rise. Domestic workers, cooks, cleaners, and lifestyle workers have not been included. "We can't run without them. They need to be included in this pay rise," said Smith.

PARASITE OF THE WEEK: The overturning of *Roe v Wade* in the US means that abortion is now a criminal offence in many US States. In Queensland, abortion rights group "Equal. Safe. Funded." warns that recent abortion law reforms are also under threat, from the Queensland LNP Opposition who want to make it a criminal offence *again*, to have an abortion, or for a health practitioner to offer one, and to allow politicians to overrule personal decisions between an individual and their health practitioner.

Call Unanswered

Unanswered phone calls at Services Australia reflect the attraction and retention issues plaguing the Australian Public Service (APS), according to the Community and Public Sector Union (CPSU).

Recent Senate Estimates hearings revealed that Centrelink is currently operating 500 staff below the level of staff they are funded for, and are struggling to fill those vacant positions, which is resulting in unanswered calls and increasing wait times.

Attraction and retention of APS employees is an issue that has grown as private sector wages and conditions have pulled ahead of the public sector.

"To prevent public services from deteriorating, the Federal government must urgently address these attraction and retention issues plaguing the APS and invest in re-establishing itself as a model employer," the CPSU said.

The union will be campaigning for public servants to have substantial improvements to both their pay and conditions as it enters service-wide bargaining this year. It has called on the Federal Government to further increase APS staffing numbers in its May budget.

"Phone calls are going unanswered in Services Australia because the APS is facing an attraction and retention crisis, while it also works to recover from a decade of staffing

cuts," said CPSU Deputy National President Mathew Harrison.

"In order to attract and then retain staff, Services Australia needs to be a better place to work; its employees need a pay increase that reflects rising cost of living pressures, conditions must be improved, those on labour hire agreements need to be transferred into permanent and ongoing secure jobs and there needs to be a boost in overall staffing numbers.

"Failure to do this will see the same problems surface time and time again." ✨

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Apartheid complicity



Photo: Alisdare Hickson – flickr.com (CC BY-NC 2.0)

Gareth Smith

Richard Falk and Virginia Tilley's 2017 report for the UN Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia ("Israeli Practices towards the Palestinian People and the Question of Apartheid") was pulled from the UN website after only two days because it concluded "on the basis of scholarly enquiry and overwhelming evidence, that Israel has imposed a regime of apartheid on the Palestinian people as a whole, wherever they may be."

Since then Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch and the Israeli human rights NGO, B'Tselem have independently reached the same conclusion.

In 1975 Australia ratified the International

Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid which obligates international bodies, and even individuals and private institutions, to take measures to combat apartheid wherever it is committed and to punish its perpetrators.

When Prime Minister Morrison received the Jerusalem Prize, he stated that "Israel was in his heart"! Australia's intimate relationship with Israel is incompatible with the convention and marks Australia as an international law pariah.

Moreover, Australians are unwittingly supporting apartheid Israel, given that donations to the Jewish National Fund, which finances land acquisition, house demolitions and illegal settlement expansion, are tax deductible. ✪

The bastard banks

David Matters

The Reserve Bank continues to launch an assault on the working class. The fallacy that interest rate rises are going to do anything other than impoverish millions of Australians while enriching the financiers has to be exposed.

The inflation we are experiencing is the result of the huge increase in expenditure on war and the aggressive foreign policy of our governments in pursuing war

agendas in the interests of these same financiers that are currently making record profits from weapons sales and the ratcheting up of gas and oil prices.

The other result of this policy is to forcibly close some businesses and cause a rise in unemployment. The capitalist class is concerned that there is a shortage of labour and that this might result in greater wage rises, so they are trying to slow economic activity. Slower economic activity will throw more out of work.

The interest rate rise also puts thousands of Australians at risk of homelessness. It is time that the government stops acting in the interests of the billionaires and starts to provide more public investment in housing.

The current approach of deliberately shrinking the economy through higher interest rates is bloating bank profits while causing untold suffering and misery to working Australians. ✪

Immigration re-detention raids

Having introduced laws to over-turn the legal decision last December that saw 163 people released from immigration detention, the government has begun re-detaining people.

It is understood that there are now four people in the Melbourne Immigration Transit Accommodation (MITA) and up to 18 in Sydney's Villawood detention centre who were rounded up in raids by squads of Border Force and police last week.

There is no indication that any discretion is being exercised regarding who is being targeted for re-detention, compounding the injustice of retrospective legislation.

One of the people re-detained in Melbourne had pleaded with Border Force not to be released from detention in December because he had nowhere to go.

"The government must stop its indiscriminate re-detention raids," said Ian Rintoul, from the Refugee Action Coalition, "Section 501 was always an unjust and discriminatory section of the Migration Act, that allowed the government to hold people, potentially indefinitely, even for minor crimes, just because they are non-citizens. It violates the accepted understanding of the criminal justice system.

"There must be complete transparency and full accounting of the fiasco surrounding the releases.

Labor should spell out who was released and the circumstances of their re-detention.

"Labor is compounding its abuse of basic human rights – firstly using the Coalition's tactic of overturning unfavourable legal decisions, secondly, making the law retrospective, and thirdly carrying out raids to re-detain without regard to whether or not there is any real threat to the community.

"Section 501 is just a way to fill immigration detention centres and fill private operator Serco's pockets; it should be scrapped." ✪

GREEN NOTES

Anna Pha

One of the biggest con jobs foisted on the Australian public and the planet is Chevron's \$81 billion Gorgon "clean gas" project in WA. It is one of the largest liquid natural gas (LNG) projects in the world, churning out tonnes of greenhouse gases daily. Its licence was conditional on taking "all practical means" to bury at least 80 per cent of its carbon emissions. The first LNG cargo departed Barrow Island in March 2016 and since then questions have been raised as to just how much effort it has put into achieving that target.

