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IT'S OFFICIAL:
WE'RE IN RECESSION

Anna Pha

Australia's economy is officially in recession. Australia's Gross Domestic Product, a measure of the wealth produced, shrank by 7.2 per cent in the three months leading to 30th June. The number of unemployed or underemployed totals a staggering 2.5 million with the worst most likely to come.

For many households, it is the first deep recession that they will have experienced. What governments do now will have an impact for many years to come. By all accounts next month's federal budget is shaping up to be a bonanza for big business and the wealthy. Workers, the unemployed and social security recipients can expect little if anything in it to alleviate the pain.

REVERSE THE CUTS

Just at a time when the economy needs an increase in demand for goods and services, the government is slashing its payments to the unemployed who are on JobSeeker and those still connected to their employer on JobKeeper. These schemes play a critical role in preventing the present economic contraction from being far worse and keeping food on the table for many households. Now is the worst time to be cutting them.

JobSeeker will be halved as from 28th September, down from $1,500 to $750 a fortnight. As rental holidays come to an end and banks expect customers to resume mortgage repayments, families will be under even more pressure than they are today.

Anglicare Australia executive director Kasy Chambers said unemployed renters faced a "ticking time bomb" if JobSeeker rates were cut as planned. Unfortunately, legislation making the cuts law, went through the week before last.

UNEMPLOYMENT SET TO RISE

The legislation phasing out JobSeeker also cuts the JobKeeper allowance in two tranches (See #1926, "Workers in the firing line").

The first tranche commences on 28th September and the second at the beginning of 2021. It is set to end on 21st March. It will be a two-tiered system with lower payments for part-time and casual workers.

When JobKeeper is cut, thousands of small and not so small businesses are likely to go under. Many are barely keeping their head above water now. That will only add to the ranks of the unemployed.

These two schemes play a vital role for millions of workers who would have ended up on skid row without that support. The government, with one eye on its holy grail of a budget surplus, and another on serving its masters in big business, is not waiting until the economy is back on its feet before withdrawing the programs.

HOMELESSNESS

Anglicare did an analysis of almost 77,000 rental listings on the first weekend of August and found only 808 were considered affordable for singles on JobSeeker. That is only one per cent of rentals were considered affordable – less than thirty per cent of a household's gross income.

The unemployed simply cannot afford housing in the capital cities. They face being thrown out onto the streets. State and territory governments had insufficient public housing to accommodate the pre-pandemic homeless population, let alone a surge in homeless.

This is one area where governments should not be waiting to take action. With federal government assistance this is one of the main areas of infrastructure that would assist people in need and create thousands of jobs. We don't need more roads and toll ways.

According to the agencies that respond to domestic violence, the number of cases has skyrocketed during the pandemic. Again, this is an area where governments had failed to address pre-pandemic needs. Construction of crisis accommodation; employment of more social workers; more funds for legal and other support centres; and the employment of suitably qualified staff would be so important. Such measures would also create jobs.

Mental health is another critical area where numbers are rocketing but there are far too few facilities including personnel.

NATIONALISATION

It is ridiculous that with so many unmet needs for both education and training, universities are sacking thousands of staff and TAFE has all but been destroyed by the privatisation of that sector.

There is great potential to rebuild the university sector and TAFE by restoring full federal funding and re-employing thousands of trainers and lecturers along with support staff. The skills are needed.

Instead it has been left to the "markets" which are guided by profits not needs.

Age care has largely been pushed off the agenda by the government, but there is a crying need for tight regulation of the sector and to bring it under public ownership and democratic control.

This sector is also hugely understaffed and underfunded. There is a conflict of interest between care and for-profit aims. Residents cannot receive the best care when a centre becomes a vehicle for returning maximum profits to shareholders.

The whole health sector is starved of funding and inadequately staffed. Alongside aged care there is scope for many more jobs in aged and also community care.

The above are just a few of the ways of in which jobs could be created. Another important area is the research and development of renewable energy sources and environmental protection.

