

Solidarity

Issue No. 185 / July 2024

\$3/\$5

STOP THE GENOCIDE, NO TO ISLAMOPHOBIA

PAYMAN IS RIGHT:

LABOR MUST

SANCTION ISRAEL



PALESTINE

Does Israel want war
on Lebanon?

NUCLEAR

Dutton's nuclear push
a cover for climate inaction

FAR RIGHT

Fascists still rising in France
despite election result

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

Sydney

Meeting 6.30pm every Thursday
Brown St Hall, 8-10 Brown St
Newtown
For more information contact:
Adam on 0400 351 694
sydney@solidarity.net.au

Melbourne

Meeting 6.30pm every Thursday
Kathleen Syme library and community
centre, 251 Faraday St, Carlton
For more information contact:
Jason on 0456 624 661
melbourne@solidarity.net.au

Brisbane

Contact Mark on 0439 561 196 or
brisbane@solidarity.net.au

Perth

Contact perth@solidarity.net.au

Canberra

Contact canberra@solidarity.net.au

Adelaide

Contact Robert on 0447 362 417 or
adelaide@solidarity.net.au

Or check fb.com/soliaus/events

CONTACT US

Magazine office

Phone 02 8964 7116
Fax 02 9012 0814

Email

solidarity@solidarity.net.au

Website

www.solidarity.net.au

Facebook

Search for "Solidarity Magazine" or
go to fb.com/soliaus

Twitter

@soli_au
twitter.com/soli_au

Solidarity No. 185

July 2024
ISSN 1835-6834
Responsibility for election
comment is taken by James
Supple, 410 Elizabeth St, Surry
Hills NSW 2010.
Printed by El Faro, Newtown
NSW.

SUBSCRIBE TO SOLIDARITY MAGAZINE

Solidarity is published monthly. Make sure you don't miss an issue—pay by credit card online at www.solidarity.net.au/subscribe or send in this form with a cheque or money order and we will mail you *Solidarity* each month.

5 issues—\$15 One year (12 issues)—\$36 Two years (24 issues)—\$65

Name Phone

E-mail Address

Cheques payable to ISO Publishing. Send to PO Box 375 Strawberry Hills NSW 2012.

Things they say

It's no longer just the Muslim community or the pro-Palestinian community that's hurting. It's been impacting each and every person with a conscience and a heart out there

Senator Fatima Payman rejects the Islamophobic claims she supported Gaza because it's a "Muslim issue"

I thought the greatest gift I could give to our Jewish students and staff was for the encampment to be gone

Sydney Uni Vice-Chancellor Mark Scott lets slip how much he wanted to get rid of the student encampment for Gaza

I am happy for people to judge me by who I am, not by who *The Guardian* wants people to believe I am.

Peter Dutton, answering a question about the lack of women candidates for the Liberal Party

The notion of some global arrangement for taxing billionaires with proceeds distributed in some way—we're not supportive of a process to achieve that.

US Treasury secretary Janet Yellen rejects a proposal for global wealth tax on billionaires

It's great to see so many Australian businesses promoting their products, services and technologies on the world stage.

Pat Conroy, Minister for Defence Industry, spruiks Australian weapons manufacturers promoted in the government's Defence Export catalogue 2024

The work that Rudd is doing now, leveraging every contact he has, including Scott [Morrison], to build relationships with the people who will count in a second Trump administration, may well end up being his finest hour.

An Australian government insider praises ambassador to the US, Kevin Rudd, for cuddling up to the MAGA crowd

We need every voter. I don't care about you. I just want your vote. I don't care.

Donald Trump on the campaign trail. He claims he was joking.

CONTENTS

ISSUE 185 JULY 2024



Fighting Labor's Gaza complicity

5 Fatima Payman's stand for Palestine

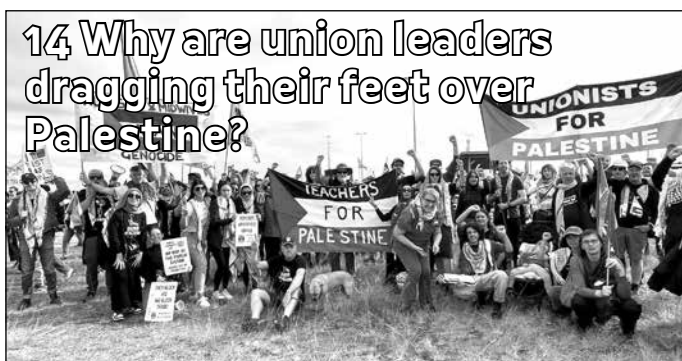
6 Where next after end of encampments?

7 Israel's failure to crush Palestinian resistance

20 Pine Gap aiding Israeli operations



12 Can France's fascists be stopped?



14 Why are union leaders dragging their feet over Palestine?

Australia

8 Refugees—11 years enough

9 Dutton's nuclear push covers climate denial

10 Phonics and the reading wars



International

8 Kenyan protests win concessions

11 Labor wins UK election but there's no enthusiasm



Features

16 Islam, imperialism and the fight for change

18 Why real change requires mass struggle and revolution

More millionaires avoid tax

A TOTAL of 102 millionaires managed to avoid paying any tax in 2021-22, despite earning an average of \$3.8 million each.

The number of them managing to find deductions that reduced their tax bill below zero grew from 66 the year before.

Donations to charity were their largest single tax write-off, reducing their taxable income by a combined \$240 million.

The rich had a bumper year, with residents of Sydney's exclusive harbourside suburb of Double Bay seeing their average taxable incomes up almost \$90,000 to average \$354,308. Perth's wealthy Peppermint Grove and Cottesloe area was the country's second wealthiest, with an average income of \$295,283, up \$65,000 on the previous year.

Luxury car tax, charged only on cars that cost over \$69,000, also jumped 11 per cent to \$978 million. Meanwhile those in the middle on the median income made just \$53,000 in total.

Suspected far right activists joining the military

AT LEAST 16 Defence personnel have been investigated over the past two years over links with extremists or white supremacists, according to documents obtained by *The Guardian*.

Nine of the cases, dating from February 2022 to April 2024, are listed as "pending" with another two still "open".

The outcome of the investigations was not disclosed.

The Defence Force tightened its vetting of potential recruits in October 2021, after concerns about infiltration by the far right.

Last year *The Age* uncovered at least three soldiers who had joined the military after being involved with far right white supremacist groups, including Antipodean Resistance and the National Socialist Network.

'Mega-dramatic' Israeli moves towards annexing West Bank



An Israeli checkpoint in the West Bank Photo: Ronan Shenhav/Flickr

ISRAEL HAS taken a major step towards outright annexation of the occupied West Bank, transferring far-reaching legal powers there from the military to civilian officials.

This shows Israel's complete contempt for any peace process—with the West Bank supposedly part of a future Palestinian state—and that any "two state solution" is dead.

Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich, in a speech to hard-line settlers that was secretly recorded and reported in the *New York Times*, boasted that the moves were "mega-dramatic" and the kind that "change a system's DNA".

"It's a sort of revolution, transferring powers from the military, with its legal obligation to consider the well-being of occupied people, to those only committed to Israeli interests," human rights lawyer Michael Sfard explained.

Smotrich is a member of the far right Religious Zionism party that sits in the governing coalition. But the moves in the West Bank have the support of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who is "fully with us", Smotrich said.

Smotrich is also the Minister in charge of administration of the occupied West Bank.

He has rapidly expanded settlement construction, with last year a record year both for expanding housing within settlements and the construction of illegal settlement outposts. Plans for another 6000 housing units were announced this month, as well as the provision of government services to an existing 68 illegal outposts.

There are now almost half a million Israeli settlers living in the West Bank, which has been under Israeli military occupation for almost 60 years.

Israel operates a regime of apartheid there, with Israeli settlers governed under civilian law while Palestinians are subject to draconian military law, and segregation where Palestinians are generally banned from entering Israeli settlements.

Israeli settler violence has surged since October, with the UN recording over 1000 attacks against Palestinians in the West Bank.

Nearly 20 Palestinian families or communities have been displaced from their farms, as settlers continue the process of dispossession and land theft.

In April hundreds of settlers went on a violent rampage, setting fires to homes, trees and cars, and murdering four Palestinians including a paramedic. Israeli soldiers watched and did nothing.

Handouts for rich housing investors surging

HOUSING INVESTORS will pocket subsidies of \$165 billion over the next decade, new figures from the Parliamentary Budget Office show. That's the combined cost of negative gearing and the capital gains tax discount claimed for investment properties.

It's almost double what they cost the government over the last ten years and will amount to almost \$23 billion a year by 2035. Two-thirds of this goes to the top 20 per cent of income earners.

These handouts will simply push up the price of housing even further. It's government money that could be going on building new housing for low income earners, instead of feathering the investment portfolios of the rich.

Racist child protection denies request to connect with culture

A 17-YEAR-OLD Indigenous girl's repeated requests to connect with her Indigenous community and heritage were refused after she was removed from her family in regional Victoria.

At a hearing in June, the Victorian Coroner's Court described the failure to act on a letter she wrote requesting this the "starkest example" of her "lack of voice" while being held in an Anglicare residential care home and under the charge of the Department of Fairness, Families and Housing.

She took her own life after cycling through seven different out-of-home placements including kinship care and residential care.

The girl had been separated from her eight siblings when she was removed from her family at age 13, and given no contact with them.

The coroner described this as a product of, "the continuing systemic racism and paternalism inherent in child protection work today that must be identified, acknowledged and resisted".