Chevron reports burying 1.6 million tonnes of CO₂ while releasing 3.4 million tonnes in the year 2021-22 – that is capturing and sequestering 32 per cent. This, after six years of operation, is far from its 80 per cent obligation and that is on its own figures. Chevron had teething problems. The *Sydney Morning Herald* (13-11-2022) reported that it found excess water in the system mixed with carbon dioxide forming an acid that threatened to corrode the equipment. The next issue was rising pressure in a layer of sandstone 2km below Barrow Island where the CO₂ was to be stored. And then the water had to be removed to release the pressure...

Carbon capture and storage (CCS) remains unproven on an industrial scale. It is expensive, will take years to be developed and the process consumes considerable energy. At best, 10 per cent of emissions will still escape. The time and resources that could be better spent on developing renewables. It is a carbon con job, used as a licence to pollute. Chevron has not met its conditions to operate the Gorgon project which is one of the largest greenhouse gas emitters in Australia. Its licence should be cancelled, and the project closed. Its employees and those communities and businesses that rely on it for income should be assisted to transition to renewable energy and other projects that are appropriate for the region.

The Safeguard Mechanism (SM) requires Australia's largest greenhouse gas emitters (100,000 tonnes or more pa) to keep their emissions below a set limit (baseline) which is set on a company-by-company basis. These companies are in large-emitting industry sectors such as electricity generation, mining, oil and gas extraction, manufacturing, and waste. Companies can purchase carbon credits to offset emissions over their baseline or when they "under-emit" their baseline they can sell credits. In practice, companies have been able to increase emissions. A market-based scheme, it was introduced by the Abbott government and, as with other Coalition climate change measures, was not designed to interfere with fossil fuel emitters.

The Labor government is planning to introduce legislation to "toughen" the scheme while keeping its framework intact. Baselines will be gradually reduced (4.9 per cent pa) with the aim of reducing the emissions of these companies by 43 per cent by 2030. This is consistent with Labor's overall 43 per cent target, is far below what science dictates. The scheme would remain market-based with companies able to continue emitting by buying carbon credits – many of which are dubious in themselves. Labor will need the support of the Greens if the legislation is to pass in the Senate. At present that seems unlikely. The Greens have expressed huge concerns with the scheme, such as the use of offsets and the low emissions reduction targets. Greens leader Adam Bandt said: "... we're prepared to put those concerns aside and give Labor's scheme a chance if Labor agrees to stop opening new coal and gas projects." With more than 100 new gas and coal projects in the pipeline, the only thing the mechanism would appear to safeguard is fossil fuel projects and profits. (See Thejuicemedia Honest Government Ads for satirical Youtube)

Free Assange
Belmarsh Tribunal
 Saturday 4th March 7pm
 The Great Hall – Sydney University

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USA: Ohio train wreck: deregulation and corporate greed

EAST PALESTINE, OHIO: The more people learn about the great freight train wreck in East Palestine, Ohio, the worse the story gets.

The controlled burn of toxic chemicals here filled the air the residents breathe and covered the waters and soil in and around town with chemicals. Dead fish are floating in the creeks, and a frightening smell hovers in the air.

The story unfolding here is shot through with corporate greed, as the executives of the criminally negligent railroad, Norfolk Southern, manipulated the political system to maximize profits from that train – and others – to satisfy their Wall Street investors, at the expense of safety, workers, and now a small town in Ohio.

It's a story not just of the wreck of the 150-car, 2835 metre freight train, where 50 cars jumped the tracks, but the widening variety of toxic chemicals that escaped from them. It's a story of dying plants, 3500 dead fish in an Ohio River tributary, and a mass evacuation of the town of 4700 people.

It's a story of residents afraid for good reason to come back to their homes. Some haven't. It's a story of a town meeting in East Palestine where stricken people vented their frustration and where representatives of the company responsible, the Class I freight railroad Norfolk Southern (NS), were no-shows.

It's a story of government turning a blind eye to Norfolk Southern's abuses, notably not classifying the freight as a "high-hazard flammable train," which requires extra precautions and inspections in advance.

That's on Biden administration Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg's watch, though prior deregulation which let NS get away with its excesses occurred under Republican Donald Trump's Transportation Secretary, Elaine Chao.

It's also a story of NS turning a blind eye to workers' warnings of problems even before the train reached Ohio, after it began its run in Madison County, Ill., workers are saying. The train broke down at least once long before it ever reached East Palestine, they said.

Here, courtesy of various sources, most notably Railroad Workers United (RWU), the leading rank-and-file organisation of railroad workers crossing all rail crafts, are further details about the East Palestine wreck. RWU has a team of 15 rank-and-file trained rail workers probing the wreck scene and gathering information.

The list of chemicals escaping from the wrecked train cars dedicated to carrying hazardous liquids includes vinyl chloride, phosgene, and hydrogen chloride. All were in large plumes of smoke that hung

over East Palestine and rose into the air.

The railroad told the Environmental Protection Agency that other chemicals released by the wreck included ethylene glycol monobutyl ether, isobutylene, and ethylhexyl acrylate.

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) said the last two cause skin, eye, nose, and throat irritation and burning. Ethylhexyl acrylate is also a carcinogen and monobutyl ether can cause dizziness, drowsiness, blood in the urine, headaches, and vomiting, CDC adds.

After officials lifted the evacuation order, calling the air and water in East Palestine safe, returning residents reported sore throats, burning eyes, and respiratory problems, and wildlife was found dead, RWU co-chair Ross Grooters said. Ohio officials reported the 3500 dead fish but whether the number is higher cannot be verified.

EPA also reported "a controlled burn" to get rid of the chemicals after they leaked from the NS tank cars. Since then, "there have been no concerning levels of toxins in the air," the agency says.

That's an eerie echo, though the corporate media is not saying so, of what Republican President George W. Bush's EPA told residents of the New York City metro area and recovery workers in the days immediately following the 11th September, 2001, al-Qaeda attack which destroyed the Twin Towers.

