

Nationalise Coles and other Big Food & Drink Corporations

Ned K. (26 December 2020)

In recent weeks two major disputes between workers and large corporations are a preview of what workers can expect in coming years from the multinational corporations and their compliant governments in Australia.

As people in Australia sat down for Christmas dinner, warehouse workers at a Coles Distribution Centre in NSW were being locked out by Coles until at least February 2021. The workers had already been locked out for a month over a dispute with Coles about job security and redundancy pay. Coles announced during negotiations for a new Agreement that they were going to close the Smeaton Distribution Centre and build a new automated warehouse which would employ about a quarter of the number of 400 workers at the Smeaton Centre.

To make matters worse for workers, Coles said it would not offer any of the workers in the warehouse that was closing a job in the new warehouse.

When workers took action for better redundancy pay and job security, Coles used the Fair Work Act to lock them out until February.

The warehouse workers, members of United Workers Union, took their protests to Coles retail outlets and held protest marches on Coles Head Office in Sydney. Their Union initiated a *Boycott Coles* campaign but at the time of writing, Coles remained unmoved.

Coles have a lot to lose in this dispute, as have the workers. The workers' loss is their livelihood. If Coles lose this dispute, they know that their plan to automate warehouses across the country will be met with even more resistance on a larger scale from workers.



Locked out Coles warehouse workers rally in defence of their livelihoods

Competition between a growing number of large retailers in Australia is driving them to reduce production costs and distribution costs to make more profits in a tighter market.

If the workers win this first round struggle, Coles know that further closures will cost them much more.

Last Call for West End

Further south in Adelaide, brewery workers from the Japanese owned West End Brewery sat down to Christmas dinner with mixed feelings.

They were ordered back to work prior to Christmas after a two-week strike for better redundancy pay in response to the brewery owner Kirin's (owned by Mitsubishi Group) decision to close the brewery in June 2021.

Following the return to work, the workers and their Union, United Workers Union, negotiated a slightly better redundancy package with seven additional weeks' pay for each directly employed worker in addition to their existing redundancy package won in previous disputes. However, long term labour hire workers missed out altogether.

Both the brewery and Coles disputes show the strong fighting tradition of workers employed by

multinational corporations - *if you don't fight you lose!*

What characterised both these disputes was that there was no initiative from the Labor Party or any other parliamentarian to question why the closures of workplaces was allowed to go ahead.

Multinational corporations just make a decision to close up shop and there is complete acceptance by the parliaments of the country about this and the struggle becomes left to the workers to fight for the best deal they can get to minimize the blow of being thrown out of full-time work with working conditions and pay that they had won over many years of employment and struggle destroyed.

Workers in Australia want to work in industries and sectors where decisions about their future and their livelihoods are made in the interests of Australia as a sovereign nation, and in the interests of the workers who work in those industries and sectors.

Any politician worth their salt would be calling for the economic lifelines of the country to be in the hands of the Australian people, rather than tame acceptance of decisions by multinationals to increase their profits. ■

On the Australian War Crimes in Afghanistan

Nick G. (3 December 2020)

Marxist-Leninists hold the view that there are two types of war – just and unjust.

Imperialist wars brutalise soldiers of imperialist armies engaged in foreign wars of aggression and occupations. In contrast, people's liberation armies fighting just wars are under the leadership and guidance of revolutionary class ideology and organisation serving the people.

Just wars cannot be won by military means alone. They are often waged by weaker and technologically inferior forces which attract the support of the people and can be sustained and led to victory by correct politics. Those correct politics include relations between the armed forces and the people, and also between the armed forces of the just cause and the armed forces of the unjust cause. Captured and wounded soldiers of the unjust army are subjected to education about the two types of war, are persuaded to renounce their support for the unjust, and are treated with leniency.

Unjust wars cannot attract popular support over the longer term. What support there is evaporates over time. The forces of the unjust cause must rely on military means, and tend to discount winning popular support because of their apparent superiority in strength of arms and other technologies.

Afghanistan – an unjust war

Australia's longest-running war is its engagement in Afghanistan. It began in November 2001 in the wake of the September 11 attack on the World Trade Center in New York. The Australian government sent troops to Afghanistan to show its support and subservience to the US as a compliant ally, often referred to as a "puppet" or "deputy sheriff of the US".

Australian soldiers played a support role to the forces of US and other imperialisms. Those forces invaded Afghanistan in a so-called "war on terrorism". There was and is a terrorism associated with the reactionary fascist wing of the Islamic religion, but the invasion of Afghanistan by imperialist powers was



Video footage of Australian soldiers killing unarmed Afghanis has been brought to light

not a just application of force. It was unjust from the start, largely motivated by US imperialist ambitions in the region and set the scene for a wave of anti-democratic measures, under the cover of "anti-terrorism".

The recent report into allegations of war crimes by Australian troops in Afghanistan was preceded by a report commissioned by the head of the Australian Army, General Angus Campbell, in 2015 following persistent rumours of illegal killings of Afghans by Australians. Presented to Campbell in 2016, the report by sociologist Dr. Samantha Cromptvoets quoted Australian soldiers, who did not want to be identified, who were appalled by the behaviour of fellow soldiers.

One said that 2012 was the worst he had seen:

"Guys just had this blood lust. Psychos. Absolute psychos. And we bred them. These things do not happen in isolation. They (soldiers) become more confident over time when they are there and these behaviours become permissible and equated with being good and effective soldiers."

She repeated allegations made by the soldiers she interviewed: when helicopters landed in villages, any villagers running away were fired upon, "killing many of these men and boys (and sometimes women and children) shooting them in the back, while running away." Other soldiers would take any surviving men and boys "and 'interrogate' them, meaning tie them up and torture them...for days

and the whole village would be deprived of food, water and medicines...When the Special Forces left, the men and boys would be found dead: shot in the head or blindfolded and with throats slit," she wrote.

One "disturbing example" given by soldier informants occurred when Australian soldiers driving along a road saw two 14-year-old boys who they decided might be Taliban sympathisers. "They were stopped and searched and then their throats slit. The rest of the troop then had to 'clean up the mess'...the bodies were bagged and thrown in a nearby river."

It was this report, delivered in 2015 but kept secret at the time, that led Angus Campbell to commission the report into allegations of Australian war crimes in Afghanistan. Campbell (now head of all Australian Defence Forces) did that in March 2016.

In the meantime, David McBride, a former Army lawyer with two tours of duty in Afghanistan, was leaking Australian Defence Force files (the "Afghan Files") to the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC). The ABC subsequently ran a series of stories alleging Australian war crimes.

The Australian Government retaliated against McBride and the national broadcaster. In September 2018, McBride was charged with theft of Government property (more charges were subsequently added), while in June 2019, the offices of the ABC were raided by Australian Federal Police (AFP) and all material relating to the Afghan Files seized. In June 2020, the AFP recommended that charges be laid

against ABC journalist Dan Oakes. There was a huge public outcry and the Government was forced to back down from charging Oakes. Charges still remain against the whistle-blower McBride.

The heavily redacted Afghanistan Inquiry Report, also known as the Brereton Report, finds credible evidence of 23 incidents involving 25 current or former ADF personnel accused of killing 39 individuals, with a further two subjected to cruel treatment. However, a further 28 incidents (and 11 more that were discontinued) had found that allegations were not substantiated or could not be proceeded with.

Of those that the Report found to be unsubstantiated, there were 20 allegations of unlawful killings, seven of which involved more than one person. Nine involved cases of ill-treatment of prisoners, including assaults and the holding of knives to male genitals.

Nine of the allegations which were designated as credible were dismissed with no further action required because of the legal principle of derivative use immunity according to which if Soldier X gives information to the Inquiry that he unlawfully killed a prisoner, the information given to the Inquiry by Soldier X (and anything obtained as a direct or indirect consequence) is inadmissible in any prosecution of Soldier X.

Regardless of the alleged war crimes of Australian troops in the unjust invasion and occupation of Afghanistan, there is culture of a sub-imperialist lackey that has long permeated the Australian armed



An Australian combat vehicle flying a Nazi flag in Afghanistan in 2007

forces. With the exception of the War Against Fascism (WWII), every conflict involving Australian troops in imperialist wars has been unjust.

The Brereton Report does us all a favour by including an historical review of Australian war crimes (Chapter 1.08 of the Report) from the Boer War to the present day. There are several examples from WWII, unsurprising given that although the cause was just, the political and military leadership came from the pro-imperialist bourgeoisie. Australia has sent troops to just about every imperialist war waged by the dominant imperialist power presiding over this county – from the British colonial Boer war to US imperialist wars on Korea, Vietnam, Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya and Syria.

Fascists and racists are attracted to imperialist military service and encourage a culture in which unjust actions are celebrated. In 2018, photos emerged of Australian troops in 2007, flying a Nazi flag from their combat vehicle. In June 2020, footage emerged of Australian soldiers holding a racist

“Southern Pride” Confederate flag used to guide in a U.S. military UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter to pick up Afghan prisoners following an Australian-led raid. The ADF immediately denied any knowledge of the incident although the footage was reportedly included in a highlight reel for the Special Air Service Regiment's 3 Squadron following a 2012 deployment to Afghanistan.