EDITORIAL

Payman's stand shows pressure on Albanese over Gaza still growing

SENATOR FATIMA Payman's resignation shows that the pressure on the Labor government over Gaza is still growing. Payman has become a symbol of the opposition to the genocide, and her stand has helped push the arguments in support of Palestine deeper into society.

Israel is still killing scores of people every day all across Gaza, ordering civilians to evacuate areas across Gaza City and Khan Younis, as it bombs them again.

The actual death toll could now exceed 186,000, a letter from experts in the British medical journal *The Lancet* has argued, including thousands dead under the rubble and indirect deaths from the breakdown of healthcare and sanitation.

Payman has faced a torrent of Islamophobia and abuse, after she said the "pressure to conform to caucus solidarity and toe the party line", meant "my conscience leaves me no choice" but to leave Labor.

Labor MPs briefed the media that the Muslim Senator told them she was being "guided by God", as if she was some kind of religious fanatic. A similar comment from a Christian MP would never spark such attention.

Albanese tried to claim she had been plotting her resignation for a month, feeding unfounded claims that she was working with Muslim groups to set up a religious party.

It was Albanese's efforts to sanction Payman that drove her out of the party.

Payman told ABC's *Insiders* she did not intend to leave Labor, saying she believed that, "I've upheld all the values of what, as the Labor Party, we should stand for".

But after Payman indicated she would cross the floor again to vote for Palestine, Anthony Albanese banned her indefinitely from the Labor caucus—demanding she humiliate herself by agreeing not to cross the floor again if she wanted to return.

Payman's resignation has meant the scale of the anger over Labor's backing for the genocide is finally starting to dawn on the media and the government.

Labor is still claiming this is driven by "misinformation" about its actions. But its response to Payman shows that it is using every tool at its disposal to try to silence opposition.

It is still allowing the export of parts for F-35 fighter jets to Israel,



feeding military intelligence to Israel through the Pine Gap spy base, and refuses to consider sanctions of any kind to pressure Israel to end its war.

There has been a media frenzy over the moves to run independent candidates against Labor MPs in Western Sydney and The Greens' challenge in the seat of Wills in Melbourne.

The five pro-Palestine independents who won seats in the recent British election reinforced this.

But it is the ongoing mass protests and the organising for Gaza that has sprung up in schools, universities, among rank-and-file unionists, pickets of MPs offices and in councils that has been key to building pressure on the government.

The next federal election could be held next year—it's far too urgent to wait until then to land another blow on Albanese.

Cracks in the labour movement

The support for Payman shows how the genocide in Gaza is generating opposition to Albanese inside the unions and the Labor Party.

After she crossed the floor a number of state Labor MPs and union secretaries, such as the AMWU's Steve Murphy, CFMEU national secretary Zach Smith and Victorian Trades Hall secretary Luke Hilakari, backed Payman.

Many of them noted that, in crossing the floor to vote with The Greens on recognising a Palestinian state,

Fatima Payman visiting students from the Melbourne Uni Gaza solidarity encampment

Photo: Fatima Payman / Meta

Payman was voting in support of Labor Party policy.

Payman's stand shows why the movement should welcome all those within the unions and the Labor Party who are prepared to defy Albanese and speak out for Gaza. Shunning them until they are prepared to cross the floor or leave the party will only make them feel more isolated and less willing to take a stand.

The support Payman received from the movement for Palestine and the Muslim, Arab and Palestinian communities also helped embolden her to act.

She was rightly welcomed to speak at the weekend rally for Palestine in Perth on 8 June, after she spoke out to declare Israel's actions in Gaza a genocide. Payman also visited the student encampments for Gaza at Melbourne Uni, Sydney Uni and Curtin Uni in Perth.

She then went further, signalling her support for recognising a Palestinian state before crossing the floor to vote for it.

There are many more inside the unions and Labor who can be drawn into the movement. As Payman herself noted even as she announced her resignation, she had received "immense support" from "rank-and-file [Labor Party] members, unionists and party volunteers".

The movement for Palestine still needs to build far broader support, and support in the unions in particular, to mobilise the power necessary to force an end to Albanese's complicity with Israel.

The scale of the anger over Labor's backing for the genocide is finally starting to dawn on the government

Fighting for Gaza after the end of Sydney Uni encampment

By Solidarity students Sydney Uni

NINE MONTHS since the start of the genocide in Gaza, the horror still grows day by day.

In Australia, Albanese has sided with the Coalition to attack the Greens for supporting pro-Palestine protests. Foreign Minister Penny Wong absurdly claims that Australia is making “non-lethal” parts for the F-35 jets Israel uses to bomb Gaza.

Although management did not send in the cops, the student encampment at the University of Sydney faced repression, as other encampments around Australia have, with management sending “cease and desist” letters to intimidate campers and suspending two students for making lecture announcements.

Although all encampments except those at Canberra, Wollongong and Newcastle have ended, the Palestine movement has emerged stronger from the experience. Inspired by the movement in the US the encampments were a symbol of defiance that captured the imagination of the Palestine campaign on, and off, campus.

The sit-in at Melbourne Uni was the first to win any agreement for disclosure and set a benchmark for the encampments across the country.

At Sydney Uni, the Muslim Students Association (SUMSA) squeezed a few more crumbs out of management, maintaining the camp even after Students For Palestine undemocratically declared it was over. The Muslim encampment officially ended on Friday 21 June—a week after S4P decamped.

Management have now said they will start disclosing research ties with weapons companies from July. They have agreed to do more to combat Islamophobia on campus and will continue to meet with Muslim community leaders.

Management has also agreed to make steps towards establishing an Open Learning Environment exchange unit called “Experience Palestine” and will release a public statement calling for a ceasefire and reaffirm the importance of international law and human rights.

Without a mass student and staff movement on campus that makes business as usual impossible for management, we cannot expect more from them.

We commend SUMSA for eking out these further concessions from



Above: Some of the 21 students at Melbourne Uni facing disciplinary charges for their role in the sit-in for Gaza on campus
Photo: Matt Hrkac

management. But management will do their utmost to delay and drop the agreed concessions.

We are a long way from winning our demands that Sydney Uni cuts ties and end its research relationships with companies such as Thales, Lockheed Martin, and Safran.

But the camps have popularised the aim of cutting ties with Israel and shone a light on the role universities play for military research. They’ve also shown just how integrated our university is with the government and how deter-

mined they are to maintain connections to arms companies and to Israel.

We still need to build broader support if we going to disrupt “business as usual” on the campus. That means leaflets, lecture-bashing, forums and rallies, and sit-ins and strikes with an aim to win and involve wider layers of students in the campaign. One important step will be the Student General Meeting early in second semester.

Every bit of resistance we build on campus needs to have the aim of strengthening this broader effort.

Universities crack down on student protests for Palestine

MELBOURNE UNI has brought misconduct charges against 21 students involved in the encampment for Gaza and the sit-in at Mahmoud’s Hall (the ArtsWest building).

They are facing either suspension or expulsion from the university for taking part in the protests.

The university has used CCTV footage and students’ connection to the wifi network as evidence they took part in the sit-in—in breach of previous privacy commitment and possibly the law.

At least 150 people joined a protest outside the first disciplinary hearings on 10 July.

The effort to stamp out the right to protest at universities has already seen one student suspended at Deakin Uni, with disciplinary proceedings still ongoing against

another student at Deakin and a number at Sydney Uni. Nine students at Monash Uni and two students at LaTrobe Uni facing misconduct charges received only warnings from the university.

At ANU, one student has been expelled for standing in solidarity with Palestinian armed resistance.

Sydney University has also imposed a new Campus Access Policy banning camping on university grounds, protests inside buildings and requiring permission for information stalls, putting up posters or using megaphones and three days’ notice of any protests.

This all further shows university managements’ commitment to their ties with Israel and role in the weapons industry—and why we need to keep fighting to break them.

.....
We are a long way from winning our demands that Sydney Uni cuts ties

Israel fails to crush Gaza resistance after nine months of horror

By Adam Adelpour

ISRAEL HAS failed to achieve its goal of eliminating Hamas after nine months of war and the butchering of 38,000 Palestinians in Gaza.

Israel and its governing coalition are in disarray amid huge protests. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's war cabinet was dissolved in May amid increasing divisions. He and key sections of his government see expanding war into Lebanon as the only way to stay in power.

Israel and Hezbollah have engaged in tit-for-tat exchanges on the Lebanese border since Israel began its war in Gaza. But the push to escalate war on Israel's northern border is now gathering pace.

In the first days of June Netanyahu made a speech while visiting border areas, saying, "We are prepared for a very intense operation in the north. One way or another, we will restore security..."

Now there are signs that the escalation on the northern border will move to a new level.

On 23 June Netanyahu said the end of the "intense phase" of the war in Gaza was "very close" and that Israel would begin to redeploy some of its forces to the border with Lebanon. The Israeli military said in a statement, "operational plans for an offensive in Lebanon were approved and validated".

Then in early July Israel assassinated a senior Hezbollah Commander, Muhammad Nimah Nasser, also known as "Hajj Abu Nimah" through an air strike in southern Lebanon. Hezbollah responded by firing 200 rockets into Israel.

According to the *Washington Post*, the US has promised continued support for Israel in a wider war, despite making frantic diplomatic efforts to avoid escalation.

Hezbollah inflicted a humiliating defeat on Israel in 2006, driving them out of southern Lebanon. Their military capability dwarfs that of Hamas. They are reported to possess 130,000 rockets and missiles capable of overwhelming Israel's missile defence systems.

Mass murder but no victory
Netanyahu has repeatedly pledged to achieve "total victory" over Hamas. In the face of intense pressure to secure the release of Israeli hostages, he used



Above: Families in Khan Younis fleeing after the latest evacuation orders
Photo: UNRWA

the goal of eliminating Hamas to justify rejecting a new ceasefire proposal in May.