The flaming jet fuel and the collapse of those buildings released millions of tons of toxic chemicals, asbestos, and particulates into the air. The unionised workers digging through "The Pile," or surviving unionised New York Fire Fighters, are still suffering and dying of rare diseases as a result.

The Ohio EPA says some of the released chemicals reached tributaries of the Ohio River, which serves 25 million people. The agency claims the river's volume dilutes any chemicals so much that they're not a downstream hazard. The people of Ohio and Pennsylvania, have good reason to be skeptical.

The head of the EPA came here Thursday, 14 days after the disaster, with promises of federal help but was faced with angry local residents, many of whom did not believe him.

He was faced with questions from residents demanding to know if he would allow his children to drink the water in the town. The state and local officials surrounding him assured the disbelieving residents that the testing showed the water was safe. It was difficult for people to accept that. Only days earlier Republican Gov. DeWine had told them not to drink that water.

A customer at the town pizza shop said by cellphone that he did not expect the visit from the EPA to



Photo: Simon J Brady – flickr.com (CC BY-NC-ND 2.0)

result in anything. "We are getting headaches and have to deal with strong odours and I saw dead fish in the creek near my house," he said.

The pizza shop and other businesses in town were closed last week but some have reopened.

People in town have been heard telling younger people to pack up, leave permanently, and to make a life somewhere else.

There was an angry gathering at a town meeting where residents literally begged town leaders to help them after they were jilted by the railroad which failed, as promised, to appear at the meeting. After having little concern for the safety of the residents along its route, the railroad said it failed to show because it was concerned about the safety of its representatives.

NS got the Trump regime to repeal rules governing the quality of train brakes – rules that, no matter how low their prior standards, could have prevented the disaster.

Safe train brakes, one progressive watchdog says, "failed the cost-benefit analysis" Trump Transportation Secretary Elaine Chao imposed in deciding to abolish federal rules. If costs are greater than benefits, at least according to calculations agencies made, Chao and other Trump Cabinet officers eliminated rules or stopped them from even being considered.

The Class I freight railroads, including Norfolk Southern, have cut 30 per cent of their workers – tens of thousands of jobs, including safety jobs – starting in 2015, all in pursuit of ever greater profits. The result in East Palestine, one worker told CBS: "The workers are exhausted, times for car inspections have been drastically cut, and there are no regulations on the size of these trains."

While cutting corners on

workers and leaving safety short-staffed, Norfolk Southern invested billions in profits in stock buybacks and high executive pay, again at Wall Street's command.

But Norfolk Southern is getting a blind eye, too, from current Biden's Transportation Secretary, Buttigieg, whose department regulates both rail traffic and rail safety.

Progressives, safety advocates, and social media commenters all accuse Buttigieg of being slow to respond to the wreck and, more importantly, refusing to restore, or better yet, strengthen safety rules Trump repealed. NS exploited the lack of rules and East Palestine is paying the price. Rep. Ilhan Omar, DFL-Minn., is seeking a congressional investigation of the wreck and its aftermath.

As if Norfolk Southern didn't have enough exposure of its corporate greed, now it must handle a second smaller wreck of 31 railcars, in Van Buren Township Michigan on 16th February. The difference, so far, is it's a smaller train, with one hazardous material car.

So says the lawmaker for that area, Democratic Rep. Debbie Dingell. She's very familiar with rail safety issues from her own House service and from that of her late and progressive husband, Rep. John Dingell (D), who often rode herd on corporate honchos from his chair of the House Energy and Commerce Committee.

Quoting the EPA, she tweeted "the majority of the derailed cars were empty" and the hazmat car "was decoupled from them and moved further down the tracks."

All this has led RWU to renew its dual goals for the future of US railroads: Tighter regulations to protect workers and communities and nationalization of the freight railroads as "public utilities" to put

an end to their Wall Street-driven corporate greed.

"We hope to build support for safety regulations and legislation to stop the carriers' worst excesses and abuses," said RWU, which has 15 members, all experienced rank-and-file railroaders, investigating the East Palestine wreck.

"At a minimum, the wreck and its aftermath should mandate a standard two-person crew, which NS and other big freight railroads want to cut to one, the engineer," RWU adds. The wreck could have been fatal, as the fiery Lac Megantic, Quebec downhill wreck was a decade ago – killing 47 and destroying that town's downtown – had the NS train had only an engineer.

The NS freight had three crewmembers: The engineer, the conductor, and a trainee, who together were able to decouple the three engines from the freight cars, preventing an even worse explosion.

Other safety measures would restrict train length, provide "adequate time off work to mitigate fatigue, and adequate and proper staffing to get the job done safely and efficiently," and mandate the installation of new, tighter brakes on all railcars and trains. The brakes that failed on the Norfolk Southern train did so because a 19th-century brake assembly could not handle 21st-century conditions on a downhill slope.

Reforms must also include "real safety programs that pinpoint hazards, not worker behaviours," RWU adds.

"Achieving any of this ambitious program will be tough. That's just one of many reasons why the railroads need to be publicly owned and run in conjunction with the railroad workers themselves."

People's World ✪

It's a story of dying plants, 3500 dead fish in an Ohio River tributary, and a mass evacuation of the town of 4700 people.

Anti-war voices must not be silenced!

Canada: On the eve of the first anniversary of the war in Ukraine, a new front in the conflict opened up on university campuses in Canada. In what appears to be a coordinated strategy, right-wing Ukrainian organisations are attacking anti-war events and organisations, which they claim are spreading hate against Ukrainian people.