Band-Aid measures and the necessary prosecution of Australian war criminals aside, Australians must ensure that our country has an independent and peaceful foreign policy, that we make a decisive break with US and other imperialisms, and never again allow Australian armed forces to be sent to support unjust wars.

The whistle-blower David McBride should receive the highest of accolades and the shameful and vengeful charges against him be dropped immediately.

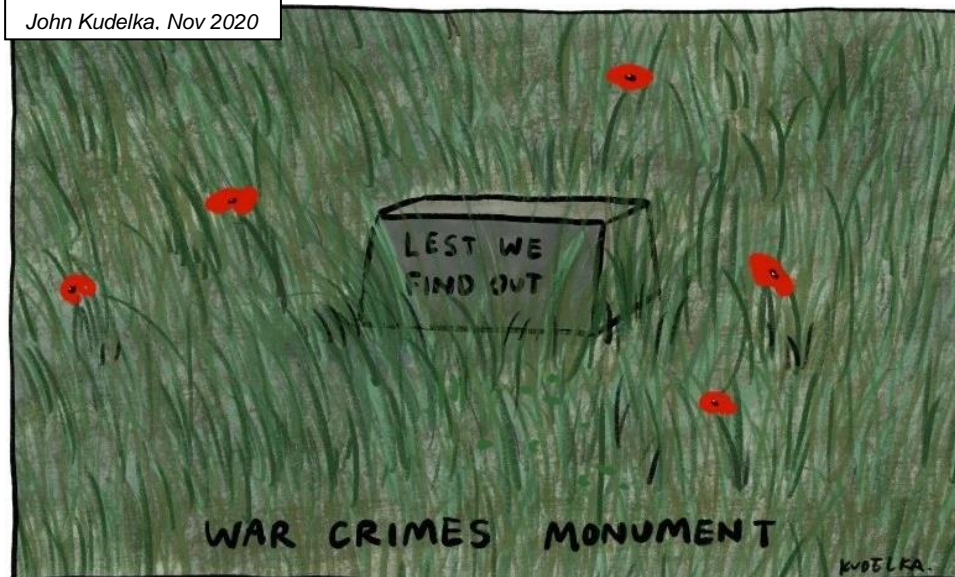
Australia's working people have a long tradition of struggle against imperialist wars, reaching as far back as mass opposition to imperialist WWI and Conscription; to fascism in WWII and the Vietnam War. In the months leading to the invasion of Iraq in 2003, millions of Australians from different walks of life voiced their opposition to Australia sending troops to the US planned and led war on Iraq. In February 2003, one month before the invasion of Iraq, over 400,000 people demonstrated in the streets across the country demanding “No War on Iraq”, “No War for Oil”, “No Troops to Iraq”.

Many carried signs depicting the then Australian Prime Minister as a puppet of the US.

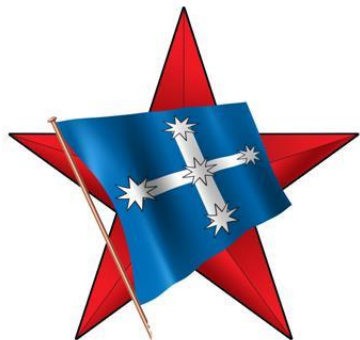
No more Australian involvement in imperialist wars!

For anti-imperialist independence and socialism! ■

John Kudelka, Nov 2020



EDITORIAL 2021: Expand the fight for Australian Independence and Socialism



Alice M., Vice-Chairperson on behalf of the Central Committee, CPA (M-L) (1 January, 2021)

Global capitalism is in a major economic, political and social crisis. The pandemic has exposed and intensified the irreconcilable contradictions of this brutally exploitative and decaying system.

Capitalism's relentless drive for profit requires constant expansion giving rise to imperialism. It requires the seizure of more resources and markets, the intensification of exploitation of the working class, other working people and the environment. Behind the endless attacks on worker's rights, conditions and livelihoods, the global climate crisis, and the health crisis stands our enemy – imperialism!

Rival imperialist powers and their multinational corporations competing for control of the world's resources and markets are compelled to drive down workers' wages and conditions worldwide. That's what drives neo-liberalism, the relentless attacks on organised labour and working people, the intensified repression of the people, and is the cause of imperialist wars. It can offer no solution to the climate crisis.

Of particular concern to Australian workers, and even some sections of the petty-bourgeois and bourgeois classes, is the increasing militarisation of our Indo-Pacific region, and the rivalry between US imperialism and Chinese social-imperialism (socialism in words, under Communist Party leadership, but imperialism in its actions). PM Morrison makes a heroic show, as a US puppet, of telling China that Australia's sovereignty is not for

sale, whilst it has long been sold to the Americans already. Outgoing President Trump delivers one of the US's highest military awards, the Legion of Honour, as a Christmas present to Morrison and the other two main pieces on US imperialism's anti-China chessboard, India's Modi and former Japanese PM Abe.

For working people, increasing repression is matched with the expanding powers of the capitalist state (legal, police and army). The New Year will see attempts by the government to take away more rights from workers in both precarious and "permanent" employment, and then move on to further attacks on unions. State repression of whistleblowers continues, including against David McBride who provided the Afghan Tapes to the ABC and thus uncovered the war crimes committed by Australian troops in Afghanistan. Threats to the civil rights of the general public continue to come from Peter Dutton and others.

Today, more and more people are questioning capitalism; some are hoping the system can be made more "humane", fairer and peaceful. That is impossible. The only genuine solution for the masses of people and the environment is ending capitalism and building a socialist society run by the working class serving the needs of the people and the environment, not accumulation of private profit.

Capitalism's crises breed people's resistance and struggle. The imperialist ruling class tries to take struggle and resistance out of people's hands, divert it away from workplaces and communities, tries to keep alive the illusion that the problems can be solved through parliament, and divert attention from the capitalist system, the root cause.

In spite of the pandemic restrictions and lock downs, workers are organising and fighting back to defend their rights and conditions.

The central pillars of capitalism in Australia are dominated by the interests of US imperialism. US imperialism dominates and rules over

Australia economically, politically, militarily and culturally through its corporations and subservient Australian puppet governments. This is why Australia is so integrated into the US war machine and why our government drives Australia's relationship with China into the ground, despite China being our largest trading partner.

Capitalism and its highest stage of imperialism won't collapse of its own accord. To end capitalism and imperialism in Australia means a struggle to end Australia's subservience to US imperialism. It requires people's mass organisations and conscious struggle for a revolutionary anti-imperialist, independent and socialist Australia.

Only a mass people's movement and struggle in workplaces and communities can empower the working class and the people. The strength of a mass movement and political leadership by determined revolutionary working class organisation is needed to bring about a lasting and fundamental change for an independent and socialist Australia.

A new year gives us the opportunity to recommit ourselves to the struggles of our class and our futures. 2021 calls for organising, mass mobilisation and unity of the people against imperialist domination, attacks on the working class and the people, opposing the trend to fascism and imperialist wars, and the climate crisis.

Immediate tasks in front of the people include to reject carrying the burden of capitalist crisis (including Covid-19), to oppose provocations that ramp up regional tensions and add to the danger of imperialist war, to organise and fight for workers' rights, for secure and sustainable jobs, to support First Peoples' struggles and demands, and to defend public health and public education, aged care, the climate and democratic rights.

Our rallying call is organise and build a powerful and united people's movement to fight for Australian independence and socialism. Join us in the struggle. Join the CPA(M-L)! ■

Farm Workers Getting Organised Against Big Wage Swindle

Ned K. (19 December 2020)

Wage swindles with farm workers being paid piece rates less than even the minimum legal Award wage have been occurring for years.

However, as Bob Dylan would say, "the times they are a-changing". Even now in 2020 there are reports of farm workers being paid piece work equivalent to \$3 an hour (*Australian Financial Review*, 16 December 2020).

Farm workers have traditionally been covered by the Australian Workers Union (AWU), but they fell into the trap of focusing organising resources on bigger industrial worksites where there were large concentrations of workers in full-time employment and with a long tradition of unionism. Steel works, aluminium smelters and foundries were the priority and farm workers, whether picking mushrooms, tomatoes, potatoes or cherries for the Christmas dinner tables were put in the too hard basket.

The majority of farm workers do not have continuous employment in the one place all year round, but follow the harvest times of many different crops. Many are new migrant workers but there is a significant percentage of farm workers who have worked in the industry for years.

Some of them started to look elsewhere for support to get organised and to put an end to the wage swindles and poor working conditions they had endured for years.

The former National Union of Workers (NUW, now United Workers Union, UWW) had a more strategic approach and realised that farm workers are the first stage of the supply chain while at the other end of the supply chain, giant retailers like Coles and Woolworths and large food exporting corporations have been the beneficiaries of the farm worker wage swindles.

Progressive leader elements in the NUW, especially in Victoria, decided to answer farm workers' call for help, and to extend their organising resources from food processing



factories and warehouse distribution of food products to farm workers.

Migrant communities in Victoria had seen that the NUW organisers supported the migrant workers in the Baiada poultry processing strike in Victoria several years ago and this gave them hope that if they stuck together, these union organisers would support them too.

Farm workers across Victoria and South Australia started joining the NUW and won concessions from labour hire companies through collective action and media exposure of their poor working conditions.