But despite the massive destruction in Gaza Israel has failed to achieve this goal.

Hamas re-gained control over the southern city of Khan Younis in April after Israeli forces withdrew. Israel announced its withdrawal following fierce resistance and only days after a Hamas operation reportedly killed 14 Israeli soldiers. Israel has now issued another mass evacuation order, telling 250,000 displaced people to leave as it renews its attacks.

Israel has also had to launch new attacks in Gaza City's Shuja'iyya neighbourhood, where Hamas re-asserted control after Israeli withdrawal, and has faced continuing resistance in Jabalia in the north of Gaza.

The *Times of Israel* reports Michael Milshtein, a former colonel in Israeli military intelligence, saying, "There is no vacuum in Gaza, Hamas is still the prominent power". Hamas' People's Protection Committees openly patrol the streets of Rafah.

Stress

The protracted war in Gaza and the failure to defeat Hamas is widening fractures inside Israel.

Israel's military has increasingly contradicted Netanyahu's promise of total victory. In June the Israel Defense Forces' top spokesman said "Hamas is an idea" and can't be eliminated.

The losses inflicted on Israel's military are considerable. From 7 October onwards they have reported

679 deaths and 4086 casualties and counting. Some other reports suggest injuries nearly double those of official statistics.

The *New York Times* published a damning article based on statements and interviews with Israeli military officials, reporting, "Nearly nine months into a war that Israel did not plan for, its army is short of spare parts, munitions, motivation and even troops".

It continues, saying, "In an army largely reliant on reservists, some are on their third tour of duty since October" and that "Fewer reservists are reporting for duty". Because of these pressures the Times says "Israel's military leadership wants a ceasefire with Hamas in case a bigger war breaks out in Lebanon."

A Supreme Court decision ending exemptions from compulsory military service for Israel's million-strong ultra-Orthodox community has now also sparked angry protests.

Israel has succeeded in destroying Gaza and slaughtering immense numbers of civilians. But with this has come growing political instability and international isolation.

The outcome of recent negotiations in Egypt remains to be seen. If Netanyahu remains intransigent it will mean more division and instability, and make an attack on Lebanon more likely.

Israel's growing crisis shows why it is right to support resistance and the necessity of a movement powerful enough to stop the US and other Western countries arming Israel. This support is what enables it to inflict terror on Gaza and threaten to spread the carnage to Lebanon.

.....
Hamas regained control over the southern city of Khan Younis in April after Israeli forces withdrew

Children the losers as the right fights its reading wars

By Lucy Honan

AS IF relishing his power to demoralise teachers and take the crisis in schools to new lows, Victorian Education Minister Ben Carroll has joined other state and federal education ministers throwing their weight behind the right-wing of the reading wars.

In June, Carroll announced to the media that the solution to declining literacy test scores was mandatory “systematic synthetic phonics” and “explicit teaching”.

Systematic synthetic phonics is a highly programmatic method of “instructing” children to read, that prioritises abstract decoding skills, divorced from meaningful and engaging literature.

Some principals of public primary schools in Melbourne who have already adopted this model have ditched picture books, and only let children choose books from the library to read for pleasure “if we are satisfied they know all the 44 phonemes in the language”.

To the relief, and surprise, of many union members, the Australian Education Union (AEU) Victoria immediately advised members not to comply with the minister’s announcement.

It condemned the new policy as a manoeuvre that distracted from the chronic underfunding of public schools and that would result in “more workload, less autonomy, and less respect for the profession (and) will simply drive more people to leave”.

Literacy rates cannot be divorced from class. As the government’s own testing regime shows, students from the most disadvantaged backgrounds are ten times more likely to have reading skills below the previously-used NAPLAN “national minimum standard” than students from the most advantaged backgrounds.

One in six children are living in poverty in Victoria and the vast majority of these children are educated in the severely underfunded public school system.

The Victorian state government funds public schools at only 65.9 per cent instead of the current state government benchmark of 80 per cent of the School Resource Standard.

Related to this is the staffing crisis, exacerbated by below-inflation wage rises, with the Victorian government predicting a shortfall of more than 5000 teachers over the next four years. Areas



Above: Teaching children to read has become a political battleground Photo: Judy Baxter/Flickr

with highest teacher vacancy rates correlate with the highest poverty rates.

Conservative model

But literacy and learning is also political. Systematic synthetic phonics and the prioritisation of “explicit instruction” is the reassertion of a conservative educational philosophy that assumes the learner receives the standard set of knowledge passively, and that education programs need ever more standardisation and tests.

The elevation of these strategies is of a piece with Federal Education Minister Jason Clare’s plan to enforce mandatory core content for teacher education.

The right-wing Institute of Public Affairs and the Centre for Independent Studies reliably repeat their “back to basics” mantra whenever students and teachers start using classrooms to discuss Palestine, climate change or anything that deviates from ruling class interests.

Systematic synthetic phonics requires the distortion of language and texts into flattened chunks to be uploaded into the student, and requires the teacher to plough through a program, not to be “distracted” (responsive) to the literacy needs and interests of their class.

Success is measured in Year 1 standardised tests that ask students to “read” nonsense words, like “jound”, to show that they aren’t relying on their recognition of actually meaningful words.

And despite the repetition of unequivocal claims that systematic synthetic phonics “works”, there is

no shortage of data from the US that show no improvement to reading scores where it has been implemented.

Unsurprisingly, reading scores declined as much as 50 per cent where culturally responsive practices and bilingual whole language models were replaced by mandated English-only phonics instruction for a Navajo Nation school.

And a meta-analysis from the UK concluded: “Our analyses of the PISA data suggest that teaching reading in England has been less successful since the introduction of more emphasis on synthetic phonics ... there is little evidence to suggest that a synthetic phonics first-and-foremost orientation to national curricula is likely to be the most effective orientation.”

The AEU’s opposition to Carroll’s announcement was a bolt from the blue for far too many teachers, who have been made to feel individually responsible for the social and educational crises in their classrooms.

Union leaders faced some backlash from members and by the following Monday a bulletin to members signalled retreat; the union had just been seeking “time to be consulted about what the Minister has announced, the timeline for changes, and the support to be provided”.

It will take campaigning and action to re-establish the power of progressive teacher politics. Teachers and School Staff for Palestine groups contain core rank-and-file leaders who can lead that fight; they know that we cannot let the right dictate to us how to teach, what to teach, or how to distribute the resources to teach with.

There is no shortage of data from the US that show no improvement to reading scores where it has been implemented

Dutton's nuclear power plan aims to extend coal power

By Jack Stublej

COALITION LEADER Peter Dutton has attempted to breathe new life into nuclear power as a serious energy policy option.

He claims his idea to build seven nuclear plants around the country, the first of them by 2035, is the way to cut energy emissions and tackle climate change. But his real aim is to extend the use of coal and gas.

Despite his assertions, nuclear energy would cost far more than renewables, especially without any pre-existing nuclear energy industry in Australia. Remarkably, Dutton backs government investment and ownership of nuclear power plants to get them built.

Establishing nuclear energy plants by 2035 would be technically unprecedented not to mention the anti-nuclear state and federal legislation that would need to be overturned. Most experts say it's impossible.

Dutton also claimed renewables are the source of wholesale electricity price increases and warnings of potential energy shortages. In reality, a mix of outages at ageing coal power stations and gas price increases caused by the Ukraine war, were to blame. The main reason for the concern over future energy shortages is the slowing in investment and construction of renewables.

Dutton's pro-nuclear arguments are part of a broader attack on renewable energy and rejection of action on climate change. The facts are that renewables are cheaper, quicker, as reliable, and more carbon-efficient than nuclear power. Additionally, Dutton's proposed modular nuclear reactor technology isn't commercially available and would still produce radioactive waste.

However, it is Labor's renewable failures and the AUKUS nuclear submarine deal that have allowed this ridiculous nuclear "debate" back into Australian politics. AUKUS, currently billed at \$368 billion, is not only a waste of money but necessitates nuclear technology and workforce development in Australia.

Labor's commitment to AUKUS has legitimised the nuclear industry generally, and includes agreement to store nuclear waste from US and British vessels here, making it more difficult for Labor to argue that nuclear power is unsafe.



Above: A decommissioned nuclear power plant where nuclear waste still sits in California on the Pacific coast Photo: [songscommunity.com](https://www.songscommunity.com)

The infrastructure for these submarines is already threatening to displace renewables projects. At Port Kembla, the space for a proposed offshore wind farm, which would be the biggest in the southern hemisphere, is threatened by a proposed submarine base. Union and community mobilisation has forced the government to reconsider.

Extending fossil fuels

The goal of Dutton's pro-nuclear crusade is to defend fossil fuels. The timeline for building nuclear plants would require expanding gas fields and extending the life of existing coal plants. This is because even Dutton admits some of them wouldn't come online until the 2040s.

Keeping coal plants operating would require government subsidies, as seen for the Eraring power station where the NSW state government is providing up to \$225 million a year to keep it running.

Proving its contempt for climate action, the Coalition would scrap Australia's 2030 emissions reduction target and withdraw from the Paris Agreement.

This is all a free kick for Labor to present itself as the only major party with a plan to tackle climate change, distracting attention from Labor's ongoing criminal expansion of coal and gas projects.

Labor has committed under its "Future Gas Strategy" to continuing the approval of further gas projects. Last month saw federal approval of a new gas pipeline in Queensland meant to operate until 2064 and co-owned by

Gina Rinehart.