At the end of January, the Ukrainian Students' Society (USS) at the University of Victoria (UVic) launched a complaint against the Victoria branch of the Young Communist League (YCL), which has club status at the university. The USS claims that members of the YCL photographed a USS banner in September 2022 and posted it online with the "malicious" claim it was fascist and antisemitic. The group accuses the YCL of harassing and accosting Ukrainian-Canadian students, and further claims that the YCL's actions are an attempt to justify Russia's "genocide" against the Ukrainian people and are responsible for ratcheting up anti-Ukrainian hate on campus. The USS has complained to university administration and is calling for an investigation and review of the YCL's club status.

In response, the Victoria YCL issued a statement in which they emphatically rejected the accusations that any of its members had harassed or accosted another UVic student, made threats or carried out violent acts. "The only partial truth in [the USS] statement," they said, "is that the YCL Victoria club posted a photo of their banner on its Facebook page – a photo which was taken with the permission of the individual managing the UVic Ukrainian Students Society table at that time. The individual stated that they did not speak Ukrainian and did not know what the words on the banner meant."

The slogan on the USS banner translates as "Glory to Ukraine – Glory to the heroes." It is widely understood that the slogan originates with the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN), formed in 1929, whose members shouted it while giving the fascist salute. The OUN was an ultranationalist and terrorist organization led by Nazi collaborator Stepan Bandera. Its acts of antisemitism and ethnic cleansing (particularly against Poles) is well documented. *The Jerusalem Post* has frequently condemned the glorification of Bandera and Nazi collaborators in Ukraine.

Contrary to the claim that it supports the war or aggression towards Ukraine, or Ukrainians, the YCL has publicly and constantly called for an immediate end to the hostilities in order to prevent further loss of life, and for a peaceful political settlement to the war. This is consistent with the YCL's work for peace, denuclearisation and disarmament, and against racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, and all forms of hatred and discrimination.

Soon after the USS complaint, the accusations against the YCL Victoria escalated and developed into attacks on social media against YCL Victoria organiser Tyson Strandlund, and other anti-war voices including the Communist Party of Canada, and the Vancouver Island Peace Council, which is a member of the Canadian Peace Congress. It appears that individuals associated with the Ukrainian Canadian Congress have been part of this escalation.

Around the same time, similar attacks were launched against the organisers of anti-war events in at the University of Ottawa and Carleton University. Specifically, the Carleton Ukrainian Students' Society (CUSS) accused the Ottawa Peace Council, Ottawa YCL and prominent peace activists Yves Engler, Tamara Lorincz, and Miguel Figueroa (who they note was long-time leader of the Communist Party of Canada) of being "provocateurs," and "funded by Russian interests" because of their participation in a panel titled, "The War in Ukraine: What is the path to peace?"

As was the case in Victoria, CUSS accused the anti-war event and participants of "encouraging genocide against Ukrainian peoples." They are calling on university administration to ban the organisers of the anti-war event, claiming it was "hate speech."

None of the organisers or participants in the anti-war events in either Victoria or Ottawa acted or spoke in an "anti-Ukrainian" manner. None of them



promotes violence or hate toward Ukraine, or Ukrainian people. None are Russian agents.

Larry Wasslen of the Ottawa Peace Council specified that the organisers of the event at Carleton University were very clear that they were opposed to the war, and that "every single member of the panel condemned the Russian invasion of Ukraine."

The real reason these organisations and individuals are being targeted by the right-wing Ukrainian lobby is not because they are "anti-Ukrainian," but because they are anti-war. And their anti-war stance is becoming shared by more and more people, as support for the conflict declines in Canada.

Rather than entertaining absurd claims of violence and hate from peace and anti-war organisations, university administrations should ask themselves why they allowed a group to brandish banners with Nazi-era slogans from antisemitic and ultranationalist organisations. Certainly, any student or campus worker whose family or community had been terrorised by Hitler or Bandera fascists would feel targeted by such slogans and feel desperately unsafe.

Suggestions that speaking out against the war is equivalent to promoting genocide are as irresponsible, untrue, and politically dangerous as claims that it is antisemitic to oppose Israel's violence and occupation in Palestine.

As Canadian Peace Congress president Miguel Figueroa said to *People's Voice*, "These attacks against anti-war events and organisations are an assault on dissent. Their intention is to intimidate any group or individual who speaks out against the war, or who provides an analysis that is different from the mainstream, state view. This is an effort to gag anyone who calls for peace – for a ceasefire and a negotiated settlement – by claiming that they are part of a Russian plot."

Right now, this fight is on a handful of university campuses. But the stakes are enormously high, and they set the stage for what is to come next. This campaign is an assault on peace, on freedom of speech, and on academic freedom. The current attacks are against students, but they can, and will expand quickly to involve faculty and media, all in an effort to silence voices for peace.

The best response – the best way to defend against this onslaught – is to advocate even louder. Working people need to hit the streets, mobilise, organise and demonstrate against war.

Anti-war voices must not be silenced!

People's Voice ✪



Global Briefs

GERMANY: Air traffic came to a virtual standstill on the 17th February with around 2340 flights cancelled. The strike affected almost 300,000 passengers. Germany's flag carrier Lufthansa had to cancel more than 1300 flights. "There is still a catastrophic shortage among ground handling workers – travellers clearly felt it last summer," said Christine Behle, deputy chairwoman of the trade union Verdi. "To change the situation, they must be given an attractive wage increase," she added. Staff shortages caused by job cuts during the pandemic and various strike actions affected the entire aviation industry in Europe last summer and led to an international travel chaos with thousands of cancellations. It could be even worse this summer.

ARGENTINA, BRAZIL, CHILE, and MEXICO issued a joint communiqué condemning "the decision of the government of Israel to legalise nine outposts and build 10,000 housing units in existing settlements in the West Bank." These are "unilateral measures contrary to international law and UN Security Council resolutions." The signatory nations expressed their "opposition to any action that would compromise the viability of the two-state solution, in which Israel and Palestine can share secure and internationally recognised borders while respecting the legitimate aspirations of both peoples to live in peace." The communiqué also called on Israelis and Palestinians to refrain from acts that encourage further escalation of violence while urging the resumption of negotiations to reach a peaceful solution.