Workers won the right to become regular seasonal workers, with better accommodation and wages instead of piece work, including overtime. Most important of all though was that farm workers in their Union built enough collective strength to prevent the employers from paying them far below the minimum wage. Employers were utilising a provision in the Horticultural Award which enabled them to determine what "the average competent employee" meant for purposes of a farm worker being paid the Award requirement of piece work rate at least 15% above the Award minimum.

Even a farm worker who an employer did deem to be an "average competent" employee would still not have to be paid overtime and there was no limit under the Award as to how many hours a farm worker could be made to work in a day or week.

As more and more farm workers organised, and the AWU lost more and more members through plant closures and the decline of metal manufacturing industries, the AWU, too, are now focusing more on farm workers as

potential union members.

This December, the Australian Workers Union lodged an application with the Fair Work Commission to vary the Horticultural Award so that every farm worker, whether on piece work or an hourly wage, has to receive the minimum casual rate of \$24.80 per hour.

Shame of the Gillard Government

When reporting on the Union's application to vary the Award, the *Australian Financial Review* revealed that when the Gillard Government was in office, it intervened in a Fair Work Commission case in support of there being no minimum rate for piecework farm workers in the Award!

Success in the AWU application for all farm workers to receive a minimum wage will be a result of years of struggle by farm workers themselves and the support they have received from progressive leaders within migrant communities and the rival union, United Workers Union.

The more far-sighted corporations benefiting from the wage theft and resulting higher profits that have prevailed for years in the fresh food supply chains may be hoping that the AWU's application to vary the Award minimum rate for piece workers will put the brakes on rising farm worker militancy.

Hopefully both Unions' leaderships work together in the interests of tens of thousands of farm workers to lift their wages and conditions above just the minimum Award standards. With over 100,000 farm workers in Australia and total union membership in the sector well below the 50% mark, there is plenty of room for both Unions to play a progressive role. ■

MARXISM TODAY

Lenin on Revolution and Crises: Quote from *Left-wing Communism*

Lenin, *Left-wing Communism* (1920)

“The fundamental law of revolution, which has been confirmed by all revolutions, and particularly by all three Russian revolutions in the twentieth century, is as follows: it is not enough for revolution that the exploited and oppressed masses should understand the impossibility of living in the old way and demand changes; what is required for revolution is that the exploiters should not be able to live and rule in the old way.

Only when the “lower classes” do not want the old way and when the “upper classes” cannot carry on in the old way can revolution win.

This truth may be expressed in other words: revolution is impossible without a nationwide crisis (affecting both the exploited and the exploiters). It follows that revolution requires, firstly, that a majority of the workers (or at least a majority of the class-conscious, thinking and politically active workers) should fully understand that revolution is necessary and be ready to sacrifice their lives for it; secondly, that the ruling classes should be passing through a governmental crisis which would draw even the most backward masses into politics (a symptom of every real revolution is a rapid tenfold and even hundredfold increase in the number of representatives of the toiling and oppressed



masses—who have hitherto been apathetic—capable of waging the political struggle), weaken the government and make it possible for the revolutionaries to overthrow it rapidly.”■

Frederick Engels: Noble Protagonist of the Proletariat

Contributed by Bruce McFarlane

(These paragraphs are an extract from a longer chapter in an upcoming book)

Born November 28, 1820. Frederick Engels (1820-95) was Marx’s comrade of forty years. Without his mental, moral and material support, Marx might well never have completed even the first volume of *Capital*.

At seventy and with failing sight, Engels worked almost unaided to bring volumes II and III of *Capital* to publication. Academic critics of his editorial efforts are among those whom he dismissed as ‘cobweb-spinning eclectic flea-crackers.’

Marxologists resent Engels because, unlike their tedious, convoluted and arcane ruminations, his expositions are sardonic, astute and the product of one of the best-stocked minds of the nineteenth century. Activists continue to be brought towards Marxism via his writings,

notably *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific* (1880).

Engels’s posthumous service to his comrade has been to take the blame for everything in Marx that offends the sensibilities of those whom Engels exposed as ‘shame-faced materialists.’

They allege that he sullied the purity of Marx’s thought with ‘science’. What is science but a search for the actualities beneath appearances? The failure to penetrate surfaces in search of the dynamics is Marx’s definition of a vulgar economist.

Engels voices the materialist acceptance of never more than relative knowledge, along with its possibility for incremental advances in our understanding: ‘The history of science is the history of the gradual clearing away of this nonsense or rather of its replacement by fresh but always less absurd nonsense.’

William Perkin’s production of coal-tar dyes in 1857-8 allowed Engels

to gloat: ‘If we are able to prove the correctness of our conception of a natural process by making it ourselves, then there is an end to the Kantian ungraspable “thing-in-itself”.’

Similar twists and reversals shadow even our most advanced understanding of the rest of the natural world and of our social domains, as Engels warned in ‘*The Part Played by Labour in the Transition from Ape to Man*.’ His criticism of the lop-sidedness of Darwinism is wedded to a denial of unstoppable progress:

Let us not, however, flatter ourselves overmuch on account of our human victories over nature. For each such victory, nature takes it revenge on us. Each victory, it is true, in the first place brings about the results we expected, but in the second and third places it has quite different, unforeseen effects which only too often cancel the first.

This caution disposes of allegations

that Engels imposed 'the idea of a linear, rigid, and self-evident time' on historical materialism.

Although Engels made his share of mistakes, he displayed a remarkable ability to absorb difficult theories as well as to link a number of fields of social inquiry: anthropology, biology, mechanics and political economy. His originality sparkles in his contributions to historical materialism: *The Peasant War in Germany*; *The Role of Force in History*; *Ludwig Feuerbach and the Outcome of Classical German Philosophy*; *Anti-Duhring*; and *The Housing Question*.

Crisis theory

The Condition of the Working-Class in England (1845) exemplifies the scientific approach to sensuous human activity. In it, Engels projects the critical analysis of political economy at a pitch which Marx would not match until 1847 with *The Poverty of Philosophy*.



Students of credit cycles will concur that Engels's perceptions have been more than fulfilled. Political scientists will also note that finance capital's influence over the whole economy has become more powerful during the last forty years.

The strategist

Following Marx's death in 1883, Engels continues to act as a nerve center for a world-wide working class movement. He is ever alert to the intersections of science, finance, technology, trade and production when striving to keep up with the changing expressions of crises. His ability to penetrate to the dynamics of longer-term fluctuations in the reproduction of capital gives his writings on political issues a contemporary significance on matters as seemingly diverse as (a) plundering the wealth of nature; (b) colonialisms and Imperialism; (c) nations and nationalisms; (d) war; (e) the peasantry; (f) revolutionary socialist organisation; and (g) 'the woman question'. His genius is everywhere apparent in how he pursues their multiple cross-links. Here, we can consider only the last three, with the 'The Woman Question' in a separate post, 'Freed love'.

Peasants: His final essay, '*The Peasant Question in France and Germany*,' appeared in 1894. He insisted on delineating strata among the peasants as the essential for a correct political strategy as did Lenin in *The Development of Capitalism in Russia* (1899) and Mao for *The Peasant Movement in Yunan* (1928). All three put the interest of the proletariat front and center when building alliances across classes.

Party building and self-emancipation: Whether in relation to tillers of the soil or to urban wage-

slaves, the goal that Engels pursues in his ceaseless political engagements is a society carried on through collective and state bodies.

With this goal, he deplores squabbles within organised labour as harming the movement towards his socialist vision.

He encourages electoral politics because the prospect of a socialist majority in parliament will provoke a military coup and be the trigger for proletarian revolution.

From 1890, he warns of a European war and the slaughter of millions of workers. Twenty years later, the revisionists led the German Party into voting for War Credits. Engels would have sided with Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht in breaking from the renegade Kautsky.

Engels knew that the lessons from practice will not deprive the labour movement of the chance to make new blunders: 'A large class, like a great nation, never learns better or quicker than by undergoing the consequences of its own mistakes.' His anti-sectarian tone has lessons for the present post-Soviet dispersal of left forces scrambling after an anti-capitalist strategy.

From the attention that Engels pays to ever-shifting actualities, we learn the better how to interpret both evidence and concepts for guiding change towards the communist ideals he had absorbed before he and Marx met in 1844.

The roles that Engels over-filled as organiser, economist and polemicist in the development of Western labour movements illumine how we can best honour his memory and his contributions. In the words of one biographer, John Green, Engels 'wanted no monument other than the coming socialist revolution.' ■

Australian Communist

Journal of the Communist Party of Australia (Marxist-Leninist)

**[SPECIAL EDITION] 100 YEARS OF THE
AUSTRALIAN COMMUNIST MOVEMENT
*OUT NOW***

Free pdf version, and other CPA (M-L) publications
are available to download from:

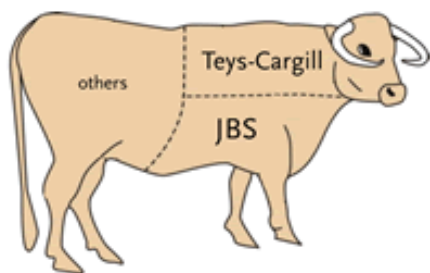
www.cpaml.org/booklets.php



Increasing Foreign Ownership of Australia's Agricultural Supply Chain

Duncan B. (4 December 2020)

There has been a lot of concern about the level of foreign ownership of Australia's farm land and water resources. For all the carry-on about China in some circles, the biggest purchasers of Australian farm assets in 2019-20 were Canadian pension funds, with Canada accounting for \$2.1 billion of the \$2.9 billion worth of transactions.