The Victorian Labor government also approved the first new gas project since 2014, near Port Campbell on the Great Ocean Road. The NT Labor government gave environmental approval for a new fracking project in the Beetaloo Basin. Federal Environment Minister Tanya Plibersek could call in the project for another assessment, but has so far refused to do so.

Similarly, in the Pilliga/Narrabri where Santos is attempting to overturn Indigenous native title for new gas wells, Labor state and federal governments refuse to intervene, despite the power to do so. Meanwhile, Labor is delaying new federal environmental protection laws that would force climate change to be considered when approving mining projects.

The failure of Labor's climate action plan is due to its reliance on private renewables investment, which has been slower than expected. Labor should use public investment and ownership of renewable energy to ensure it is built—instead of attacking the Liberals for proposing government ownership of energy.

The climate movement needs a strategic orientation towards winning workers and unions to fight for these demands.

This requires fighting for a "just transition", demanding a state-funded renewables grid with guaranteed union jobs and retraining for fossil fuel workers as fast as possible.

It will take workers going on strike and people in the streets taking up demands for 100 per cent renewables and guaranteed green union jobs.

Dutton's pro-nuclear arguments are part of an attack on renewable energy and action on climate change

Kenya protests win concessions after protesters shot down

AT LEAST 39 people have been shot dead as a wave of mass protests in Kenya have forced the government of President William Ruto to scrap its planned Finance Bill 2024.

The bill would have increased taxes on daily items for Kenyan workers who are already battling a cost-of-living crisis. With the bill defeated, protesters are now taking aim at the corrupt government; back in the streets with a new slogan: Ruto Must Go.

The protests began on 18 June as thousands of mainly young workers and urban poor took to the streets in the capital, Nairobi, and other cities. The protests escalated after parliament approved the bill. Hundreds of thousands mobilised across the country. Protesters in Nairobi stormed parliament and set part of it on fire.

In response, Ruto unleashed the full force of the state. By early July, 270 had been arrested, 361 injured and at least 39 killed, the youngest just 12.

One protester told Reuters, “People are dying in the streets and the only thing Ruto can talk about is money. We are not money. We are people ... if he can’t care about his people then we don’t need him in that chair.”

Ruto promised a government run in the interests of “hustlers”—ordinary Kenyan workers. But nine out of ten Kenyans are earning the same or less than at the start of the pandemic, while prices have continued to rise.

Kenya is saddled with an \$82 billion debt. Urged on by the International Monetary Fund, Ruto is determined to make workers pay the price.

Ruto’s relationship with the West runs deep. Kenya is the only major non-NATO ally in sub-Saharan Africa.

His government has backed the West in Ukraine, participated in the US-led response to Houthi attacks in the Red Sea and sent 1000 police to Haiti to support a US-backed intervention.

The US wants Kenya as a relatively stable ally to counter Chinese and Russian influence. US troops had to withdraw from Niger and Chad this year after their respective militaries came to power and began favouring Russia.

The protests have stopped the finance bill and seriously shaken Ruto’s government. But to topple Ruto and bring more fundamental change, the protest movement will need to focus more decisively on strikes and the power of the organised working class.

Angus Dermody

Eleven years of refugee torture, enough!



By Ian Rintoul

Above: Refugees in detention on Nauru in 2016

ELEVEN YEARS ago, on 19 July 2013, the then Labor Prime Minister, Kevin Rudd, announced that the government had struck a deal to transfer all asylum-seekers who arrived by boat to Manus Island in PNG. A similar deal was signed with Nauru on 3 August 2013.

Those agreements determined that any refugees sent offshore would never be resettled in Australia and marked the beginning of what is now internationally known as the Australia Solution. Anthony Albanese was Deputy Prime Minister.

Eleven years later, about 50 refugees and asylum-seekers (about 90 people altogether, including the partners and children of 18 families) are still being held in PNG.

For the past ten months the Labor government has turned a blind eye to their suffering as they have been left without income, food, electricity or medical support.

Ten of the refugees are too mentally unwell to engage with UNHCR officials to be considered for resettlement in New Zealand.

The Albanese government has refused every request for them to be medically transferred to Australia, insisting that an agreement between Morrison and PNG signed in December 2021 meant that Australia no longer had any responsibility for the

refugees.

Over the past ten months, refugee supporters have raised tens of thousands of dollars to ensure refugees did not go hungry.

Despite numerous appeals, Labor did nothing.

Now the Albanese government has announced that a renewed funding deal will be struck to support the refugees.

But there are no details and the deal reiterates that the refugees will never be resettled in Australia. Yet about 18 of them have no third country resettlement pathway.

Meanwhile, the number of refugees on Nauru has grown to 100, as Labor maintains offshore detention of asylum-seekers who arrive by boat.

They, too, have no resettlement pathway and are facing a decade or more of offshore detention. They are not eligible under the resettlement deal with New Zealand.

And an ABC report has revealed that in the last weeks of June Labor turned asylum-seeker boats back to Indonesia.

Albanese once said Labor would be “tough on borders without being weak on humanity” but that’s a lie.

Labor is working overtime to re-establish a regime of indefinite detention.

Labor’s border protection policies need to be fought just as hard as those of Dutton and the Liberals.

The number of refugees on Nauru has grown to 100, as Labor maintains offshore detention

British Labour takes office but little enthusiasm on show

By James Supple

LABOUR WON a big majority in Britain's election on 4 July after 14 years of Tory rule. But it was far from a vote of confidence in the party under leader Sir Keir Starmer. The results saw a surge towards the racist far right Reform UK party while pro-Palestine independents won five seats.

Despite an almost 20 per cent swing against the Tories, Labour's share of the vote rose by just 1.7 per cent, with only one third of voters backing them. And much of this was due to gains in Scotland, where the Scottish National Party vote collapsed.

In a further example of the rise of the racist right, Reform UK took 14.3 per cent of the vote and five seats, including a seat for party leader Nigel Farage. This follows the successes for France's fascist National Rally, the Alternative for Germany and other far right parties across Europe.

The anger at the Tories and lack of enthusiasm for Labor allowed Farage to dominate the campaign. Some early polls even had Reform UK ahead of the Tories, and the party finished second in 103 seats.

Reform UK called for a freeze on "non-essential immigration", blaming migrants for the declining health system and the lack of affordable housing. Farage said he wanted the poll to be "the immigration election".

For years the Tories and Labor have promoted racism against refugees and migrants in an attempt to boost their own support. Farage is simply taking this one step further.

Outgoing Tory Prime Minister Rishi Sunak promised to "stop the boats" in a racist scare against refugees, attempting to send them to Rwanda in imitation of the Australian government's detention of refugees on Manus Island and Nauru.

The Tories launched a vile racist ad featuring people rolling out a red carpet to refugee boats, claiming this would be "Labour's approach to illegal immigration".

As the Tories announced a new cap on migrant visas Labour leader Sir Keir Starmer tried to outdo them saying, "Read my lips—I will bring immigration numbers down."

Independents for Gaza

Labour also lost votes on its left due to its backing for Israel's genocide in Gaza.



Above: Labour leader Sir Keir Starmer has set out a right-wing agenda
Photo: Keir Starmer/
Flickr

.....
There is a message for Anthony Albanese about the consequences of his own complicity in Israel's genocide

Jeremy Corbyn, running as an independent after the former leader was expelled from the Labour Party, convincingly defeated a Labour candidate. He said he ran for those who "want something different" and want to see a government that, "will search for peace not war, and not allow the terrible conditions to go on that are happening in Gaza".

Independent Andrew Feinstein came second running against Sir Keir Starmer, taking 19 per cent as the Labour leader's vote fell by half.

A Labour shadow minister, Jonathan Ashworth, lost his seat to pro-Palestine independent Shockat Adam, despite a previous majority of 22,000 votes. The Green Party also won three new seats, increasing its total to four. In two of them it ran prominently on Gaza.

Many of the independent victories were in areas with large Muslim populations. But as the votes for Corbyn, Andrew Feinstein and other independents show the impact of Gaza and the mass movement for Palestine was far wider.

There is a message in this for Anthony Albanese about the consequences of his own complicity in Israel's genocide.

After 14 years of savage cuts to services and the health system under the Tory government, there is a widespread desire for change. But Labour promised little, with Starmer sending signals it would keep the rich

and powerful on side, saying the party was "pro-business" and the "party of wealth creation".

It plans a global investment summit in its first 100 days and has already held meetings with banks including BlackRock, Lloyds Banking Group and HSBC to discuss infrastructure deals.

Labour pledged not to increase taxes on corporations or the rich, limiting its ability to restore health funding or roll out renewable energy.

Instead its manifesto dumped earlier promises on the use of private contractors in the National Health Service, affordable housing and green infrastructure spending.

Just the like Albanese government here, British Labour wants to govern in the interests of big business and the ruling class.

This means there is a serious danger of further far right advances as disillusionment in the new Labour government inevitably spreads. Already fascist Tommy Robinson, who called for a vote for Reform UK, has called a protest in London.

There needs to be a union fight-back to force the new government to end austerity policies, tax the rich and tear up the anti-union laws. Mobilisations against racism and over Palestine are also set to continue. These movements outside parliament are the key to pushing back racism and forcing real change.

CAN THE RISE OF FRANCE'S FASCISTS BE STOPPED?

Despite the fascists' failure to take government in France, they will continue rising if the left relies on electoral deals to halt them, argues **Cooper Forsyth**

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS in France saw a widely anticipated victory for the far right thwarted, with the New Popular Front, an electoral alliance of four left-wing parties, coming out on top with 180 seats.

In second place, President Emmanuel Macron's neoliberal Ensemble alliance won 168 seats, with the far-right National Rally (RN) third with 143 seats.