As for the funding, the government should look at abandoning the $158 billion in personal income tax cuts that are mostly targeted at those on higher incomes. It should forget corporate tax cuts. Finally, it would not threaten Australia's security to halve the $40 billion plus per annum, and rising, military expenditure. Australia's security would be better enhanced by developing cordial relations within our region, including with China. ✪

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Review:
Tales Of Wo-Chi-Ca

Guardian

Issue 1932 September 14, 2020

COALITION-ALP TAG TEAM AGAINST THE WORKING CLASS

In recent weeks, the bourgeois duopoly that runs our government have been a little careless in revealing their true class allegiances.

The ALP, who present themselves as the party of labour, of Australia's working-class, have been voting in step with the Coalition, who have sold themselves as efficient economic managers looking out for the country with "sensible" policy decisions.

It is of course all but a ruse. Ideological differences exist only in terms of degree to which they serve the interests of the ruling class but they nevertheless support the ruling class all the same.

Greens senator Rachel Siewert's motion to maintain the supplement rate on JobSeeker to $550 a week was voted down by both major parties. This was not surprising as internal discussions within the ALP have left them torn on this question. While those in the "Left" faction of the ALP, such as Lisa Chesters acknowledge that prior to the increase "the rate was previously too low," little seems to have been offered as a solution. The position of the ALP largely rests on acknowledging how low the rate is, that a "comprehensive" review needs to take place but that to commit to a figure during the pandemic is premature.

This is nothing but a stalling tactic, an unwillingness to want to reveal a concrete position lest they open themselves to attack by the Coalition. The government of course all the more happy to stoke that fear to keep the opposition from attacking its policy decisions.

Furthermore, when it came to the opening up of new gas fields, both the ALP and the Coalition voted in support. A move like this should be expected by the Coalition as the party has largely been dominated by climate scepticism fuelled by donations from mining giants like Gina Rinehart (more on that in a moment). However, the ALP, who like to present themselves as progressives on this issue, have failed to live up to their own self-proclaimed reputation. Again, this issue seems to be one fought on factional grounds, where Joel Fitzgibbon is one of the loudest voices in the party room. Late last year, Fitzgibbon argued for the ALP "to adopt the Government's climate change targets" (ABC). In August, Fitzgibbon further expressed his desire for the party to be pulled to the right on climate action stating that "Labor needs to develop a middle-ground message [...] in order to win government."

And if it wasn't clear enough that the Opposition was doing the government's bidding, wonder no more. Earlier this month, the ALP was helping the government to water down state donation laws. As it currently stands, the High Court of Australia has upheld the Queensland ban on developer donations. As a result, the Government introduced the *Electoral Legislation (Miscellaneous Measures) Bill* seeking to undermine state autonomy, and in the process our democracy. The bill would provide "immunity from state law where donations are made for federal purposes" (*Guardian UK*). Greens senator Larissa Waters has qualified the bill as "legalised corruption", further stating: "It has legalised flow of big donations to buy outcomes that suit private profits and that deliver a well-paid job once that politician leaves parliament." Outside of a few superficial modifications to the transparency of donations, the ALP seem all for it. Again, however, not is all well within the ALP, even on the issue of receiving donations as Queensland Labor have dissented.

What becomes apparent here is two things. The first is that despite all the rhetoric, the ALP is not a party with the interests of the working-class at its heart and its actions in recent months all but prove this to be true. The second is that ALP is torn apart by factional infighting which weakens its ability to fight for the working class, if it wished to do so.

The Communists are seeking to run in election in the future and promise to be neither of these things. Firstly, they have always fought in the interests of the working-class and our policies have been consistent in that regard in every election we have run in. Secondly, as a Marxist-Leninist party operates on the principle of democratic centralism. What is democratic centralism? To quote Lenin: "The principle of democratic centralism [...] implies universal and full *freedom to criticise*, so long as this does not disturb the unity of *a definite action*." This means your communist representative will not put their individual voice above the collective decisions made so we can fight stronger together for you.

Help us register our electoral body "The Communists":
www.cpa.org.au/communists-registration

LONG LIVE THE COMMUNIST YOUTH OF CHILE

CPA statement

The Communist Party of Australia fraternally greets the 88th anniversary of the Communist Youth of Chile.