Teys-Cargill (US) and JBS (Brazil) are the big foreign players in Australia's meat industry

What is less well known but also disturbing is the level of foreign ownership of the cotton mills, abattoirs, grain export terminals and other vital links in the food supply chain.

A report in the November 2020 edition of *AgJournal* found that more than 25 of our largest red-meat abattoirs, including three of the five largest are owned by overseas companies. Brazil's JBS and the US Teys-Cargill are the big players in the meat industry. US, Japanese and Brazilian companies also control the majority of Australia's beef feedlots.

At least 35 of our major dairy factories are owned by overseas interests. Canada's Saputo and France's Lactalis along with New Zealand's Fonterra own most of Australia's dairy processors. Dairy

farmers are very much at the mercy of these companies who dictate the farm-gate price farmers get for their product, leaving them struggling to survive.

Australian grain export terminals, cotton gins and sugar refineries are also mostly in foreign hands. 18 of 25 grain terminals are controlled by companies such as Canada's Glencore and the US Cargill.

Of our 38 cotton gins, less than 10 are Australian owned. U.S. and Singapore companies are the big players in the cotton industry.

All but six of Australia's 24 raw sugar mills are foreign-owned. Singapore-owned company Wilmar International is the major owner of our sugar refineries.

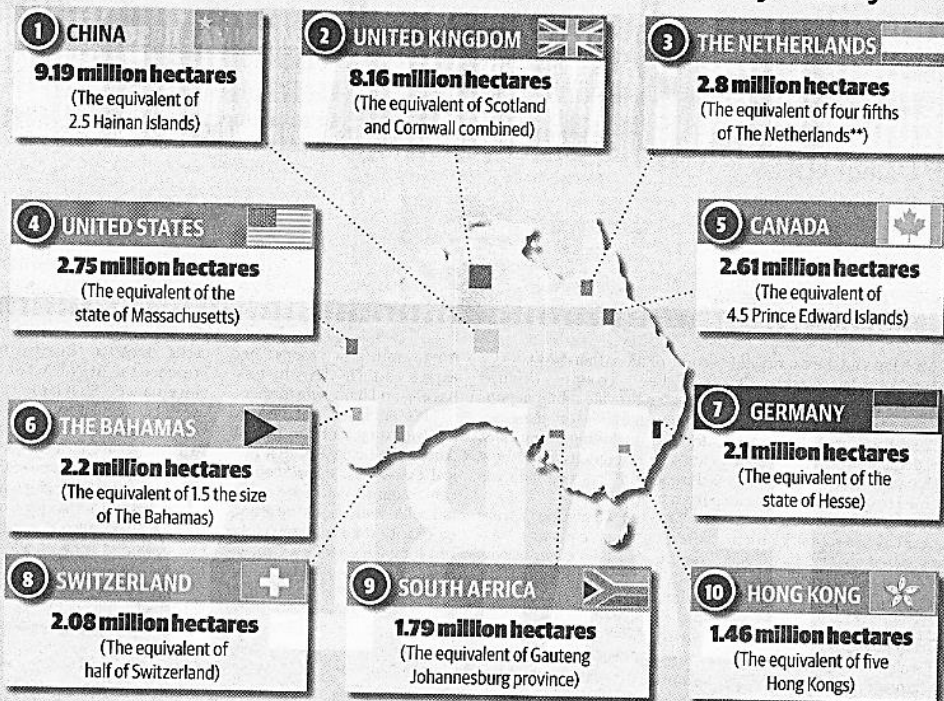
Foreign ownership of Australian farm land, water resources and food processing companies compromises our national independence and is a threat to our food security. These companies put their own interests ahead of the needs of Australian farmers and the Australian people. ■

Foreign Control of Australia's Farmland Increases

Duncan B. (23 December 2020)

ARRIVAL GATE

Foreign freehold and leasehold of Australian farmland by country*



* Images for size comparison only. Do not indicate location of holding **land area of The Netherlands
Source: Foreign Investment Review Board

The Foreign Investment Review Board has just released its latest Farmland Ownership Report.

This shows that the combined foreign freehold and leasehold of Australian farmland is more than 53 million hectares, or about 13.8% of our farming area. Foreign interests acquired a further 900,000 hectares during 2019-20, a ten percent step-up on year-to-year.

China is the by far biggest foreign landholder with 9.2 million hectares, of which 8.4 million is leased.

The United Kingdom is the next biggest with 8.16 million hectares. The Netherlands, the US, and Canada are well behind them with holdings of 2.8 million, 2.75 million and 2.61 million hectares respectively.

The Bahamas, Germany, Switzerland, South Africa and Hong Kong make up the top ten foreign landholders with smaller holdings of around 1.5 to about 2 million hectares.

Many Australian farmers and other Australians are concerned about the level of foreign ownership of Australian farmland, agribusiness companies and vitally important water rights. ■

The Mystery of the Missing Dairy Farmers

Duncan B. (17 December 2020)

It's a mystery worthy of Sherlock Holmes or Hercule Poirot. Where are the missing dairy farmers?

According to a report in the *Weekly Times* (16 Dec 2020), one in four Victorian dairy farmers has left the industry since 2016, with 393 farmers leaving dairying since July this year alone. As the table shows the trend is Australia-wide with farmer and dairy cow numbers falling every year. (Only Tasmania recorded an increase in cow numbers.)

There are many factors contributing

to the loss of dairy farmers. The 2016 price clawback by dairy processors led to many farmers leaving the industry. Farm gate prices offered by processors make it hard for farmers to make a profit.

Increasing costs for inputs such as electricity and fodder add to the burden. Dairy farmers in irrigation areas are finding it almost impossible to meet the current high prices for irrigation water, in competition with the agribusiness companies growing almonds, cotton and other crops that need a lot of water. In fact, Northern Victoria has lost 21% of its dairy farmers since 2016.

Many older farmers are taking advantage of record cattle prices and good selling prices for farms to retire and leave the industry with something to show for their years of hard work.

The corporates are moving into the dairy industry in a big way. In October, Aurora Dairies, owned by Canada's Public Sector Pension Investment Board, paid \$55 million for a 2,500-hectare portfolio of dairy farms in Gippsland.

Perhaps it is not such a mystery. We will find many dairy farmers working as farm hands on farms that perhaps they once owned. ■

WALK OUT Dairy farmer numbers by state														
	Victoria		NSW		Qld		SA		WA		Tas		Australia	
	No. farms	No. dairy cows	No. farms	No. dairy cows	No. farms	No. dairy cows	No. farms	No. dairy cows	No. farms	No. dairy cows	No. farms	No. dairy cows	No. farms	No. dairy cows
On June 30, 2016	4141	1,005,000	690	182,000	420	89,000	246	78,000	151	60,000	430	149,000	6079	1,562,000
On June 30, 2017	3889	975,000	661	164,000	406	86,000	240	71,000	148	64,000	427	160,000	5771	1,520,000
On June 30, 2018	3881	1,023,000	626	166,000	393	85,000	228	67,000	159	56,000	412	149,000	5699	1,547,000
On June 30, 2019	3516	898,000	575	149,000	356	78,000	212	72,000	150	56,000	404	175,000	5213	1,428,000
On June 30, 2020	3462	895,000	534	145,000	327	65,000	206	69,000	135	54,000	391	182,000	5055	1,411,000
2020-21 (p)	3069	NA	NA	NA	287	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	4622	NA
Percentage change since 2016	↓26%	↓11%	↓23%	↓20%	↓32%	↓21%	↓16%	↓12%	↓11%	↓10%	↓9%	↑22%	↓17%	↓10%

Follow CPA(M-L) & Vanguard



Communist Party of Australia Marxist-Leninist



@cpaml_vanguard



www.cpaml.org



info@cpaml.org



Comments, contributions, and membership enquires welcome!

Want *Vanguard* emailed directly to your inbox? Join the mailing list.
Send "Subscribe" to vanguard.online@yandex.com

STATEMENT US Out! China Stay Out!

We Don't Want Your Rivalry or War!

*Central Committee, CPA(M-L),
(18 September 2020)*

US imperialism's agents of influence in Australia are whipping up a new Cold War-style hysteria against their imperialist rival China. They are responsible for promoting anti-Chinese racism which threatens all Australians of East Asian and South East Asian origin.

They are creating an atmosphere in which it seems like we are already at war with China, and if we are not careful, we will be.

Since Mao's death, the struggle inside China between those who wanted to continue to advance along Mao's road of collectivization and reduction of social inequalities, and those who advocated a capitalist economy and capitalist development as a short-cut to great power and influence, intensified, with the latter group ultimately triumphing.

Since that time, we have had no relationship with the Communist Party of China. We have been critical of its embrace of capitalism and of the emergence of its social-imperialism (socialism in words, but imperialism in deeds).

Central to our struggle for socialism and independence however, is our belief that US imperialism remains the dominant master of Australia's destiny. It is by far the major investor in Australia and has enjoyed the loyalty of the dominant group within our ruling class since the end of World War II. That loyalty even extends into the ranks of part of the working class thanks to years of false propaganda about the US being our protector and shield under the ANZUS Pact.