The results are a blow to the far right, who were expected to come first following their success in the European parliamentary elections and strong lead in the first round of voting. It shows that most people in France are unwilling to accept a fascist party in government.

The victory belongs to the 800,000 people who took to the streets last month against the RN and then campaigned against them.

The massive voter turnout, up to 67 per cent, compared to 46 per cent for the parliamentary elections in 2022 and 43 per cent in 2017, is a testament to the determination to prevent the RN coming to power.

Macron hoped that the possibility of a far-right government would rally voters to his side. Instead, the French public used the election to vent their anger about cost of living, the genocide in Gaza and repeated attacks by Macron's government on the working class.

But there can be no complacency about the threat of the far right.

The RN continued its meteoric rise, increasing its vote from 88 to 143 seats. Leader Marine Le Pen declared that victory had only been "delayed". She recognised that, "The tide is rising. It did not rise high enough this time but it is continuing to rise."

Without an outright majority, the New Popular Front will have to collaborate with Macron's party in order to govern.

This will mean more attacks on the working class and concessions to racism and Islamophobia.

The danger is that this allows the

RN to continue to present itself as the only alternative to the failing political system.

The rise of the RN

The RN, formerly the National Front, has its roots in the fascist movement and is still run by committed Nazis.

Following the defeat of fascism in the Second World War, and the relative stability of capitalism, the precursors to the National Front argued that for fascism to become relevant again, it would have to distance itself from the legacies of Hitler and Mussolini. Organising armed fascist gangs would not be their immediate path to power as it was in the 1930s.

Instead, a turn towards an electoral front would help fascism break out of its "ghetto" and reach wider layers of support in order to "transform them in our image", as the fascist organisation Jeune Nation argued.

This approach laid the foundation for the National Front. It modelled its structure on the fascist French Popular Party of the 1930s and 1940s, but focused its platform on immigration rather than racial purity.

It was the rise of Islamophobia and anti-migrant racism, in response to the war on terror after the September 11 Twin Tower attacks, as well as an attempt to gain consent for an unpopular neoliberal economic agenda, that legitimised the National Front's politics and brought it into the mainstream.

At the same time it maintained links to violent racist thugs and sought to build a fascist core inside the party.

The rise of Islamophobia coincided with a collapse in job security and living standards for working class people.

Islamophobia was the key way successive governments were able to maintain legitimacy, deflecting the blame for economic misery onto immigrants and Muslims.

The FN's idea of creating harsher punishments for some crimes, when

The rise of mainstream Islamophobia and anti-migrant racism legitimised the National Front's politics

they are committed by foreign or dual nationals, was taken up first by right-wing president Nicholas Sarkozy. This was continued under the Socialist Party presidency of Francois Hollande between 2012 and 2017.

At the time, Le Pen gloated, "When you see ... a President of the Republic take up the Front National's measures, there's an astonishing aspect to this, an homage to the FN."

After the 2015 Islamic State terror attacks, Hollande tried to whip up nationalist and Islamophobic sentiment under the guise of "republicanism" and "secularism", organising a "republican march against terrorism". This went hand in hand with attacks on the working class.

As France-based socialist Jad Bouharoun put it: "It was in this context, when it appeared as if a police state had suddenly descended upon society and filled the air with a deafening chauvinistic and Islamophobic racket, that Hollande launched his frontal attack against the working class with the 'El Khomri' labour law."

This legacy of the Socialist Party in particular, in both conceding to Islamophobia and implementing attacks on the working class has produced rising support for the RN.

An Ipsos poll shortly before the first round of the elections found a majority (54 per cent) of people who self-identify as "disadvantaged" backed the RN. The far-right party also secured the highest share of the "popular class" vote (38 per cent), three percentage points ahead of the left-wing coalition.

It also found that, "Most voters who said they barely make ends meet or rely on savings and/or loans to get by (41 per cent and 46 per cent respectively) backed the RN ahead of its left-wing rivals."

Frédéric Micheau, deputy managing director of pollster OpinionWay, explained this as a result of "a feeling of abandonment and betrayal" the left-wing electorate feels towards the Socialist Party.

This should serve as a warning for the resurgent New Popular Front. As part of the NPF, the Socialist Party won 59 seats.

Ironically, the success of the NPF has helped to resuscitate the Socialist Party. But it was the Socialist Party in government which discredited the left and helped to pave the way for the fascists.

Macron in power

Macron's government bears responsibility for the further rise of the RN. As support for the mainstream left and right parties collapsed, Macron sold himself as "neither right nor left", claiming to represent something different.

But far from overcoming the inequality between rich and poor, Macron has consistently sided with the rich, pushing through neoliberal reforms and attacking the working class, while at the same time making more and more concessions to the racism of the National Rally.

Macron made his reputation in crushing the Yellow Vest movement that challenged neoliberalism beginning in 2018. He encouraged a violent crackdown on protesters and introduced state laws to prosecute those who filmed the grotesque police violence.

He bypassed parliament to ram through increases to the pension age, in spite of massive national demonstrations and strikes by unions in France, which were met again with a brutal police crackdown.

In 2021, he introduced racist laws such as the "anti-separatist law" which introduced a swathe of attacks on Muslims, including a ban on women under 18 wearing the headscarf in public.

In December last year, he passed an anti-immigration bill which slashes social services and makes it much easier to deport immigrants. Le Pen claimed this as an "ideological victory" for her own anti-immigration platform.

This is the context for the National Rally's large gains in recent months' European and parliamentary elections.

Collaboration with the right

Ultimately, electoral efforts will not stop the rise of the RN.

Behind the success in the second round is an agreement between the NPF, including its most left-wing section the France Unbowed party led by Jean-Luc Melenchon, and Macron's party, where the party



A rally in Lyons, France against the fascists in June Photo: Franck Chapolard/Alamy

that had run third in each seat in the first round of voting stepped down to allow the other a better chance of winning.

But this saw the left give its backing to the very politicians who have paved the way for the RN.

Among those the France Unbowed candidates stood aside for were former prime minister Elisabeth Borne, who repeatedly attacked the conditions of unemployed workers and backed the cops as they brutalised protesters after the police murder of Nahel M a year ago.

Another was interior minister Gerald Darmanin, whose name is associated with the most viscous, racist and Islamophobic laws under Macron. He has even attacked the RN from the right, claiming they are "soft on Islam".

It is likely the new government will be an alliance between the NPF and Macron's party. This will discredit the NPF as the left again supports a government forcing through attacks on living standards.

Driving back the fascists requires a movement outside parliament that insists they are not a legitimate party and brands and exposes them as Nazis to undermine their electoral support.

And their attempts to hold meetings, campaign in local shopping areas or hold rallies need to be confronted.

Anti-fascist movements in Greece and Britain that used these tactics have

been able to defeat fascist parties such as the British National Front, the British National Party and Golden Dawn in Greece.

Alongside this a mass anti-racist movement is needed to defend migrants, end police violence and demand the repeal of Islamophobic and anti-migrant laws.

Even the NPF has failed to make fighting racism a priority, since sections of it support racism. The Communist Party leader Fabien Roussel, for instance, has said that France's borders are "sieves" and demanded more police at the borders.

The unions also have a responsibility to wage a more serious fight against attacks on workers' wages and living conditions and, crucially, to combat the racism that is used to divide the working class.

The union leaders gave up the fight over raising the pension age last year far too easily. A union movement winning clear victories would show that class struggle can improve workers' lives—as an alternative to racism and voting for the RN.

But, as French socialist Denis Godard has put it, "The situation is far from hopeless. The fascist gangs are growing, but they can't put tens of thousands on the streets. The left and the unions can put hundreds of thousands on the streets and could mobilise millions."

The urgent task of the left is to build this fight.

WHY ARE UNION LEADERS DRAGGING THEIR FEET OVER PALESTINE?

Chris Breen examines why most union leaders still haven't mobilised their members to support Palestine, despite the efforts at rank-and-file action

ISRAEL AND its partners in genocide are more isolated than ever.

Mass protests and student encampments have lit a spark of growing consciousness about the genocide and Australia's role in it, but it is workers who have the industrial power to make calls to stop military trade with Israel a reality.

Although still weak in many respects, the ACTU peak union body has issued a statement calling for an end to all military trade with Israel. The union movement is on record opposing companies in Australia doing work on the F-35 fighter jets being used in Gaza. The CFMEU has called for Australia to immediately ban military trade with Israel, including dual-use devices.

Rank-and-file groups for Palestine have sprung up in dozens of unions. Many unions have had official contingents at the rallies for Palestine, and Maritime Union officials were arrested at Port Botany in protests to blockade Israeli ZIM ships.

But why have official calls to end military trade taken so long? And why are unions yet to seriously mobilise their membership for the rallies for Palestine, let alone take industrial action to enforce bans on weapons trade with Israel?

The extent of horror in Gaza has been clear from October, and certainly since the "plausible genocide" ruling by the International Court of Justice on 26 January.

Yet most union leaders have been dragging their feet and blocking action.

To see why it is important to understand that union leaders occupy a distinct social position that encourages conservatism. The paid officials who run the unions are a negotiating layer, removed from the pressures of the workplace. Senior officials are usually on substantially better wages and conditions than the workers they

represent.

To keep their positions they have to be somewhat responsive to workers' demands, since they can ultimately be removed by their members in union elections. To have any bargaining power, they need to be prepared at least to threaten industrial action on occasion. But their role as professional negotiators means they see their rightful place as at the bargaining table rather than the picket line.

There is a difference between left and right officials, especially where officials have recently been elected out of a wave of strike action.

The NSW leadership of the Maritime Union, who are on the left, have put their bodies on the line in the fight to shut down ZIM shipping.