SPAIN: The "grain deal" announced in July 2022 was presented as a scheme to avoid famine in parts of Africa and Asia. After months of accusing Russia of blocking the Ukrainian ports and preventing the grain shipments, an agreement was reached for exporting grain from both Russia and Ukraine via special corridors in the Black Sea. However, the grain from Ukraine miraculously turned up mainly in EU countries and Türkiye. The EU countries received 6.4 million tons of Ukrainian grain; 43 per cent wheat, 29 per cent corn. Only 15 per cent of the exports ended up in the countries at risk of famine. So – 6.4 million tons went to the EU and Türkiye, Ethiopia got 167,000 tons, and Sudan 65,000 tons. Spain got almost half of the Ukrainian wheat and corn – an estimated 2.9 million tons which was used to feed the pigs to produce world-famous jamon, according to an investigation by the Austrian outlet eXXpress.

TÜRKIYE: "Armenia sent us 100 tons of humanitarian assistance and anticipated its intention to provide additional aid ... it behaves like a brother country by reaching out at a time of difficulty," Turkish Foreign Affairs Minister said. Türkiye and Armenia agreed to speed up the negotiation process to open a common border. The border remained closed for at least 30 years in the wake of the war between Armenia and Azerbaijan over Nagorno Karabakh.

A team of 32 medial professionals from Cuba's Henry Reeve International Contingent arrived in Türkiye on 12th February to contribute to saving lives and helping in recovery for victims of the devastating earthquake there.

Find out more about the

Communist Party of Australia

web www.cpa.org.au

email cpa@cpa.org.au



Have your say! Write a letter to the Editor

email: editor@cpa.org.au

IWD

Test your knowledge

Can you identify these women? Over centuries of struggle many women have played a leading role, whether it be against slavery, racism, exploitation, sexism or colonialism. They have fought tirelessly in liberation movements, for suffrage, for women's emancipation, for indigenous rights, for peace, against fascism and in the many other struggles of the people. The following are brief notes on a few of these women. See how many of them you can identify.

1. Born 1812, she was the daughter of Mangerner, Chief of the Recherche Bay people of Tasmania. By the time she was 17 she had experienced the violent death of her mother, stabbing by a party of sealers, the death of her intended partner who drowned while attempting to save her from abduction, and the abduction and subsequent death of her sister. In 1829 she became the partner of Woorraddy and with him accompanied George Robinson on his missions to the Aboriginal tribes between 1830-1834, serving as a guide and interpreter. She arrived at the Aboriginal settlement on Flinders Island (Wybalenna) in 1835. She had become disillusioned with Robinson and his mission, realising that the program to resettle Aboriginal people on the island would further erode the chances of living their preferred lifestyle. In 1839 she went to Port Phillip. She returned to the settlement at Wybalenna in 1842, without Robinson.

The man, who had promised race protection, had abandoned them. The Aborigines had no choice but to continue their unhappy exile on the island. In 1847, she and the remaining 45 people were moved to an abandoned settlement at Oyster Cove on the Tasmanian mainland. She died on May 8, 1876 at the age of 64. Although originally buried at the old Female Factory at Cascades, South Hobart, her skeleton was acquired by the Royal Society of Tasmania in 1878 contrary to her expressed wishes. After a lengthy legal battle with the trustees

of the Tasmanian Museum, the Aboriginal community in Tasmania were able to have her bones cremated on April 30, 1976, the following day her ashes were scattered on the D'Entrecasteaux Channel as she had wanted, nearly 100 years after her death. She has become the symbol of the struggle and survival of Tasmanian Aboriginal people for both Aboriginal and white Tasmanians.

2. Born a slave in Maryland's Dorchester County (USA) around 1820, she began work at the age of five or six as a house servant, and seven years later in the fields. In 1849, she made a daring escape and found her way to Philadelphia. She returned to Maryland on 19 occasions and helped around 300 slaves to escape to the North along the secret route that became known as the Underground Railroad. She became known as the "Moses of her people" for her personal bravery and ingenuity as a conductor on the Railroad.

She worked closely with John Brown in planning the raid on the arsenal at Harper's Ferry. Ill-health prevented her from participating in the raid which cost John Brown and others their lives. She spoke at anti-slavery meetings and took up the struggle for women's rights including the right to vote and participated in organisations for Black women such as the National Association of Colored Women and the National Federation of Afro-American Women.

In 1861, when the Civil War began, she served as a scout, spy and nurse with the Union forces in the Civil war. Died in 1911, her life was a testimony to the fierce resistance of African-American people to slavery. "Ma people mus' go free," was her constant refrain.

3. Born in a castle called Vroncourt (Haute-Marne, France) in 1830 to a maid-servant, father possibly the owner or his son, she undertook teacher training and opened a private school. In 1856 moved to Paris and took up political activity. With friends created the Citizens' Vigilance Committee of the 18th

Arrondissement (Le Comité de Vigilance des Citoyennes du XVIIIème arrondissement). When the Republic tried forcibly to disarm Parisians it led to the proclamation of the Paris Commune on March 28, 1871.

She became an ambulance nurse and soldier, belonging to the Montmartre 61st battalion. She surrendered to the authorities who had arrested and threatened to kill her mother. She was deported to New Caledonia in 1873 with other prisoners from the Commune. Following the general amnesty for Commune prisoners she returned to France in 1880, to a warm welcome by 10,000 people at the St Lazare station in Paris. There she continued her political activities, spending many years in and out of jail until her death in 1905.

4. Born July 5, 1837 in Saxony, Germany, a leading revolutionary figure in the German and international workers' movement, in the struggle for women workers and for universal suffrage. At the second International Conference of Socialist Women in Copenhagen in 1910 she put the proposal that women around the world should focus on a particular day each year to press for their demands. The conference of over 100 women from 17 countries, representing unions, socialist parties, working women's clubs and including the first three women elected to the Finnish parliament, unanimously approved the proposal. Her speech to the Congress of the International in Paris in 1889 on "The Liberation of Women," sparked considerable interest.