The rise of a financially and militarily powerful China has occurred at the same time as a weakening in the economic and military clout of the US. In every field of trade and investment, of access to the labour power of other countries and to their raw materials, the Chinese and US engage in pushing and shoving, one against the other, with an escalating tension particularly throughout our region.



The revival of an anti-China Cold War mentality in this country, specifically to serve US provocations aimed at halting China's growing strength and influence, is leading Australia to harm its own interests – economically, politically and militarily.

In 2018 the Victorian Andrews Labor government signed a Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). At the time of signing the MOU, a few murmurs of disapproval came from the direction of some members of the hard right in Liberal and National Parties and the right-wing think-tank, the Institute for Public Affairs.

It all changed in May 2020 during Pompeo's overnight visit to Australia. Pompeo voiced the US disapproval with the Victorian government signing the BRI and warned that closer economic ties with China threatened Australia's up to now warm relationship with the US. He broadcast a warning that the US "could simply disconnect" from Australia. Immediately a loud chorus of Liberal and Labor politicians pounced on the Andrews government calling for cancellation of the BRI.

Morrison and his senior Ministers are out of their depth in trying to confront China on behalf of the US. Their clumsy provocation of calling for an investigation into the origins of the Coronavirus with China as the assumed source came to nothing when China co-sponsored a call for a genuinely independent investigation under the auspices of the World Health Organisation. Australia was quickly isolated and had merely set itself up for Chinese trade retaliation.

The June 2020 raids by ASIO and the Federal Police on NSW Senate Labor member Shaoquett Moselmane

and a member of his staff, John Zhang were designed to investigate alleged Chinese foreign interference. Foreign interference is punishable by up to 20 years' imprisonment.

What was not known at the time was that on June 26, four Chinese journalists' residences were raided by the Australian Federal Police coordinated by the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation. Ten officers raided each journalist's house, the raids lasting over four hours. Laptops and even children's tablets were seized and taken away, and the journalists warned to keep quiet because the raids related to Australian national security.

Australians remained in the dark about this provocation when news broke of an Australian-Chinese journalist having been placed under detention in China, and then of two other journalists having been required for questioning. We do not endorse China's tit-for-tat response but we do condemn the use of so-called "national security" becoming the go-to excuse for our government to withhold information from Australians.

In this atmosphere of anti-Chinese feelings, South Australian Liberal Legislative Councillor Jing Lee was prevented by hard right members of the State and Federal governments from being elected as President of the Legislative Council. Born in Malaysia, she was attacked for having attended a function of the pro-Chinese Xinjiang Association of SA. The attack was led by federal Liberal senator Alex Antic, and MPs Nicole Flint and Tony Pasin. All are aligned with the hard right led by Peter Dutton. Jing Lee was the Premier's choice. Mud-slinging by the *Australian* which alleged that Jing Lee was a threat to Australia on national security grounds proved to be more powerful than the State premier.

We do not support Chinese companies scraping social media to compile a data base on a reported 35,000 Australians (of a total of 2.4 million people around the world). But this pales in comparison with data scraping by the likes of Facebook and Google. Vietnamese-Australian

entrepreneur Cam-Hoan Ton-That, now based in the US and associated with white power and neo-Nazi activists, established Clearview AI, a facial recognition database that has scraped more than three billion photos from social media and websites without anyone's permission. Ton-That sells this data to security firms and police forces, as well as real estate agents wanting to block black and Hispanic applicants for rental housing. Data scraping should be illegal, but China is certainly not alone in using it.

The ultra-right clique that infests ASIO and the Australia Federal Police, and has its sworn supporters in the federal government, is backed by opinion makers in a number of so-called "independent" think-tanks. Chief amongst them is the Australian Strategic Policy Institute (ASPI – sometimes called 'Australians Serving Predatory Imperialism'). ASPI's finances come from its strategic sponsors, primarily the huge multinational armaments companies who have a vested interest in regional tension by way of lucrative Australian contracts for arms and equipment. Those sponsors are the Naval Group (France), Jacobs Engineering (US), Northrop Grumman (US), Lockheed Martin (US), MBDA Missile Systems (Fr-Br), SAAB (Sweden), Thales (France), Raytheon (US), and Austal (Australia). There are also a number of Gold, Silver and Bronze sponsors including the Australian government twice – (one is the spy agency the Australia Signals Directorate), Microsoft, Google and Facebook.

US imperialism has its agents of interference in the media, the think tanks, the government, the military and the security agencies. China has made some clumsy attempts to create its own. It is not in our interests to have either the US or China trying to interfere in the lives of Australian workers.

We must insist:

US imperialists out!

Chinese imperialists stay out!

No Australian involvement in imperialist war – for an independent and peaceful Australia!

No to racism – friendship and understanding between all peoples!

Socialism and independence for Australia! ■

Taking the Initiative in Responding to Imperialist Rivalry

John S. (15 September 2020)

Rivalry between the long-dominant US imperialism and the rising Chinese imperialism is intensifying.

The US is marshalling its forces and its allies and proxies to resist Chinese encroachment on US dominance. It is upgrading and focusing its military resources and strategies, and roping in allies such as Japan, Australia, Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states, and working to entice India into that fold.

It has also unleashed an intensifying ideological and political campaign to demonise and isolate China, and Chinese businesses that threaten to out-compete US firms.

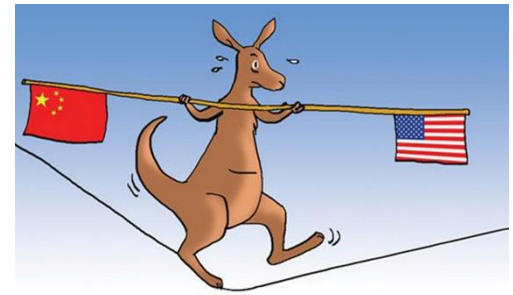
China is a rapidly rising economic power. Its major current objective is access to economic opportunities around the world. It wants access and stability so that it can expand business and investment opportunities, and make money. Its major current strategies are to project "soft power" through investment and bilateral and multilateral political and economic agreements, and, at the same time, to develop its international military capabilities for both defensive, and, at some future time, offensive purposes. It is involved in militarising its islands in the South China Sea, and is positioning itself by gaining control of ports and areas in countries such as Sri Lanka, Pakistan and Cambodia.

Australia

The US dominates Australia economically, politically and ideologically.

US investment comprises 25% of all foreign investment in Australia; this has tripled since 2005. Chinese investment represents only 2% of foreign investment in Australia (the 9th largest investing country), or 5.7% (5th largest) if Hong Kong investment is included.

50% of US investment is in mining and manufacturing. Amid all the hysteria about Australian jobs going to China and the Australian economy being dominated by the Chinese market, US multinationals are at the forefront of shifting Australian



manufacturing to China and selling Australian raw materials to China.

US multinational Chevron, the largest producer and exporter of Australian LPG (gas), has been selling so much to the rest of the world that Australia will almost certainly have to import LPG at higher prices to meet our needs.

So, yes, China is our biggest market but it is mainly US multinationals transferring manufacturing to China and selling to China. US imperialism is caught in this hypocritical contradiction: it wants to prevent the growth of Chinese power, but it is dependent on manufacturing in, and trade with, China, so it needs Chinese prosperity.

Australia is being dragged into the US effort to resist the challenge of Chinese capitalism, as China develops into a fully imperialist power. We see the growth of military preparations, with the establishment of US military facilities in Darwin and the alignment of Australian military personnel and equipment with the US military, including through the purchase of massively expensive US hardware.

We are experiencing an ideological and political offensive against everything to do with the Chinese government. Australian military and intelligence agencies are effectively determining Australian foreign policy, as they fall into line behind the US offensive.

The authoritarian policies and practices of the Chinese government, and real and exaggerated intelligence gathering and bullying of Chinese citizens overseas, provide ample propaganda opportunities for its opponents to criticise and fear-monger.

These attacks on China always ignore the bigger or equally bad
(continued on pg.12)

(continued from pg.11)

activities of US imperialism – its economic domination, its constant cyberwarfare activities, its massive military build-up, its arming of its proxies to wage war (e.g., against Yemen,) and interfere in other countries (e.g., Iraq, Syria, Venezuela, Palestine). The giant US elephant in the room is ignored.

The anti-China campaign also promotes racism against Chinese-Australians and Chinese citizens living in Australia. Again, our ruling class wants the money from Chinese students and the profits from outsourcing jobs to China, at the same time as joining the pro-US anti-China campaign.

The US and Australian ruling classes also maximise the opportunity to label the Chinese Communist Party as the source of the problems, as part of their anti-Communist propaganda. Despite retaining the name, the Chinese Communist Party has nothing to do with Communism – it sold out to capitalist restoration decades ago.

We need to help direct the responses here to this intensified rivalry between China and the US.

We need to keep Australia out of war preparations, and out of war itself. Work needs to be done to popularise the notion of an independent and peaceful Australia. There should be no foreign military bases in Australia.

We need to oppose all signs of racism. We support the Black Lives Matter movement here and internationally. There is no place for Islamophobia, anti-Semitism or other forms of discrimination and prejudice.

We need to promote the economic and social demands of our *Fighting Program*, and in particular support environmentally sustainable Australian manufacturing and the nationalisation of strategic economic sectors. All privatisation should be opposed.