On the other hand, the NSW secretary of the Health Services Union, Gerard Hayes from the Labor Right, met the Israeli ambassador. He claimed that the union didn't want to take a side and supported a two-state solution. But meeting the ambassador while genocide is taking place was taking a side.

Hayes' statement also condemned "the savage Hamas attacks on Israeli civilians" while merely calling on Israel to be "be more focused" on preventing civilian casualties.

But all officials can come to see strikes as a nuisance and the mobilisation of workers, and rank-and-file democracy, as a threat to their position and the resources of the union, especially when anti-union laws carry heavy fines.

The union movement today is also far weaker than in the past. Union militancy has been in retreat for several decades. Far fewer unions take serious industrial action even around their own immediate demands for wages and conditions, let alone over wider political issues like Palestine.

This often leads to a strategy of lobbying Labor governments or

Unions provide democratic structures that allow workers to make arguments that counter the distortions

employers to deliver, rather than mobilising members. Some union leaders have been reluctant to call out state or federal Labor governments' complicity in Israel's genocide for fear of disrupting what they perceive as a cosy bargaining relationship.

Trade union leaders set up the Labor Party. Today union leaders still control half the votes at Labor Party conferences and often climb into the ranks of Labor MPs.

Because union leaders look to Labor to form the federal government, they associate with the "national interest" of Australia's rulers. That can act as a brake on mobilising around issues like Gaza, that raise radical and embarrassing questions about the role of the Australian state.

Ultra-leftism

Union officials' conservatism means they have held back from taking a stronger stand over Gaza. But their response also shows they are not yet under sufficient pressure from rank-and-file union members to force them to act on the issue.

Given the limited, vacillating and occasionally completely reactionary positions of some union leaders on Gaza, it is sometimes tempting for activists to simply denounce union leaders or to ask if they would be better off organising outside the unions. But this would leave activists cut off from a key audience. Despite union decline, there are still 1.4 million union members in Australia today.

Despite many bureaucratic restrictions, unions still provide some of the only democratic structures that allow workers to make arguments that counter the ruling class distortions. At the Australian Nurses and Midwives Federation (ANMF) delegates conference in Victoria at the end of June, ANMF for Palestine members argued for the union to join the Boycott Divestment and Sanctions campaign against

Israel. The motion lost narrowly, but in the debate and at the stall that followed, the pro-Palestine rank-and-file members made important arguments directly to workplace delegates about why it's not antisemitic to oppose Israel, and signed up new union activists to the campaign.

The possibility of any serious workers' industrial action for Gaza relies on winning over large numbers of those union members to action. A radical minority cannot take successful industrial action on its own. Union bans at the ports, for example, would require the support of the majority of the workforce.

Unlike Labor Party leaders, workers, whatever their current political consciousness, have no interest in maintaining imperialism or covering up genocide. They can be won to supporting Palestine. That then forces union officials to either give some voice to Palestine or to lose influence among radicalising members of their unions.

Successes

Pro-Palestine unionists working within the unions are gaining wider support, showing how organising by union rank-and-file members can shift union leaders into some forms of action. This requires working with union leaders and officials where possible and organising against them when it's not.

Activists in Teachers and School Staff for Palestine pushed the NSW Teachers Federation to bring its flags to Palestine rallies, when it originally refused on the basis that they didn't want to be smeared as antisemitic.

Teacher activists are mobilising to defend the right to discuss Palestine in schools and in NSW successfully moved motions for the union to back the wearing of the keffiyeh at work. In Victoria, rank-and-file teacher action has meant the union leaders are taking their own pro-Palestine motions to the state conference in July.

There is still much more to be done. While the union has responded to pressure it has also sought to limit that response. For instance, the NSWTF brings union flags to most rallies for Palestine but limits the emails it sends to members to the hundred or so in the Peace Special Interest Group.

NSWTF officials organised well publicised public forums about the Voice in most teachers' associations but haven't done so about Gaza. The Voice, a symbolic move designed to avoid real change, was pushing



Above: Rank-and-file union members march at Port Botany in Sydney to demand sanctions against Israel

what ALP leaders wanted while Gaza pushes hard against them.

At the University of Sydney, nearly 350 NTEU members packed into a meeting to consider a motion to boycott Israeli universities, which passed with 93 per cent voting in favour despite officials often arguing that "members don't care about Palestine".

In Melbourne, university staff and NTEU members mobilised to defend the Melbourne University student occupation when management threatened to bring in police.

On May Day, some Australian Services Union members in Melbourne took 30-minute stopwork action to call on their employers in the community and not-for-profit sector to step up advocacy for Palestine.

Proud history

Some union leaders defend their inaction by arguing that members are only interested in 'bread and butter' issues, and that forcing members to take a position on politics will create division in the union.

But unions have a proud history of building power by standing against apartheid and war.

On 25 October 1990, Nelson Mandela delivered a thank you speech to the Australian union movement at Melbourne Town Hall.

He said, "I well remember that the labour movement of this country [Australia] was among the very first, if not the first, to take solidarity action

in line with the people of South Africa in the course of their struggle".

All the most powerful mass movements in Australian history have involved significant industrial action. The movement against the war in Vietnam saw workers economically disrupting the war machine. Maritime unions first refused to load ships with supplies for the war in Vietnam. Then they banned work on all US ships.

To get to that point required much political argument and agitation. The Moratoriums (political strikes and rallies) against the war, which came after years of organising, involved teachers, university staff and construction workers downing tools to stop the war.

These political mobilisations were not distractions; they fed the union movements' combativity, increasing strikes, and building direct challenges to anti-strike laws.

To build the power that can disrupt our rulers support for, and military ties with, Israel means rebuilding this social justice unionism.

Union power today is at a far lower ebb. There are now anti-union laws that impose enormous restrictions on when unions can take industrial action and ban strikes over political issues, with huge fines for unions that take any unlawful strike action.

But union mobilisation and industrial action in support of Palestine is the only way the movement can wield the power needed to break Australian ties with Israel. We need to break the law to stop the war.

ISLAM, IMPERIALISM AND THE FIGHT FOR CHANGE

Islamic politics inspire some of the most powerful movements against imperialism in the Middle East. **Luke Ottavi** looks at how the left should respond

MILLIONS OF people look to Islamist movements, particularly across the Middle East.

Groups like Hamas in Gaza, Hezbollah in southern Lebanon, the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt and the Islamic regime in Iran have wide influence and support.

In Australia the attitude to Islamist groups is usually coloured by the Islamophobia whipped up by our rulers. The media coverage of the Sydney University encampment by news programs like 60 Minutes painted Muslims speaking out for Palestine as “extremists” with a “dangerous Islamic ideology”.

We need to clearly oppose the Islamophobia and the attempt to divide and discredit the Palestine movement.

The Australian government also hypocritically lists Hamas and Hezbollah as terrorist groups and accuses those—particularly Muslims—who stand with the Palestinian resistance of being terrorist sympathisers. There is no such media hysteria about the Australian citizens travelling overseas to fight for Israel.

The Palestinians have a right to resist as an occupied people—a right that has been recognised at the UN and in international law. Both Hamas and Hezbollah should be removed from list of terrorist organisations.

But we also need to understand the nature of Islamist movements if we’re to effectively fight against imperialism, capitalism and oppression.

There are two mistakes that are often made on the left when it comes to Islamist movements.

The first is to think that they are all reactionary because Islam is often regarded as reactionary in general. Some even say that political Islam is a form of fascism because of the alleged views Islamists hold about women or LGBTIQ+ people, and the supposedly oppressive society some Islamists want to install.

This has led sections of the left to support the state and counter-revolutionary forces in suppressing Islamists—such as during the Egypt-

tian revolution after 2011 when the Muslim Brotherhood was in government and was being attacked by the military.

The second mistake is to think that because Islamists are often fighting against Western imperialism and colonialism that they are always progressive anti-imperialists. An example is the way some went silent when Hezbollah forces supported Bashar Assad in suppressing a popular revolution in Syria in 2012.

Both positions are wrong.

Religion

Some of the confusion around Islamist movements comes from a confusion about the power of religion itself.

Religion is a set of ideas that can inspire movements with vastly different political aims. It has played a role in many different social struggles all over the world.

Versions of Christianity—Catholic and Protestant—were often portrayed as being the defining features of the two sides of the struggle in Northern Ireland. But the fundamental issue was not religion but the struggle for Irish freedom from British colonialism.

The approach the left should take to different Islamist political movements depends on the role an Islamist movement is playing in struggle and the class interests they represent, not their religious doctrine.

Islamists often call for a struggle against oppression and exploitation and a return to the original teachings of the Prophet. This, they argue, will save people from the harsh realities of life under capitalism and imperialist domination.

This can mean different things to different classes in society.

The British Marxist Chris Harman, in his pamphlet *The Prophet and the Proletariat*, identified at least four different social groupings involved in Islamic movements, each of which uses Islam in its own way.

Elements of the ruling class and

Islamism has gained a mass following in Middle Eastern societies traumatised by the impact of capitalism

the wealthy, for instance, have supported Islamist movements.

The Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt has long had the support of important capitalists, including millionaire Khairat al-Shater who was part of its leadership imprisoned in 2013. Those running large companies, who often resent the way state economic policies favour cronies of the regime, can have an interest in supporting Islamic opposition movements.

Islamism also appeals to the poor. Tens of thousands of barely employed former peasants live in the cities of the Middle East. They have lost the certainties associated with their old way of life—which they identified with traditional Muslim culture—and have not gained a secure material existence.