She was on the National Executive of the Social Democratic Party and editor of its journal *Die Gleichheit*. Attended the International Women's Peace Conference in 1915 making a powerful speech on war. She was a member of the Bookbinders Union in Stuttgart, and active in the Tailors and Seamstresses Union, becoming its provisional International Secretary in 1896, even though it was illegal for women to join a trade union in Germany.

Along with fellow revolutionaries Rosa

Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht joined the Spartacus League during World War I and became a founding member of the Communist Party of Germany (KPD) in 1920; became a delegate to the Reichstag; and secretary of the International Women's Secretariat and Executive member of the Communist International from 1921. She lived in socialist Russia from 1924 until her death in 1933.

5. Born February 17, 1848 near Mudgee, NSW, she was a newspaper proprietor, journalist, poet and feminist. In 1887 she edited the *Republican* with her more famous son, printing it on an old press set up in her cottage. The *Republican* called for all Australians to unite under "the flag of a Federated Australia, the Great Republic of the Southern Seas." From 1888-1905 she was the moving force behind *Dawn: a journal for Australian Women*. Through the pages of *Dawn* she took up women's causes, in particular the fight for female suffrage in NSW, and linked the question of universal suffrage to federation.

She came up against the Typographical Union as she had employed female printers, and the union refused membership to females. It attempted to force her to dismiss her printers, which she refused to do. On the formation of the Womanhood Suffrage League of New South Wales in 1891, was elected to its Council. Its meetings were held at the *Dawn* office. She was also a member of the Women's Progressive Association and campaigned for women to be appointed to public office.

6. Born in 1871, in Zamosch, Poland, a leading revolutionary of her time who worked closely with Karl Liebknecht in the left wing of the Social Democratic Party (SPD) of Germany taking a strong socialist, anti-militarist, and internationalist position. Played an important role in the formation of the Spartacus League when the First World War began in 1914 and the SPD supported it. Was also involved in the formation of the Communist Party of Germany (KPD).



Vandana Shiva.

Photo: Oregon State University – flickr.com (CC BY-SA 2.0)



Harriet Tubman.

Photo: Horatio Seymour Squyer – Public domain



Nguyễn Thị Bình

Photo: Paris Peace Talks – flickr.com (CC BY 2.0)

Quiz:

of women of struggle

Took a strong stand against the revisionism of Bernstein, wrote a number of publications on Marxist theory, including *The Political Mass Strike, Theory and Practice, The National Question, The Accumulation of Capital, The Crisis of Social Democracy (The Junius Pamphlet), The Russian Revolution*. In 1919 was taken in for questioning with other leaders of the KPD and murdered by the same circles of militarist Freikorps (Volunteer Corps) that later openly supported the fascist National Socialists' seizure of power.

7. Born December 1883 in Levuka, Fiji, her family moved to Tasmania. She worked as a governess in South Gippsland and in far west NSW, and then as a journalist in Australia, London, Paris and North America. She won a number of literary prizes for her writings, a number of them drawing heavily on her experiences as a governess and on a cattle station. She made her permanent home in Greenmount on the Darling Ranges outside Perth (WA) and was one of the founders of the Communist Party in Western Australia. She worked relentlessly for the Communist Party, the peace movement (against conscription and war) and the Writers' League which she and Jean Devanny set up in 1935.

She was awarded the World Peace Council medal in 1959. Supported the struggles of the working class and was acutely aware of the suffering experienced by the victims of poverty and that it was a product of capitalism. She remained a strong supporter of the Soviet Union. Her writings include *Wild Oats of Han* (semi-autobiographical), *Windlestraws*, and the goldfields trilogy – *The Roaring Nineties, Golden Miles*, and *Winged Seeds*. She died in 1969.

8. Born April 18, 1889 at Ranchi, Bihar, India, began her formal education with a governess and then school in England and later the University of Sydney, graduating in 1911. She was president on and off of the United Associations (of Women) between 1930 and 1950. The UA became a branch of the NSW branch of the Australian Federation of Women Voters (AFWV). Believed in a woman's right to economic independence, including the right for married women to an income, the right to paid employment regardless of marital status, a right to compete alongside men in the labour market, equal pay and just remuneration for skills. She lobbied for child endowment and access for women to family planning and was involved in setting up the first contraceptive clinic in Sydney (1933). She played an important role in the struggle to eventually persuade trade unions and the ACTU to endorse the concept of equal pay in 1942 and assisted women running for Parliament as well as running unsuccessfully herself for the ALP.

During World War II, was involved in organising the "Sheepskins for Russia" Appeal and other aid for Russia when it was invaded by fascist Germany. She convened

the Australian Women's Conference for Victory in War and Victory in Peace which approved the Australian Women's Charter (1943). At the UN Conference on International Organisation (1945) she secured the insertion of the word "sex" in the clause "without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion," where it occurs in the Charter of the United Nations. Worked hard in promoting a better understanding of the Soviet Union and became president of the Australian Russian Society in 1946, was president of the NSW Peace Council, a member of the executive of the World Peace Council, and even had a hand in the drafting of the amendments to the Constitution which were carried in the 1967 referendum to give the Commonwealth the power to make laws specifically to benefit Aboriginal people and for Aboriginal Australians to be counted in the census. She died in July 1970.

9. Born in 1927 in Sa éc province, Vietnam, grand-daughter of the patriot Phan Chu Trinh, she studied French at Lycée Sisowath and worked as a teacher during the French colonisation of Vietnam. Became member of the Communist Party in 1948. From 1945 to 1951, she took part in various movements against the French colonists. Was arrested and jailed between 1951 and 1953 in Chí Hoà jail (Saigon) by the French colonial authority in Vietnam.