Australia must be independent of both imperialist powers.

Kick out US imperialism and keep out Chinese imperialism.

Socialism and independence for Australia. ■

The Draft Fighting Program of the CPA(M-L) is available at www.cpaml.org/fightingprogram.php

First Peoples Likely to be the First Target of Law Empowering the Military

Lindy Nolan, (3 November 2020)

With nearly 450 deaths since the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody, the first murder charge against a police officer has been referred for trial in the Supreme Court. But a new Bill still in the Senate looks set to give immunity to military and police from charges arising from “emergency” actions. [The Bill was passed and came into effect in mid-December 2020 – ed.]

In September, Lawyer and human rights’ activist Kellie Tranter released a briefing paper on the Defence Legislation Amendment (Enhancement of Defence Force Response to Emergencies) Bill 2020, but there’s been barely a whisper in the media, apart from *Independent Australian* and *The Saturday Paper*.

The Bill allows the ADF – and foreign forces – to escape charges from actions during civil “emergencies” declared by the Defence Minister. The action does not have to be referred to parliament or even the prime minister.

US troops are already based in Darwin, making the NT the most likely place where foreign troops may be called into action. First Peoples are already the most gaoled people in the world. They make up 30 per cent of the Territory population and are already living in the firing line.

Tranter says an assumption that the new law would only be used for natural emergencies, like bushfire or flood, is

incorrect, though that’s the pretext. Tranter’s paper makes clear it could just as easily be used against anti-poverty protesters or striking unionists.

Anti-imperialist organisation Spirit of Eureka provides evidence from history for Tranter’s claim in their statement ‘The New Defence Bill is a Step to Fascism: Fight for Working People’s Rights’.

In a 2015 article, Tranter also drew attention to a section of the *Australian Army Manual of Land Warfare*, called ‘Aid to the Civilian Authorities’. Circulating unofficially in the 1980s, former Greens Senator Bob Brown tried to make the document public in 2000. But his amendment to this affect was defeated by a Labor-Coalition voting bloc.

A ‘how to book’ for military coups and martial law, the manual puts meat on the current Bill’s bones, like locking down neighbourhoods to undertake searches; setting up detention centres; systematically isolating and shooting leaders; hiding evidence by removing wounded and dead; and so on.

We could rejoin the sorry list of dictatorships where people simply disappear. Rejoin? This continent and its islands, as almost all now know, is covered with the bones of secretly or openly slaughtered First Peoples.

“Emergency Response”

In publicising Tranter’s concerns, Spirit of Eureka also noted the last time the ADF was used here against civilians was during the Northern



ADF personnel on the streets during the Bushfire Emergency in summer 2019/20. The military is increasingly being used in ‘Civil Emergencies’, such as lockdowns during the ongoing pandemic.



Territory Intervention which began in 2007.

The Intervention was called 'The Emergency Response'. After late night passage through parliament of an enormous and barely scrutinised document, the army rolled into communities across the Territory.

The Emergency Response was a testing ground for open policies of state military, economic and cultural repression across the continent and islands.

It aimed to open First Peoples' lands to exploitation by multinational corporations. Last year half the Territory was opened to fracking. Gas is announced as Australia's bipartisan economic saviour post-Covid.

When mining (or gas) and community, including First Peoples, come into conflict, the forces of the state protect corporate property. It's never reversed. Alas, no riot squad surrounds Rio Tinto HQ for destroying caves sacred to Puutu Kuntj Kurrama and Pinikura or Victorian Government offices for cutting down Djab Wurrung birthing trees.

Yuendumu resident, anti-fracking leader and Warlpiri Elder Ned Jampajinpa Hargraves spoke at an online forum for Redfern Amnesty Group on August 5 this year about events surrounding November 2019's shooting death of Walker, a Warlpiri teenager by a police officer.

Jampajinpa said Yuendumu has a population of just 800, but a \$7million dollar police station was the only thing built as part of the Intervention. "That money could have gone to our children," he said.

The police station is a direct line from the Intervention to Walker's

death. Police, but no medical treatment, poured into Yuendumu as the teenager lay for hours before eventually dying.

Jampajinpa stated that Warlpiri were victims of the last "official" massacre by police and civilians at Coniston in 1928.

He said that faced with the Intervention's laws, army and police, Warlpiri "were tied down, could not move a muscle".

After Walker's death, Warlpiri youth under Elders' leadership alerted the world, ensuring protesters poured onto the streets across the continent, their numbers increasing until a police officer was charged.

Groups as varied as the Australian Anthropological Society announced they stood with Yuendumu.

Strength growing

Great strength was taken from US Black Lives Matter protests to take to the streets against Black deaths here.

The first aim of almost all First Peoples whose family members have died in custody is that people be held accountable, that charges be laid. This could well prove impossible if it falls under the new legislation.

A Warlpiri statement was read at a small Sydney Black Lives Matter protest on Monday October 26, the day murder charges were referred for trial at the Supreme Court.

It said, "We are a proud People, strong in our language, culture and our Lore. But the police and government rule over us and treat us as enemies in our own land."

It concluded, "We want everyone supporting Black Lives Matter to stand with us for justice for Walker.

"This means those responsible must be held accountable. Justice for Walker also means that power must come back to the Warlpiri People and the violence and control against us must end. We want our rights back to control what happens in our communities and on our land. Stop this Intervention and all the racist laws we are under. Reset our local councils and give us the resources we need to employ and serve our people. The police must put down their weapons before they come into our land. We cannot walk around in fear in our own community.

"Respect Warlpiri Lore, the real Lore of our land."

Breaking silence and repression

No matter what words on paper are passed in parliament, no matter how brutal the suppression or terrible the sacred and human carnage, the ruling class has been unable to crush the resistance of First Peoples.

But First Peoples need more than our applause.

Union motions were passed, articles were published. The CFMEU constructed a home in one week for Territory First Peoples, exposing what the Intervention was NOT providing. The MUA and others are active. The ACTU's First Nations Worker Alliance exposes CDP slave labour, teaches history, encourages voting. All these have merit.

A few unions will fight. Sadly, too many compliant leaderships deliberately suppress even their own members' cries for support. No wonder there are no strikes when First Peoples are smashed.

Collectively we need to break silence and repression, but we have far to go. The working class must breathe struggle into deliberately buried slogans. An injury to one IS an injury to all. This cannot just be words, for this law is coming for all those the ruling class deems enemies.

No matter how big the spontaneous demonstrations nor large an election victory, unless the working class systematically rebuilds its strength and alliances, exposes the lies and omissions that allow First Peoples to be murdered and repressed, the carnage will continue and spread.

Colonialism and imperialism. First Peoples cannot defeat them alone. Nor can we. ■

Biodiversity Security Requires Independence and Socialism

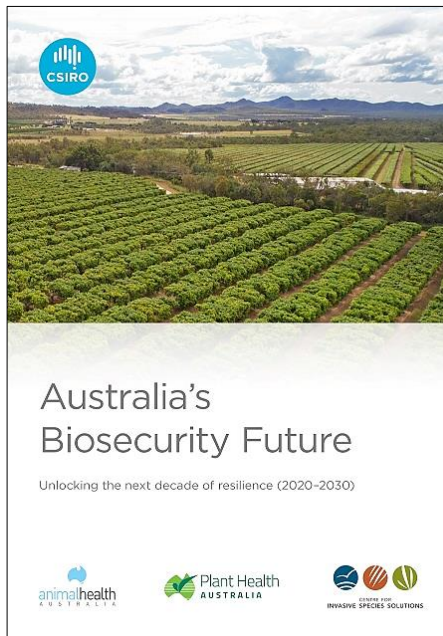
Nick G. (23 November 2020)

Biosecurity, in its broadest sense (incorporating the inter-related human, agriculture, environment and marine health and referred to as One Health) is under serious threat in Australia.

Of course, we are not alone. Globally, protections in place around biosecurity are failing to keep up with the increasing threats. Throughout the entire capitalist world, resistance to regulations by private corporations seeking growth in profits, and demands by finance capital for ongoing reductions in government expenditure, have seen the risks intensify.

The crisis in Australia has been made clear in a new CSIRO publication, *Australia's Biosecurity Future: Unlocking the next decade of resilience (2020-2030)*. It is an impassioned plea by scientists to the federal and state governments for a change in direction – from business-as-usual to what it calls a “transformational trajectory”.

In relation to the former, it notes that “Between 2012 and 2017, the annual number of interceptions of biosecurity risk materials at Australian borders rose by almost 50%, to



37,014.”

Current funding and staffing levels are deemed inadequate to deal with this. Even a three-fold increase in funding will not help us get ahead of risks already in the system: “Scaling the current system through additional funding allocation will not be enough. Modelling shows that even almost tripling investment in interventions out to 2025 will still result in increased residual biosecurity risk compared to 2014–2015 levels.”

The authors make it clear that they are not only referring to introduced weed and pest species. In the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic, they explain that “environmental biosecurity in the context of One Health should involve understanding the increasing risks and likelihoods of infectious zoonotic diseases due to environmental destruction, urbanisation, encroachment on natural habitats, increased global trade and travel, and the increased resistance of pathogens to new antimicrobial drugs.” Zoonotic diseases are those transferred to humans from animals.