The rich who run the state and the economy and have increasingly Westernised lifestyles can be identified as non-Islamic by the poor. And the poor also have an interest in joining movements that condemn governments that fail to provide them with jobs or the basics of life.

There are also thousands of university graduates across the region, part of the new middle class, unable to find the kind of well-paid jobs their studies train them for.

In 2021 the International Labour Organisation reported that 40 per cent of university graduates in Egypt were unemployed. Those in work usually find only low-paying government jobs, often having to work multiple jobs to survive.

In this situation, an Islamist movement that directs people’s anger against a state which they see as capitulating to Western imperialism and causing systemic impoverishment can gain a mass audience.

Rise of Islamic politics

Islamism has gained a mass following in Middle Eastern societies traumatised by the impact of capitalism. Middle Eastern societies have been dominated by imperialist powers from the late 19th century.

It was secular nationalist forces

that spear-headed the initial movements against colonialism. But they failed to deliver on their promises of greater prosperity and independence from Western imperialism, creating a space for Islamism to become the main opposition force.

Socialism was discredited due to the Stalinist politics of the mass communist parties that existed in the 1940s and 1950s. As those parties lined up with oppressive nationalist rulers, the Islamists gained support as the only groups willing to wage a struggle against imperialism.

Egypt provides one example of this process. Gamal Abdel Nasser led a revolt against British domination in Egypt and came to power in 1954. He nationalised the Suez Canal and was seen as an anti-imperialist hero across the Middle East.

However, his successors abandoned anti-imperialist rhetoric to make peace with Israel and Western imperialism. They adopted free market policies that impoverished workers and the poor.

The Egyptian Communist Party uncritically supported Nasser because of its Stalinist analysis that socialism was possible only after the national revolution. They subordinated class struggle to Nasser, who they saw as leading the struggle for national independence.

But Nasser crushed their organisation, leaving the Muslim Brotherhood as the only large oppositional force in the country.

A similar process played out in Palestine. For decades the secular Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) held the leadership of the Palestinian struggle.

The PLO became heroes when their guerrilla fighters forced the Israel military to retreat in the battle of Karamah in Jordan in 1968.

However, the PLO later betrayed the Palestinian resistance when leader Yasser Arafat entered the “peace process” resulting in the Oslo Accords in 1993, formally recognising Israel.

The PLO dominated the new Palestinian Authority (PA), set up to administer the Occupied Territories for Israel. The PA became a police force that “does Israel’s job for them”.

The PLO’s failed strategy opened the space for Hamas to gain mass support—by continuing armed resistance against Israel’s occupation.

In 2006 Hamas defeated the PLO in a democratic election to control the PA in both the West Bank and Gaza. Hamas was ousted from the West Bank by a coup led by the PLO (with



Above: A rally of Hamas supporters in Gaza in 2007
Photo: UPI/Alamy

Israeli backing) but it retained control in the Gaza Strip. It continues to have strong support from Palestinians—including growing support in the West Bank.

Socialists and Islamists

Socialists draw a distinction between Islamist mass movements with a real social base like the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, Hezbollah in Lebanon or Hamas in Gaza and Islamist groups like Islamic State, which have no social base and are a product of the sectarian civil wars in Iraq and Syria, fuelled by regional sub-imperialist (and oppressive) powers like Saudi Arabia.

We support the right of Palestinians to resist, which sees Hamas struggle against Israel’s occupation. But we disagree over Hamas’s armed struggle strategy, collaboration with the Arab rulers and the kind of society they want to implement in a free Palestine.

In Egypt, the left should join forces with members of the Muslim Brotherhood in struggle against the military dictatorship. We never support the state against the Islamists because we recognise that this can only strengthen the state and give it confidence to crush all opposition groups, including the left.

British Marxist Anne Alexander explained the approach of Solidarity’s sister organisation, the Revolutionary Socialists in Egypt, in the face of Sisi’s dictatorship.

“Although the Revolutionary Socialists are not calling for an alli-

ance with the Brotherhood, they argue to work ‘side by side with the young Islamists who are facing the machinery of military repression every day’. This is crucial to building a movement capable of challenging the regime. This means clarifying that the real enemy is Mubarak’s and Sisi’s state, not the Brotherhood.”

The slogan that Harman put forward is that socialists are “with the Islamists sometimes, with the state never”.

On some issues we find ourselves on the same side as the Islamists struggling against imperialism and the state. This is true today as we fight against Islamophobia, imperialism and to free Palestine.

Even so, there are basic issues over which we disagree—we are both for the right to practise religion and the right to criticise it.

When we work alongside Islamists we argue about ideas about women, LGBTQI+ people and so on in the context of arguing the best way forward to end racism, discrimination and to free Palestine, from the river to the sea.

To end poverty and oppression we need a complete overthrow of existing class relations, not just to swap one ruling class and ruling ideology for an alternative Islamic ruling class.

What’s needed is a revolutionary transformation of society to end capitalism and bring about a world free from exploitation and free from the imperialist horrors continuing to unfold in Gaza. That means fighting for socialism.

WHY STRUGGLE AND REVOLUTION IS THE ONLY ROUTE TO REAL CHANGE

Radical parties that have tried to introduce sweeping change through parliament have continually failed, argues **James Supple**, because the system is set up to stop them

CAPITALISM IS producing global catastrophe.

Brutal and bloody wars are increasing common—not just through military coups in places like Sudan and Myanmar but between major world powers in Ukraine. The US, Australia and the West are arming Israel as it carries out genocide in Gaza and threatens to spread war across the whole Middle East.

A handful of billionaires and the super-rich reveal massive inequality. Jeff Bezos can waste \$5.5 billion on a trip to space while one in ten people on Earth face chronic hunger. Even in a rich country like Australia, governments are refusing to address the out of control housing and cost of living crisis.

And even as we face catastrophic levels of warming our rulers allow the extraction of coal, oil and gas to continue unchecked.

Growing numbers of people are disillusioned with the political system and want radical change.

But the majority of them still look to elections and parliament as the way to achieve this—usually through getting more Greens or independents into the balance of power where they can influence government.

Yet every time new left-wing parties have either joined government, or taken power through parliament in their own right, the experience has been a disaster.

Syriza's election to government in Greece in 2015 represented a breakthrough by the radical left in Europe. Five years earlier it had received just 5 per cent of the vote. It promised to tear up brutal austerity measures imposed in the wake of the global economic crisis.

Just six months later it capitulated to the IMF and the European Central Bank, accepting even worse austerity measures including privatisations and cuts to pensions of 40 per cent.

Former Syriza Finance Minister Yanis Varoufakis, who resigned rather than agree to this, said the deal was a “catastrophe” and meant “humiliation”.

When the radical party Podemos in Spain joined a coalition government in 2019, the result was the same. Its focus on winning seats in parliament saw it abandon radical policies such as a 35-hour week and an earlier retirement age.

Disappointment at the mainstream left government it joined saw the party's support crash and its founders resign in despair.

The Labor Party started out here in the 1890s with the aim of using government in the interests of working class people. Instead it has delivered betrayal after betrayal, moving steadily to the right.

Reformism

The attempt to bring about change through the existing parliamentary and state institutions is known as reformism, as it seeks to reform capitalism rather than get rid of it. There are a number of reasons why it fails.

Firstly any government that wins control of parliament does not control the bulk of the economy.

Billionaires like Gina Rinehart and Andrew Forrest directly run some of Australia's biggest companies, but all the major corporations are controlled by a tiny rich elite—the capitalist ruling class.

This gives them enormous power to either force governments to serve their interests, or drive them from office.

They can create economic chaos, through sacking thousands of workers, withholding essential goods from sale or pulling millions of dollars out of the country. They can also use their control of the media to launch vicious attacks on governments they oppose.

Big business will react savagely to any serious threat to its wealth. The

mining companies responded to Kevin Rudd's modest super-profits tax in 2009 with a multi-million dollar advertising campaign and threats to cut off investment. The Labor government quickly retreated.

The rich can also use the financial markets to target a radical government. The British Labour government elected in 1974 faced just such an assault after it won an election promising to deliver on “socialist aims” through “a fundamental and irreversible shift in the balance of wealth and power in favour of working people”.

Major companies and banks started to move money out of the country and attack the currency. The government capitulated, agreeing to push through savage wage cuts for workers.

Another barrier to change is the state. Those in charge of the public service bureaucracy, the police, the courts or the military never face election. They have the power either to refuse to implement government policies or to overturn their actions in the courts.

The generals, judges, chiefs of police and senior public servants usually come from privileged backgrounds, or have spent their careers mixing with business owners and the wealthy. This means they see their role as serving their interests.

As a last resort the army will use violence to overthrow any government that poses a real threat to capitalism and the wealth of the ruling class.

A classic example is the military coup in Chile that removed Salvador Allende's democratically elected government in 1973, putting an end to what some saw as a democratic path to socialism.

Australia is yet to experience a military coup against a democratic government, but elected governments have been sacked by the representative of the British monarch on two

occasions.

When big business and the conservative establishment decided Gough Whitlam's Labor government had to go in 1975, they were willing to break parliamentary rules and push the Governor-General, supposedly a powerless figurehead, to sack the Prime Minister.

NSW Premier Jack Lang was sacked in 1932 after he moved to stop repaying government debt during the Depression, defying the federal government.

On top of this, the parliamentary process itself is designed to deflect challenges from radical movements or prevent them taking power. We get to vote in each election only once every three or four years. This leaves governments plenty of time to wear down movements against them before they face the voters.

Mass movements are at their strongest when they are mobilised in strikes and mass demonstrations, and workers can begin to feel their power to make change. But voting is a passive process that involves an individual choice at the ballot box, isolated from that experience. Calling an election can be used as a way of halting movements for change.