During the Vietnam War, she became a member of the Central Committee for the National Front for the Liberation of Vietnam and the Vice-Chairperson of the South Vietnam Women's Liberation Association. In 1969 she was appointed foreign minister of the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Vietnam and played a major role in the signing of Paris Peace Accords, an agreement ending the war after the defeat of the US and restoring peace in Vietnam. It entered into force 17 January 1973. After the Vietnam War, became Minister of Education of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. She was elected Vice-President of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam in 1992.

10. Born 1936. Grew up within an independent Aboriginal community at Blackford near Kingston, in South Australia. First active in the Aboriginal Council of Women. Highly committed in the fight against racism and discrimination, in 1974 she was appointed the Executive Secretary of the Aboriginal Legal Rights Movement. Member of the Socialist Party of Australia (now Communist Party of Australia). During a visit to the Soviet Union, her hosts named an island in a Siberian river after the Aboriginal activist. Stood for Parliament in 1988 during a by-election in the seat of Port Adelaide – the first Aboriginal person to stand for Federal Parliament in South Australia. Later in 1990, she would play a key role as Head of the Aboriginal Issues Unit for the Royal Commission Inquiry into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody. She was recognised by government in 1992 with the

Australian Public Service Medal, and in 1993 with the Equal Opportunity Achievement Award. Died prematurely in 1993.

11. Born November 19, 1937 in Buenos Aires Argentina to Communist parents exiled from Hitler's Germany. Family returned to German Democratic Republic in 1952. Studied at Humboldt University; accepted into Communist youth and Socialist Unity Party (communist party). Worked as translator and organiser for youth festivals. Met Ché Guevara 1960, travelled to Cuba in 1961 where she worked with Women's Federation, Institute of Friendship with the People and Ministry of Education. Travelled to Bolivia in 1964 to set up urban network to support Ché's guerilla force. Joined guerillas; killed in CIA-aided army ambush on August 31, 1967. Remains returned to Cuba October 13, 1998 where they were buried alongside those of her comrades.

12. Born January 26, 1944 in Birmingham, Alabama. Communist, author, Black activist (once associated with radical Black Power group Black Panthers), women's rights activist, teacher, friend of Cuba. She joined the Communist Party in 1968. Her campaigning to free the Soledad (Prison) Brothers (a struggle that took on international proportions) in the late 1960s saw her framed for the death of a judge and having to flee underground. She became the subject of an intense manhunt and was listed on the FBI's Top 10 Most Wanted Criminals list. Was caught in August 1970 but with a massive international and national movement gaining momentum was released 18 months later and cleared of all charges in 1972 by an all-white jury. She founded the National Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression.

Her books include an autobiography covering her early years, and *Women, Race and Class*, tracing the links between class and women's oppression and racism drawing on historical material dating back to slavery. Today she is active against the US wars, opposes the death penalty, and is fighting for the abolition of the prison industrial complex. John Lennon and Yoko Ono released a song about her, and so did the Rolling Stones.

13. Born in Dehradun, India in 1952 and educated as a nuclear physicist, she is one of the South's best-known environmentalists, writers, speakers and campaigners. She is known for her work on agriculture and food, intellectual property rights, biodiversity, biotechnology, bioethics, genetic engineering, eco-feminism, water privatisation, sustainable development, peace, human rights, and many other issues. "When I found global corporations wanted to patent seeds, crops or life forms, I started Navdanya to protect biodiversity, defend farmers' rights, and promote organic farming." Navdanya

is the Research Foundation for Science, Technology and Ecology. Amongst her many awards, including some from the UN, is the Right Livelihood Award (also known as the Alternative Nobel Prize).

"Human beings need a social economy that exchanges things other than money and that produces for reasons other than profits," she said, commenting on the "Green Revolution" that was supposed to bring Western technology to the aid of Third World farmers. But instead of wealth the new high-yielding seeds it brought poverty and environmental destruction and led to an economic monoculture. She works with Indian farmers to re-build seed banks in the hope of strengthening biodiversity and to pursue sustainable farming techniques without expensive inputs from the agro-chemical companies.

14. Born January 9, 1959 in Chimal, Guatemala. Of the indigenous Quiché-Maya ethnic group. Received Nobel Peace Prize in 1992 and Prince of Asturias Award in 1998. UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador and author of the autobiographical work, *Crossing Borders*. Family suffered terribly during genocidal civil war from 1960 to 1996. Since the end of the war, she has campaigned to have members of the Guatemalan political and military establishment tried in Spanish courts. She became involved in the Mexican pharmaceutical industry as president of the company Salud para Todos ("*Health for All*") and "Farmacias Similares," with the goal of offering low-cost generic medicines. She ran for president of Guatemala in 2007 and 2011, having founded the country's first Indigenous political party Winaq.

ANSWERS:

1. Truganini (Trugernanner)
2. Harriett Tubman
3. Louise Michel
4. Clara Zetkin
5. Louisa Lawson
6. Rosa Luxemburg
7. Katharine Susannah Pritchard
8. Jessie Street
9. Nguyễn Thị Bình, nee Nguyễn Châu Sa
10. Ruby Hammond
11. Haydée Tamara Bunke Bider (revolutionary name – Tania)
12. Angela Davis
13. Vandana Shiva
14. Rigoberta Menchú Tum

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US keeps Cuba on terrorist list

Jacob Buckner

Cuba is a terrorist state – at least in the opinion of the US Department of State.

In 1982, President Ronald Reagan added Cuba to the US roster of countries that supposedly promote international terrorism. That designation, stamped on Cuba in the midst of the Cold War, imposed even stricter financial attacks on the socialist island than it faced under the already-punishing US economic blockade in place since the 1960s.

So, what were the alleged terrorist offences to which Cuba was lending support? Chief on the list was Cuba's historic commitment to internationalism and its determination to fight alongside movements opposing US imperialism worldwide.