The CSIRO lists a number of emerging challenges to Australia's biosecurity including urbanisation, growing trade and travel, antimicrobial resistance, biodiversity loss, climate change and agricultural intensification. It points to problems with resourcing: “The biosecurity system is challenged by eroding budgets and declining and uneven biosecurity capability, coordination and expertise across jurisdictions. Examples of declining capabilities

include taxonomists, plant pathologists and entomologists. A lack of biosecurity specialists and investment could limit Australia's ability to prevent and respond to shocks.”

Among the different directions promoted by the CSIRO are greater community and Indigenous engagement and changing the focus from a reactive “response and recovery” model to one of “prevention and detection”.

These and other suggestions are all to the good, but the CSIRO fails to adequately address the political issues embedded in a system which, as we said earlier, is characterised by “resistance to regulations by private corporations seeking growth in profits, and demands by finance capital for ongoing reductions in government expenditure.”

It notes in relation to reporting of biosecurity risks that “some lack incentive to report detections where this may have a detrimental impact on their livelihood.” It adds, “From large industry through to smallholders and hobby farmers, there are portions of these groups who are not complying with biosecurity standards.”

It is really saying that capitalism is in conflict with the protection of biodiversity. The report goes as far as it can in pointing out that governments need stronger non-negotiable standards to ensure greater private sector biosecurity responsibility. The CSIRO calls for greater incentives for compliance – we call for heavy penalties up to and including jail time for non-compliance.

It is not for nothing that at our last Party Congress in June 2019, we wrote into our Program that “Biodiversity matters to the working class. The planet is facing an alarming rate of species extinctions. Habitats of other species must be rehabilitated and expanded. Research into the biology of other species must be ramped up in order to create programs for the restoration of their numbers.”

Our view is that biodiversity risks will only be seriously addressed when we take the power of the great corporations over society away from them and vest all economic, political and social control in the people.

That requires nothing short of genuine national independence and socialism. ■



CSIRO workers fighting against budget and job cuts in 2016

New Book Released: Fight capitalism's destructive impact on nature

The book is a 120-page compilation of 29 articles relating to contemporary environmental issues taken from our Party's website from 2017 to 2020.

Although the content of some articles will have dated, what is more important is the analysis of these events and issues from a Marxist-Leninist perspective.

That perspective differs from some environmental writings in clearly foregrounding some of the basic contradictions inherent in environmental issues:

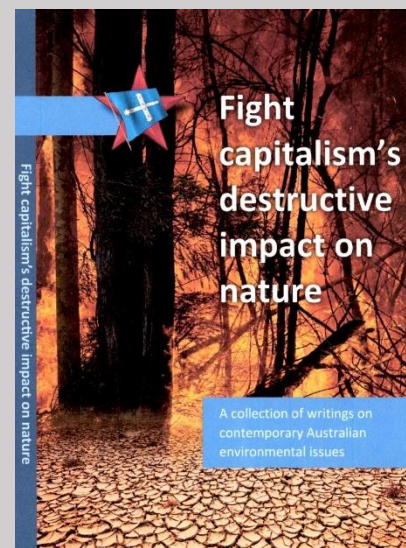
- The contradiction between capital and labour
- The contradiction between capital and nature
- The contradiction between imperialism and the Australian people.

Our perspective also differs in clearly foregrounding the rights of the working class, the environment, and the broader Australian people against capitalism and imperialism.

Our perspective is that the workers can and must exercise leadership in resolving the three contradictions above, that their right to struggle and win is entirely just and bound to succeed.

While it is likely that readers will learn details of some of the struggles covered in this book, we hope that a more substantial learning will be from the approach taken towards the issues covered in the content.

In this way, environmental activists will be better placed to analyse and form responses to new and unforeseen issues and thus strengthen the connections between the struggle for socialism, for anti-imperialist independence and for a healthy, clean and sustainable living planet.



Free pdf available from:
www.cpaml.org/booklets.php

*For Australian residents, **hard copies** can be obtained by sending a \$10 note with a return postal address to:

PO Box 196 Fitzroy, Victoria,
 Australia 3065

Contact info@cpaml.org for more info

Dumping Trump – a Doorway, not a Destination

John G. (10 November 2020)

The US Presidential election beat itself into all our heads, as commentators picked over the election entrails emerging at snail's pace from the disjointed states of America.

Reaching the climax, a rejected Trump stretched out for days, then a week with more coming.

It tended to overshadow what in the US led into the election, setting the scene for any change.

'I can't breathe', the words uttered by Eric Garner in 2014 and again by George Floyd on 25 May 2020 as police squashed the life out of them, unleashed the largest wave of protests ever seen in the US.

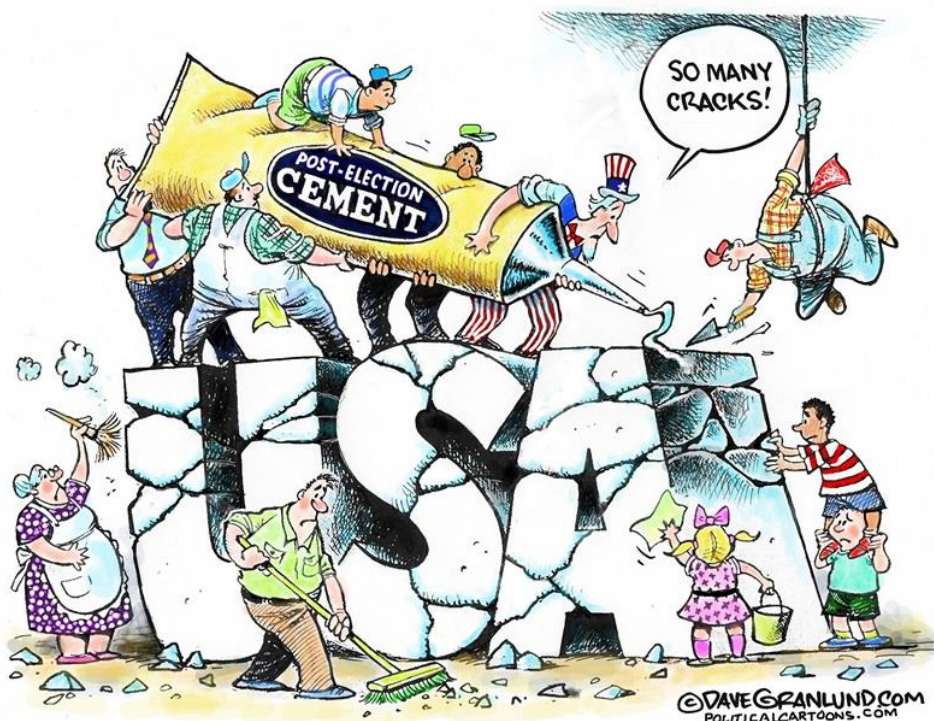
The Black Lives Matter movement organised over 8,000 protest marches in 2,000 US cities with enormous turnouts in the following three months. Other marches over Covid, economic hardships, food shortages, evictions and for rent relief, and just cries for relief from poverty, have marked a huge wave of unrest. The poor, sections of the working class, Black Americans with a wide and deep range

of allies have been mobilised, and to an extent, organised.

The action on the ground had, by August, forced a dozen cities and three states to outlaw choke holds, ban use of tear gas, other chemical irritants, and rubber bullets on protesters among other relief from violence and

oppression by authorities. Free food handouts occur daily in cities across the country. Evictions were outlawed in some cities. Free clean water is supplied to communities where polluted supplies threaten health.

In response to the jingoism of Trump and officials at State and local



levels, and the crises over race, the exploding pandemic, waves of unemployment and growing poverty, communities have mobilised and found voice. Leaders have been emerging in the communities and on the streets to see hardships relieved.

The roadmap to that relief went through Donald Trump.

A decrepit old white hack is no real answer to entrenched poverty and racism.

As a former Texan Commissioner for Agriculture and commentator on American life, Jim Hightower, called it from under his cowboy hat, 'Beating Trump is a doorway not a destination'.

Community leaders were agitating that it would not be enough to throw Trump out, to put in another old white corporate politician and just see things go on with a few minor concessions to the outburst of anger and emerging people's movement, crumbs scattered from the table of US imperialist superprofits. The call for a new America, reverberated.

A different decrepit old white Democrat in the White House isn't the answer for those mobilised Americans, even with the first concession of the first ever Black/Asian American women as Vice President elect.

Mass frustration and dissolution might ordinarily lead to a poor voter turnout when people have experience of how useless elections are in their lives, leading nowhere. But this election had a historically high turnout, a product of the social conflict and people's determination to be rid of Trump and the swamp of corporate Washington.

For lower working class and oppressed strata of American society, it's an expression of the distance between the American dream and their American reality, of grasping their own interests in opposition to those of the corporate elites.

It's important to be clear eyed about that phenomenon. Hopes and dreams don't change US society.

The American Dream for some

The US has one of the highest GDPs per capita in the world. The inclination of many Americans, including upper working-class strata, is to protect that wealth in which they share. It affects the thinking and aspirations of others who are only

touched in passing and others who don't partake. It feeds the militarism, jingoism, racism and nationalism that has significant importance to US capital.

Interests aligned with American finance capital drive reaction within the US. Many realise high incomes, luxury housing, and decadent lifestyles from a cut from US imperialism's dominance of world capitalism. Others hold onto the aspiration.