Gough Whitlam told his supporters to end the strikes and demonstrations that followed his sacking and "maintain the rage" until election day. But the demoralisation that followed along with weeks of media attacks saw him lose in a landslide.

In 1968 the French government was able to bring an end to an enormous strike wave and widespread factory occupations through calling an election—with the established left-wing parties working to wind down the struggle.

Finally, parliamentary elections produce pressure on radical movements to water down their politics in order to chase votes and make alliances with other parties. This is because they are an arena where the power of money and the capitalist media over individuals are heightened.

Capitalism and revolution

Despite all this, the idea of sweeping revolutionary change and the end of capitalism seems, to many, impossible.

Yet the last 100 years is punctuated with radical movements that have called the whole system into question.

Struggles outside of parliament are the key engine of social change—and the only road to socialism.

The 1960s and 1970s saw a worldwide wave of radicalisation that



Above: A march following the Egyptian revolution in 2012
Photo: Hossam el-Hamalawy/Flickr

produced revolutionary situations in a series of countries. The most dramatic included France in May 1968, when millions of workers occupied their factories, Chile from 1972-73 after the election of Salvador Allende's government triggered major workers' struggles, the toppling of dictatorships in Portugal in 1974 and Iran in 1979, and the movement in Poland in 1980.

It saw the highest level of strikes in Australian history, the mass movement against the Vietnam War, and struggles against racism and for women's and LGBTIQ+ liberation. The level of struggle pushed Gough Whitlam's Labor government to deliver significant reforms—even as it sought to undermine the radicalism and workers' struggle.

Revolutions and near-revolutions have been a constant feature of modern capitalism—from the toppling of dictatorships in Egypt and Tunisia in 2011, in Sudan in 2019, to the revolts of the 1930s that saw the occupation of the factories in France in 1936 and the Spanish civil war, and the revolutions that swept away the old regimes in Russia, Germany and Austria after the First World War.

Since the first industrial working class emerged in Britain in the 1830s workers have repeatedly risen up in movements so powerful that revolution against capitalism was possible.

In the most developed revolutionary situations, workers have set up new democratic assemblies to organise the struggle that have begun to take control of production and the running of society into their own hands.

Any strike on a big enough scale poses the question of which class controls society. With any large section of the workforce on strike day after day, the movement needs to make decisions about, for instance, where to keep the power running and how to distribute food and essential goods.

So in Chile in 1973 when bosses shut down the transport system and boarded up supermarkets, workers organised to take control of the trucks to restart deliveries and make sure the population was fed.

Only in Russia in 1917 have workers succeeded in overthrowing capitalism and taking power themselves. The Russian revolution's failure to spread internationally eventually allowed Stalin to stage a counter-revolution that ended any element of workers' democracy.

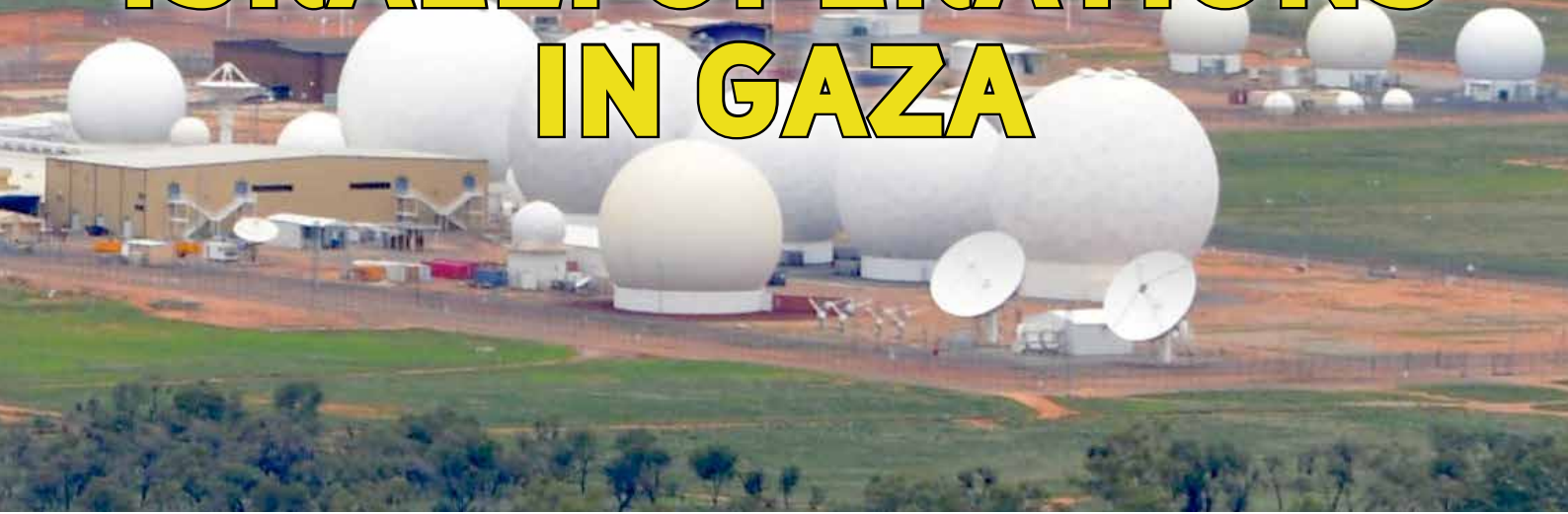
But in just a few years the revolution was able to end the war, give women the right to divorce, abortion on demand and the vote, and became the first country in the world to decriminalise homosexuality.

It showed the possibility of building a world based on real democracy, equality and freedom from oppression.

Many other revolutionary situations have ended in defeat due to the lack of a revolutionary party able to lead the struggle. In Russia it was the Bolshevik Party, grouping together tens of thousands of revolutionary workers, that allowed the revolution to succeed.

Revolution is the only way to end the crises facing humanity—and revolutionary organisation working to build the struggles outside parliament is a necessity for it to succeed.

PINE GAP BASE AIDS ISRAELI OPERATIONS IN GAZA



By Jacob Starling

THE ALBANESE government is directly aiding Israel's war in Gaza through allowing the sharing of intelligence information from the spy base at Pine Gap.

The unique and unprecedented sharing of US intelligence with the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) is another way in which the US and Australia are directly contributing to Israel's myriad war crimes.

The *Washington Post* has revealed that Israel's 8 June raid on the Nuseirat refugee camp, which retrieved four hostages and killed 274 Palestinians, was made possible by US intelligence.

Prior to 7 October, the US had left it to Israel to monitor the Gaza Strip. But as Israel launched its war against Gaza, a secret memorandum was drafted between Israel and the US, expanding intelligence sharing between the two states to an unprecedented level.

Israeli military spokesman Daniel Hagari claimed in March that he had never experienced such a high level of intelligence cooperation between Israel and the US.

At the same time, the US has massively increased its gathering of intelligence on Hamas.

The US provides the IDF with highly detailed satellite imagery of a kind which Israel lacks.

US analysts mine electronic and physical records recovered in the field for clues and US-operated MQ-9 Reaper surveillance drones fly over Gaza, collecting aerial footage. The

Above: Pine Gap's antennas in 2016

Photo: Felicity Ruby/
Nautilus Institute

US has also increased surveillance of Hezbollah as the prospect of an Israeli invasion of Lebanon grows nearer.

According to US National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan, this intelligence is being offered to Israel unconditionally and unstintingly. "We are not holding anything back. We are providing every asset, every tool, every capability."

While the US says it has specified that the intelligence should exclusively be used for hostage recovery and the targeting of Hamas leaders, there has been no attempt to enforce this policy.

Sarah Yager, the Washington director of Human Rights Watch, has argued that the memorandum "essentially opens up the entire US vault" and in practice there are no rules governing the disclosure of intelligence to Israel.

Israel is expected to monitor its own behaviour. Despite the numerous well-documented atrocities committed by the IDF, the US continues to offer them unlimited and unconditional intelligence.

Australia's role

The Pine Gap US surveillance base, just 18 kilometres out of Alice Springs, has played a direct role in this process.

NSA veteran David Rosenberg, who worked inside Pine Gap for 18 years, says that the facility would be monitoring the Gaza Strip, "With all its resources, and gathering intelligence assessed to be useful to Israel."

Since 2020, Pine Gap, which some describe as the US's second most important surveillance base

globally, has undergone its largest and most rapid expansion ever, Peter Cronau reported in *The Saturday Paper*.

Ten new satellite dishes have been added to the facility, giving it a total of 45 antennae. These new dishes can collect highly sophisticated information on missile and rocket launches, including the size, type, speed, trajectory, and target of a projectile.

They are perfectly equipped to locate and monitor the launch sites of Hamas rockets.

Raw data from Gaza is collected by three large geosynchronous satellites located over the Indian Ocean. This data is then sent down to Pine Gap, where US personnel provide analysis and reporting. Pine Gap also intercepts telecommunications signals from mobile and satellite phones, sharing any findings with the Israeli forces.

This is far from the first time that Pine Gap has gathered US intelligence for Israel. During the 1973 Yom Kippur War, intelligence collected by Pine Gap allowed the IDF to break through the Egyptian lines and encircle their forces.

More recently, Pine Gap has provided information on targets to US troops in Afghanistan and Iraq.

The Australian government actively supports American imperialism in the Middle East so that the US will protect Australian influence in the South Pacific from Chinese ascendancy.

To break our government's complicity in the ongoing genocide, we must take on Australian imperialism directly, cutting the ties which bind the Western imperialist bloc.

.....
This is far from the first time that Pine Gap has gathered US intelligence for Israel

Solidarity