On 5th September 1932 the Juventudes Comunistas de Chile (Communist Youth of Chile) was founded as a historical necessity for the Communist Party of Chile to have a youth wing. Young people from fourteen to twenty-eight years of age find in the Communist youth the organisation where they can develop their skills to organise broad sectors of the youth to train the new cadre for the Communist Party of Chile, to help transform the Chilean society and build socialism.

The Chilean youth have been championing the struggle for democracy and against the dictatorship of capital and for the freedom of the Mapuche political prisoners. The events of October 2019 saw the Chilean people particularly, the youth fighting to get rid of the Pinochet era Constitution.

Long live the Communist Youth of Chile.

Communist Party of Australia, CPA

PRESS FUND

Independent media is so important these days as major news outlets all trot out the same rubbish and repeat as fact whatever claims our politicians make. That is why the *Guardian* is so important to anyone seeking the truth and a working class analysis. That's is why it is worth supporting the *Guardian*. Our warmest thanks to the contributors below:

R O'Farrell $10, D White $20, Eddie Seymour $25.

This week's total: $55.00. Cumulative total: $2,559.00

Politics in the Pub Perth

Military Spending

Thursday 24th September, 6-8 pm

Venue: 43 Below Bar and Restaurant
(43 Barrack Street Cnr Hay St Mall Perth CBD)

Speakers:
Jen Blay – Student Activist
Adrian Glamorgan – Peace Activist
Seamus Carey – IPAN WA Youth Rep
Chaired by Dr Christopher Crouch

This is a free event – Food and drink available from the counter.

For more information contact 0419812872

Sydney Cuba Vigil

STOP USA BLOCKADE ON CUBA

Also solidarity with Venezuela & Gaza

5:30 pm Thursday September 17

Sydney Martin Place – Outside of US Consulate Office

AFTINET
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20 YEARS FIGHTING FOR TRADE JUSTICE

Come to AFTINET's online birthday party
5.30-6.30 pm Thursday September 17, 2020

Bring your favourite beer, bubbly, cocktail or mocktail, and dress for the year 2000!

WHAT DOES FREEDOM REALLY MEAN?

Seamus Carey

DEMOCRACY MUST MEAN THAT INDIVIDUALS HAVE A DUTY TO UPHOLD THE COLLECTIVE INTEREST, ESTABLISHED THROUGH DEMOCRATIC PROCESSES, ABOVE THEIR OWN, IN ANY CASE WHERE THE TWO INTERESTS ARE IN IRRECONCILABLE CONFLICT.

The recent rallies around Australia protesting against restrictive measures to combat the pandemic are emblematic of intensifying contradictions within liberal ideology and its material basis in Australia.

Images of the various rallies show an abundance of placards with a strange mix of the rhetoric of '60s hippie "counterculture," and that of far-right conspiracy theories, both of which are imports from the United States. These may seem like strange bedfellows, but in both cases the central conceit is the bourgeois concept and fetishization of "freedom" taken to a particular logical extreme – logical in a formal sense, although as we see, deeply illogical when tested against the real world.

It is tempting to write these people off as fringe extremists and think no more about it. But that would not grasp the deeper material and ideological roots of these ideas.

According to the flavour of bourgeois liberal ideology that is the ruling ideology of Australian capitalist society, the concepts of "freedom" and "democracy" are so deeply intertwined as to be practically identical. In a bourgeois democracy, the main marker of its supposedly "democratic" nature is the "freedom" experienced under it in various forms. What matters most, in this conception, is one's freedom to act always according to their will, and express in any context whatever views they wish.

Whether or not the people's views and interests are actually reflected in governance is regarded as decidedly secondary. The fact that regardless of the apparent freedoms of bourgeois society, the government and state disproportionately represent the interests of the miniscule ultra-wealthy minority in our society over the interests of the vast majority of people, and in the Australian case even disproportionately represent the interests of a foreign power (the US) over objective Australian national interests, is not regarded as a contradiction. This demonstrates the idealism inherent in the bourgeois concepts of freedom and democracy, as these ideas are treated as having primary reality as ideas-in-themselves and the objective material outcomes are treated as secondary, instead of the other way around.