At the start of the 20th century Lenin noted the phenomenon of a labour aristocracy in major imperialist heartlands.

He cited sections of the English working class, and how stratified it had become with an upper stratum of workers engaged in sporting clubs, cooperatives, trade unions and guilds, and numerous religious sects. Implicit were their incomes, luxuries, and lifestyles. He noted the amount of land in southern England devoted to sporting fields and leisure. He referenced the lower stratum of the English proletariat proper, haunted by unemployment and insecurity, gathered in the barren slums of the major cities.

In the preface of *Imperialism, the highest stage of capitalism*, Lenin pointed out "capitalism has now singled out a handful ... of exceptionally rich and powerful states which plunder the whole world simply by "clipping coupons" Capital exports yield an income of eight to ten francs per annum, at prewar prices ... out of such superprofits (... obtained over and above the profits which capitalists squeeze out of the workers of their "own" country) it is possible to bribe the labour leaders and the upper stratum of the labour aristocracy. ... In the civil war between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie they inevitably, and in no small numbers, take the side of the bourgeoisie ...".

The US has its aristocracy of labour, but there is frustration for some as US imperialism's imperial lordship slides, even partially, and monopolist finance capital faces degradation. Sections sliding out of grace and favour seek paths to salvation. Some gathered round Trump after decades of what they see as government indifference and neglect from the Washington swamp. Talk about fake news.

The American Dream grates against many people's American Reality

Millions of the poor found themselves squeezed, abandoned to hardships over decades. Police violence and extraordinary oppressive rates of gaoling among minorities weigh on lower strata communities. They also had decades of growing hardships through wars, financial crises, housing crashes, unemployment and collapse of much healthcare. They have garnered significant support and gained leadership of greater numbers than previously experienced.

Clinton's 1996 social welfare "reforms" handed control to states. The new welfare system relied on "personal responsibility", added work requirements, shrinking the numbers who qualified for benefits, handing out harsh punishments for non-compliance, compounding the impact of the economic crises and familiar to people here. Biden and Hillary were Bill Clinton's collaborators in that disaster.

The country tired of the warmongering Bushes, and had hopes dashed in 8 years of Obama's government inaction. They emerged hating the Washington swamp as Trump branded it giving expression to a lot of people. Trump compounded frustrations, promise after promise unfulfilled while his early years saw some employment relief and the first rise in the minimum wage in many years.

Celebrity showmanship, a sharp tongue and brash triumphalism attracted attention. Racism and inaction against COVID-19 mobilised sections of the black community, medicos, nurses, sections of working-class whites after delays on delays in programs he promised and the threat to many people's lives and livelihoods.

The cry to dump Trump grew. The aristocracy of labour worked to funnel it into the Democratic party's presidential race. That fell short for many when Bernie Sanders and Elizabeth Warren were pushed out of the Democratic primary race. Many who were determined to win relief from their difficulties, the racist police killings, the deprivation, the insecurity, the health crisis, couldn't stomach trying to hold up another corporate

politician from the Washington swamp as their saviour.

Aiming for a different destination through this open door

Taking account of the failing mood, activists from a range of working-class and minority community groups and parties focussed on getting rid of Trump as a first step.

The Freedom Road Socialist Organisation proposed:

‘The upcoming election (in the US) are in essence a referendum on the past four years, and we hold that it is important that everyone who can vote do so – and that you vote against Trump. The defeat of Trump and his ilk will create a more favorable context for the people’s struggle to advance. ...’

‘No matter who wins the next election, we need to stay in the streets and fight for an agenda that reflects peoples needs. And we need to keep our eye on the prize. That means advocating for and building organization to achieve revolutionary change. The kind of change that sweeps away the current ruling class from power and puts power into hands of working people.’

Votetrumpout.org, a broader alliance, notes:

‘We are not going to minimize our disagreements with Joe Biden. But we’re also clear-eyed about where things stand: supporting the Democratic nominee in swing states is the only means we have to defeat Trump. ... If Biden wins, we’ll be at his door on day one, demanding the kinds of structural reforms that advance racial, economic, and environmental justice. But before that, it’s clear what we have to do: This November, we have to #VoteTrumpOut in swing states.’

That approach appears to have rebuilt the drive to action for a better America. It recognised that people, including many of Trump’s supporters, want to get traditional corporate politicians off their backs, and have some level of recognition of the way ‘conventional electoral politics’ is weighed against working people and small business.

The call for dumping Trump and then continuing struggle to impose a roadmap out of the crisis on the country’s rulers has distilled thinking of masses of Americans. It strives to take the rejection of Trumpism towards a different America, one not

on the American nationalist Democrats agenda. It has an element of a call to arms for the times.

Struggle to impose a roadmap for a people’s agenda against corporate America after the defeat of Trump, could also open a path for numbers of Trump’s alienated working-class followers to continue with their struggle to ‘clean out the swamp of Washington politicians’ in the fight to force Biden to give way to relieving their hardships.

Challenging corporate rule requires step by step struggles at levels masses of Americans are ready for. There is undoubtedly struggle over leadership of this movement and its roadmap with those completely swamped in electoral politics. Mistakes and faltering are inevitable. Struggle to change America involves adopting new levels of understanding, tested in the vortex of struggle that is emerging in the US, in itself creating new ideas as the movement unfolds.

Beating Trump has opened a doorway. It is yet to be seen if the people’s movement can take it forward towards a completely different destination than the electoral swamp has prepared. ■

“The Paris of the workers, with its commune, will be celebrated forever as the glorious harbinger of a new society.”

Karl Marx, *Civil War in France*, May 1871

ICOR, Greetings for 2021

Dear comrades, dear friends of the ICOR,

We say farewell to the year of the 200th birthday of Friedrich Engels, and welcome the year of the 150th anniversary of the Paris Commune.

The past year brought new experiences and great new challenges for all of us. ICOR and the forces of AIAFUF (Anti-imperialist and Anti-fascist United Front) have strengthened and grown together in it.

We send you and your organizations militant and revolutionary greetings!

We wish you and all of us optimism, health, steadfastness - and many successes!

Monika Gaertner-Engel,
General Coordinator of the ICOR

Sanjay Singhvi,
Deputy Main Coordinator



ICOR Resolution:

INTERNATIONAL COORDINATION OF
REVOLUTIONARY PARTIES AND ORGANIZATIONS

Vaccines Belong to Humanity – Not to the Pharmaceutical Corporations! (17 December 2020)

It is a great success that due to the research of many people, only one year after the first Covid-19 infections, several vaccines are about to be approved, or are currently being administered. This is a success, although strict monitoring and scientific evaluation of their efficacy and tolerability must continue.

The success, the breadth of vaccinations, the quality and safety could be even greater if such vaccine research would not also be taking place under the conditions of rivalry of pharmaceutical companies in the interest of imperialist competition. For example, Russia is using its Sputnik V vaccine in the Latin American market to gain advantages over its capitalist rivals from the United States, Germany, France, and Japan. The Chinese company Sinovac has signed testing and manufacturing contracts for its vaccine with numerous countries. With the production of mRNA vaccines, a new type of vaccine has also been achieved. Also due to its simple structure, many millions of vaccine doses can be produced in a few weeks.



The vaccine and the necessary medical treatment must be accessible to all countries and people, especially the poor. But as the approval of the vaccines of the big pharmaceutical corporations Pfizer/Biontech, Moderna and AstraZeneca approaches, it becomes clear that the imperialists are aiming to secure the majority for themselves. For example, according to Oxfam, only a few countries, making up 13 percent of the world's population, have already secured more than half of all vaccine doses. For Peru, one of the countries with the highest death rate per capita in the pandemic, vaccine shipments have been announced only by August next year.

Covax-Facility (Covid-19 Vaccines Global Access), established in 2020 by the World Health Organization, is ostensibly to ensure a fair distribution of the vaccine. But there are few financial commitments to its self-imposed goals. And the distribution envisaged by Covax is also anything but fair: countries that can pay for their own vaccine doses are to be supplied with priority over countries that are dependent on aid funds. We reject this inhuman imperialist health policy in the strongest possible terms!

Even in the imperialist countries we criticize the vaccination policy. It relies unilaterally on large testing centers instead of focusing on general practitioner care close to home. And here, too, the Covid-19 pandemic is a disease of the poor.

We demand: The order of vaccinations must be based on strictly medical and infectiological criteria – all over the world, regardless of the financial possibilities of countries and individuals! In particular, the necessary logistics must be taken into account: Countries with limited possibilities for the necessary cooling of the vaccines must be provided especially with vaccines from AstraZeneca and Moderna and similar products, the cooling of which is less complicated. At this stage, vaccinations should be voluntary and not introduce compulsory vaccination through the back door via certain special rights for vaccinated people.

Vaccinations are an achievement of the development of humankind to which all people are entitled! Instead, under capitalism/imperialism, profit is made from vaccines that can decide over life and death!

Away with the patent right on vaccines!

Forward to socialism - for a society, in which the achievements of humankind also benefit all!

The Communist Party of Australia (Marxist-Leninist) is an affiliate of the ICOR (International Coordination of Revolutionary Parties and Organisations). The CPA (M-L) signed on to this resolution along with 29 other organisations around the world. For more visit **www.icor.info**