Cuba was also identified as an SSOT, a "State Sponsors of Terrorism," for its offering asylum to US citizens fleeing unjust and racist persecutions, including Black Liberation activist Assata Shakur and Victor Manuel Gerena and Guillermo Morales, members of Puerto Rican independence movements.

Fast forward 40 years to December 2022, and three members of the US Congress visited Havana to meet with Cuban President Miguel Díaz-Canel, Foreign Minister Bruno Rodríguez, and members of the legislature, the National Assembly of People's Power. US Democrats James McGovern, Mark Pocan, and Troy Carter, visited to discuss the two countries' shared interests and to "improve bilateral relations."

Their journey to Cuba comes at a time when there are increasing calls across the US to end the 60-year blockade on Cuba. Just as importantly, it comes as a number of faith-based organisations and community groups are rallying around a related demand: Remove Cuba from the State Sponsors of Terrorism list.

The SSOT designation is totally unfounded and steeped in a history of anti-communist propaganda. A short review of the past half-century-plus makes it abundantly clear what the source of terror is in the US-Cuba relationship – and it's not Cuba.

A BLOCKADE OF AN ENTIRE PEOPLE

By the time Cuba was designated a terrorist state by Reagan in 1982, US economic sanctions had already been in place for 20 years. President John F Kennedy had signed Proclamation 3447 in 1962 initiating the first steps of the blockade of Cuba in response to the island's move away from subservience



Vigil supporting Cuba and an end to the blockade. Also solidarity with Venezuela & Gaza. North Sydney outside the USA Consulate.

to US economic interests, which had been the standard before the Cuban Revolution.

Cuba nationalised US corporate-owned oil refineries in August 1960, under President Osvaldo Dorticós Torrado and Prime Minister Fidel Castro. The country also made all sugar factories and mines public property. The value of the seized oil assets totalled some US\$1.7 billion.

Acting on behalf of the upset corporations, Kennedy responded with Proclamation 3447, prohibiting all "importation into the US of all goods of Cuban origin and all goods imported from or through Cuba" and banning all exports from the US to Cuba.

The sanctions were not only a reaction to Cuba's declaration of economic autonomy but to its decision to begin turning away from world capitalism and toward a socialist system. In the first year of the Revolution, the new government built thousands of schools, increased the literacy rate, and enacted Agrarian Reforms which broke up large landholdings and redistributed land, building peasant cooperatives. It also began seeking closer relations with the Soviet Union and other socialist countries.

The US government began to only view Cuba through an anti-communist lens. In Proclamation 3447, Kennedy stated that the Cuban government was "incompatible with the principles and objectives of the Inter-American system," which was code for the chain of US-dominated states in Central and South America.

Now, over six decades later, these same sanctions – and the ones that were added

later – still limit essential imports and exports of food and medicine and restrict industries such as computers, technology, chemicals, electronics, telecommunications, and information security. Shortages and hardship for the Cuban people are the results.

WHO'S THE TERRORIST STATE?

In a 1980 report titled *Agency's Patterns of International Terrorism*, the CIA claimed Cuba "openly advocates armed revolution as the only means for leftist forces to gain power in Latin America ... and provides direct support in the form of training, arms, safe havens, and advice to a wide variety of guerrilla groups."

That provided the pretext for Reagan's SSOT designation, expanding the previous sanctions and resulting in further isolation of Cuba. But the socialist country didn't remain on the terror list forever, it has been removed for a period in the past.

On May 29, 2015, the administration of President Barack Obama removed Cuba's SSOT designation. Travel was expanded between the two countries, embassies were opened in Washington and Havana, and dialogue resulted in 22 bilateral agreements. Although then-President Raúl Castro's request to end US sanctions and permanently close the US military base and torture camp at Guantánamo Bay were denied, the Obama years showed that there could again be productive relations between the two nations.

But in the closing days of the Donald Trump administration, Cuba was again put on the SSOT list, with Secretary of State Mike Pompeo citing the same old asylum of US political fugitives as a reason, along with Cuba's harbouring of Colombian liberation fighters and alliance with the Venezuelan government, which allegedly allowed "terrorists to live and thrive."

Samantha Wherry, of the feminist anti-war organisation CODEPINK, said that the December 2022 delegation of US Congress members to Havana could represent another opening toward US-Cuba normalisation.

"These Congress people are aware of the harm of the blockade and have been advocating for lifting it," she said. After returning, they held many meetings with the Biden administration and State Department officials. They are advocating for Cuba's removal from the SSOT list. "It doesn't make sense for Cuba to be on this list," Wherry said.

During Biden's campaign for president, he promised to re-engage with Cuba, pledging to reverse new Trump-era sanctions that hurt Cuban families. However, nothing has yet come of this, even though there is still no proof that Cuba currently harbours terrorists or engages in terrorism. Biden can use his executive power to influence Cuba's removal from the list; this would require a presidential report and certification of Congress, in addition to an affirmation from Biden that Cuba does not support terrorism.

Recently, 160 US lawyers demanded Biden initiate that process. The attorneys say that under the State Department's own criteria, Cuba does not meet the standards for sponsoring terrorism. Peace organisations – including the US-Cuba Normalisation Committee, Pastors for Peace, SEIU1199, Puentes de Amor, and others – have joined the call and continue to send caravans to Cuba, displaying international solidarity and creating an ongoing dialogue aimed at ending the blockade.

Cuba's placement on the SSOT list – like the entire US economic sanctions regime – is unjust and steeped in anti-communist propaganda. Every ally of the Cuban people and every supporter of peace should denounce these policies.

As Wherry said, "Right now Cuba needs solidarity ... Encourage your representatives to have just policies toward Cuba. Join an organisation, join calls to action, and show up in the streets."

People's World ✪

The attorneys say that under the State Department's own criteria, Cuba does not meet the standards for sponsoring terrorism.



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