Whether or not the words "freedom and democracy" are used to improve the lives of people, or to justify abhorrent acts to subjugate the world and kill millions in aggressive wars, some people are also happy to overlook.

If things were as simple as "more individual freedom – more democracy," then all of politics would be an extremely simple affair. The basic question of politics – the contradiction between the great variety of individual and group interests in society, and the objective necessity for society as a whole to function in a more or less unified way, according to this or that conception of collective interest – would not exist.

The socialist concept of democracy does not follow this idealist approach, but rather a materialist approach that privileges objective facts and outcomes over abstract ideas. The question of how the facts are, or should be, established is of course an extremely complex one and will not be dealt with in this article; but it must be asserted that it is in fact possible to do such a thing to a certain degree of accuracy, else not only does politics again become trivial and meaningless but so too does science. It is relevant to note that the misunderstanding and even denial of science is often a consequence of the views I am discussing; yet those espousing them demonstrate by their actions that they know politics to be anything but trivial.

Democracy must mean that individuals have a duty to uphold the collective interest, established through democratic processes, above their own, in any case where the two interests are in irreconcilable conflict. To reject this is in fact a violation of democracy; but liberal ideology teaches the exact opposite, that the "freedom" to do so is itself an expression of democracy. Violation of the democratic will for democracy's sake!

The pandemic has illuminated these different notions of democracy and their consequences. It has shown, clearer than ever, that when there is an objective collective interest, there is a need for unity in action to achieve it. Appealing to the "freedom" to violate the collective interest according to individual interest has become understood by many people as an affront to democracy, not its expression. But this reality poses problems for the ruling bourgeois ideology, as its internal contradictions and contradictions with reality are being exposed.

When China was the first to implement lockdowns to combat the pandemic, the measures were described by many Australian politicians and mainstream media as "authoritarian" and "draconian" – the latter being a word that some journalists seem to think means "Chinese." But this year's experience has proved that the measures China took were precisely what was needed to minimise suffering of the people and deaths. But countries like Australia and the US have found themselves caught between this reality and their bourgeois ideology, resulting in an inconsistent mix of methods that have caused widespread confusion, fear and unnecessary suffering and deaths.

It is reassuring to some to imagine that the truth is simple and reconciles these difficult contradictions with a single thought: it's all fake, we just need our freedom and everything will be okay. This faith in ideas with no need to understand them as reflections of material reality is a powerful tool of the ruling class to inspire reaction, and has hold of not just the fringe extremists but much of our society.

Engels cited Hegel and wrote: "Freedom is the insight into necessity." ✪

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE INDUSTRY

Statement by the CPA Maritime Branch

Wharfies are employed in enterprises. Working in locked gates that are industrially symbolic of an enterprise cage. The optics match the political reality. Previous industry forms of employment have been smashed by the ruling class. The broader unity and solidarity of workers being in the same industry boat was replaced by putting workers in a different boat, in enterprises, but we all remain on the same waters and the industry vision of workers should never be put aside but continually fought for.

I'm a wharfie and the logo on my shirt only identifies the exploiter who appropriates the surplus of my labour. We do the same job on the same ships yet EBAs (Enterprise Bargaining Agreement) have found a way to ensure we don't all get the same pay and conditions for the same work. Clearly a longer line of struggle must dictate that EBAs have got to go. While EBAs do exist as an objective reality we should now be finding ways to struggle for the industry, which after all was the basis of our success.

Industry claims can be made in an EBA and they should be. As much as we can standardise in EBAs the better but changing this form of employment becomes a political matter and while we can make industry claims at a local level and do everything we can to promote industry-wide outcomes a political battle must ensue to fight for the widest representation of workers across industries and not enterprise cages designed to weaken and erode the position of workers, which has occurred under enterprise employment.

The ALP and Liberal Party are big supporters of enterprise employment. The ALP invented it legislatively in Australia. The Liberals sought to take it a step further and reduce the relationship between workers and bosses to an individual one through individual contracts.

The pattern from both ruling class parties is to move away from broader industry arrangements for workers in order to increase exploitation and profits for employers. That is the basis of the decision made by these ruling parties. They both actively and openly supported employers against workers by reducing our standard of living and preventing the ongoing capacity to fight in the most effective way – across our industries.

IS THERE A WAY BACK TO THE INDUSTRY?

Yes but only through an intense and broad social and working class campaign. The ACTU "Change the Rules" campaign recognised the negative ongoing state of enterprise employment. In claiming enterprise bargaining is broken the ACTU says:

> "The rules around enterprise bargaining are too restrictive and bosses have found ways to exploit them. They use tactics such as outsourcing, offshoring, labour hire, terminating agreements, no stake agreements, and more, to avoid paying fair wages and conditions. Bosses have an unfair advantage over workers."

All of this is true but since "Change the Rules" there has been no ongoing ACTU agitation around these industrial matters. That industry forms of employment should replace local enterprise arrangements is a must but unions must be agitating on these big issues constantly.

Getting rid of EBAs is not just relevant when there is a national campaign on industry matters. It's a matter for non-stop constant campaign work and shouldn't be aside cast aside despite the current very important and COVID-19 related matters that the ACTU has a focus on.

Industry employment and a move away from enterprise agreements must be a whole of union and whole of class fight. It is a massively important reform that opens up the capacity of the working class to fight back on a broader scale and resist neoliberal attempts at workplace reform.

WHAT CAN WE DO IN THE MEANTIME?

In the meantime we need to make industry claims and erode enterprise employment as much as we can. There are some important areas we need to focus on. Recruitment and industry labour pools are some of the most important claims in this regard. The madness of having labour made redundant on one side of the harbour while another employer recruits must be ended. No sane industry arrangement can operate like this. It is expensive and inefficient and treats workers lives as worthless and under the complete entirely flexible control of the boss. If a worker is redundant on one side of the harbour why shouldn't they be picked up at the other enterprise that often has just secured the work that is responsible for the worker in the other company being made redundant. It's a mad industry that tolerates this cost because they see a union worker transferring as a threat and are prepared to train new industry entrants in the hope they won't bring a union culture.

Anti-unionism is shaping the economic and industrial landscape. We need to fight for labour pools and transfers under enterprise employment as a means of consistently eroding the restrictive nature of EBAs. We need to fight for the right to recruit as has been won in some parts of the industry in Sydney through struggle. This undermines the boss's tactics around promoting psychosocial testing to employ those who are least likely to be union members.

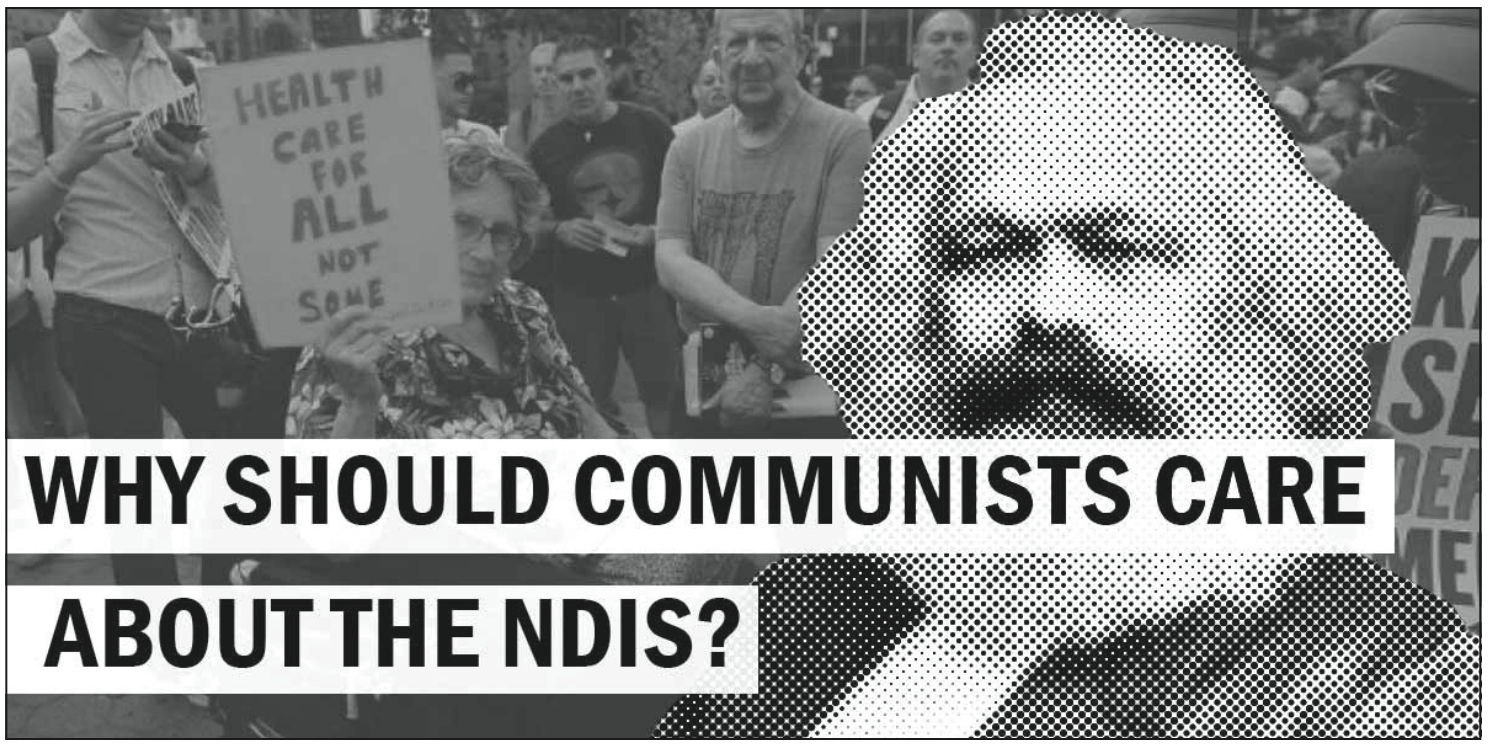
Industry attacks through automation and outsourcing are much more serious when we are in our enterprise cages. The struggles of wharfies to work against automation, prevent it where possible and extract considerable concessions when implemented is much harder under enterprise employment. This is one of the main reasons that industry employment must be resurrected.

Struggle under EBAs will continue but it is always important to ensure that when we are fighting our EBAs we have an eye to the industry and are equally willing to fight to return to industry employment that would remove the insecurity of EBAs and undo a process put in place by both Labor and Liberal and one supported wholeheartedly by all industry bosses. ✪

The logo on my shirt only identifies the exploiter who appropriates the surplus of my labour.

MARXISM AND THE NDIS

BA Ford



On 28th August, the Minister for the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), Stuart Robert, announced that the government will be implementing reforms to the NDIS for 2021.

These reforms come after the failure of the NDIS rollout over the past few years. The NDIS exists to provide support and accessibility tools for people with "a permanent and significant disability."

The NDIS also states that there are currently 4.3 million disabled people in Australia. Yet it aims to only provide insurance to "500,000 Australians who have permanent and significant disability," while leaving out the other millions of disabled people from accessing the insurance scheme. As of late August 2020, over 400,000 people are supported by the NDIS.

TUNE REVIEW

The Tune Review was conducted by David Tune of the Department of Health in 2019 to review the faults of the NDIS and was released in January 2020. Around this time Stuart Robert commented that no one had died while waiting for the NDIS to rollout at the beginning of this year. Robert was slammed by the media and disability activists because the truth was that 1,279 people died between 2016 and 2019 while waiting to access the scheme.

Ironically, the biggest problem of the NDIS is its accessibility. But why is the NDIS, which is supposed to support access needs of disabled people, so inaccessible? For the same reason many government supports are inaccessible, because of bureaucracy.

It takes months for applications and reviews to move through the NDIS, which, as stated above, can lead to a disabled person's death while they wait for support they need.

The Tune Review has twenty-nine recommendations for changes to NDIS including clearer and more accessible language, additional funding, greater leeway for applicants, greater outreach to marginalised people with disabilities such as Aboriginal and Torres strait Islander people and migrants, and so on.

The recent NDIS announcement states that the Australian government supports or supports in principle (whatever that means!) the twenty-nine recommendations of the Tune Review.

INDEPENDENT ASSESSMENTS

One of the major reforms announced is that, as of 2021, the NDIS will be conducting independent assessments. Rather than a disabled person providing reports from their trusted doctors or specialists, the new assessments will require an independent assessor to come to a disabled person's home and assess how disabled they are using standardised tools.

According to Robert, the independent assessments will "deliver a simpler, faster and fairer approach for determining a person's eligibility right through to developing more flexible and equitable support packages."

However, disability activists and advocacy groups remain sceptical. In their statement on independent assessments, People with a Disability Australia compared the change to similar schemes and said:

> "People with disability who have undergone independent assessments in other schemes, such as workers compensation schemes, have found the process stressful and hostile. Ombudsman reports have shown that some workers compensation insurers purposefully choose independent assessors who they know are more likely to recommend terminating or minimising supports. We are concerned that the same issues will arise if the NDIS starts using independent assessments."

WHY SHOULD COMMUNISTS CARE ABOUT THE NDIS?

The very obvious reason that communists should care about failures of the NDIS is because communists should fight, as Lenin said, and generalise all forms of oppression under capitalism into a single picture to advance our "socialist convictions and democratic demand."

Disability rights are ingrained in our theory and practice. How? By the very fact that we reject ideas such as "fair day's wage for a fair day's work" and "the full product of his labour to the worker." We reject these phrases and ideas because they assume that all workers have equal ability. Marx sums up our position with his famous phrase "from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs."

Lenin expands on this in *State and Revolution* when he calls ideas of the equality of workers as "petty bourgeois, confused phrases." Lenin argues that the first phase of communism (socialism) will abolish the injustice of individuals owning the means of production (private property), but will be unable to do away with *at once* the "defects of distribution and the inequality of 'bourgeois right'" as products are distributed according to labour performed.

To overcome this defect of socialism, of unequal individuals performing unequal labour, Lenin argues that the state is required to safeguard the public ownership of the means of production, equality in labour, and equality in the distribution of products until social equality is finally realised under communism.

How is this relevant to the NDIS? The NDIS exists to provide support to people whose labour does not produce as efficiently as able-bodied people and who find themselves "locked out" from participating in society because of inaccessibility.

There are three models of disability. In her short piece "What's next for the NDIS?" disability activist, El Gibbs, defines them as the charity model in which disabled people are "dependent on the good will of non-disabled people"; the medical model that says disabled people are "broken and need to be fixed"; and the social model that "says that barriers lie within society" as a part of other systems of oppression "such as colonialism, white supremacy and capitalism."

The policy behind the NDIS is built from the charity and the medical model, which are the models that capitalists subscribe to. Why do capitalists subscribe to these models? Firstly, they position natural variations of the body onto individual fault and responsibility, which is a core aspect of liberalism. Secondly, it positions the expense of supporting disabled people onto individuals through purchasing their own support tools, aids, and medical treatment, rather than providing accessible workplaces, houses, and public spaces.

Another important aspect of the medical model is that it allows the government to define and redefine what "disability" is. Ask yourself: why is it that only 400,000 disabled people out of a population of 4.3 million accessing the NDIS? It is because the NDIS shifts the definition of person needing access support to only include people with a "permanent and significant disability."

The government can also use definitions of disability to grow or shrink the reserve army of labour, the unemployed, and regulate wages. Disability models and definitions are significant for this reason as wages are, as Marx said, determined "by the varying proportions in which the working class is divided into an active army and a reserve army."

The best example of this are "medical rules" of the Disability Support Pension (DSP) that, like the NDIS, only allow those with permanent or significant disability to access the pension. What about the rest of the disabled population? If they can't find work, they are forced onto JobSeeker payments and into Disability Employment Services (DES).

Between the DSP, the NDIS, DES, and the Supported Employment Services award, disabled people become tools of the bourgeoisie to drive down wages and provide easily exploitable labour as outlined in last week's article "Jobs, jobs, jobs" (#1931).

American disability activist, Marta Russell, explains the relation between disability rights and Marxism in her essay 'Marxism and Disability.' She argues that liberal, reformist movements do not solve disability issues because these issues stem from the forces of capitalism. She says that "it is neither arbitrary nor irrational that disabled persons have been excluded from education, transportation, and other social spheres. Rather, it is logical that such a state of affairs would exist as long as disabled persons have little value as workers to the capitalist class."

As workers, we need to support the rights of disabled people whose exploitation is intricately linked to our own, whose oppression is used to drive down wages. As communists, we must continue to advocate socialism as the only solution for disabled people, whose exploitation is tied to capitalist exploitation, whose needs can only be provided for under socialism, and whose full equality can only be realised under communism. ✪

The NDIS states that there are currently 4.3 million disabled people in Australia. Yet it aims to only provide insurance to "500,000 Australians who have permanent and significant disability," while leaving out the other millions of disabled people from accessing the insurance scheme.

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SUPREME LEADER KIM JONG UN SENDS OPEN LETTER TO ALL PARTY MEMBERS IN PYONGYANG

Statement by the Workers' Party of Korea

Supreme Leader Kim Jong Un visited a typhoon-stricken area of South Hamgyong Province on 5th September and sent an open letter to all the Party Members in Pyongyang.

In the letter he said that Kangwon Province and South and North Hamgyong provinces located on the east coast were hit by Typhoon No. 9 that did damage again at a time when an all-out recovery campaign was under way in several areas of the country to remove huge damage done by a quick succession of flood and typhoon.

He noted that the Party Central Committee decided to frankly discuss with the party members in the capital city the issue of giving a strong assistance to the recovery from damage in South and North Hamgyong Provinces under such an urgent situation which needs to be tackled without even a moment's delay and moreover, as many civilian building forces and units of the People's Army are now in the sites for the recovery from damage in Kangwon Province and South and North Hwanghae Provinces.

For all the areas of the country, to protect their heart-like capital city in every way all the time is a social custom, and for the people of the capital city, to sincerely aid and encourage the people in the local areas when in need is also a proud social custom of our country, he said.

When the Party Members in the capital work in the typhoon-stricken areas in hearty response to the calls of the Party, great strength incomparable with the economic losses by the destructive natural disasters will be gained, he said, calling the party members in the capital the core forces most trusted by the party.

Although this year has witnessed uncommon difficulties due to the protracted worldwide public health crisis and natural disasters, we are courageously overcoming all the hardships by dint of the united efforts of the Party and the people, he noted.

He termed this year the one of struggle, advance and unity, when the unity is further strengthened in the tense and arduous struggle, not a year of disasters and misfortunes.

He said that the Party Central Committee asked the Party Members in the capital to join the recovery of South and North Hamgyong Provinces from damage in order to ensure the successful holding of the celebrations for the 75th anniversary of the WPK and the 8th Congress of the WPK.

He said that we can not let a lot of people in South Hamgyong Province and North Hamgyong Province who newly suffered damage spend the holiday homeless even though the situation was difficult and time was urgent as October 10 was close at hand. He added that the Party Central Committee appeals to the Party Members in the capital to sincerely console the people in the disaster-stricken areas and to earnestly aid them with the tender care of the party and with warm feelings of the capital city of Pyongyang, so that they would get rid of aftermath as early as possible.

He said that the Party Central Committee decided to organise the 12,000-strong divisions of the elite Party members of the capital to be dispatched to South Hamgyong Province and North Hamgyong Province each.

He said that if the divisions of the elite Party members in the capital go to the sites for recovery from the damage after holding a loyalty-pledging meeting in the plaza of the holy place where President Kim Il Sung and Chairman Kim Jong Il lie in state prior to their departure, the leaders would be very pleased.

When the Party Members in the capital work in the typhoon-stricken areas in hearty response to the calls of the Party, great strength incomparable with the economic losses by the destructive natural disasters will be gained, Kim Jong Un said.

He said that the main task of the divisions is to become the vanguard and spark in implementing the Party's policy in the van of the working youth and soldiers who turned out in the rehabilitation campaign.

He noted that sub-units directly under the divisions should be organised with Party Members with high construction skills who had served in special construction units before their discharge as the divisions of the elite Party Members of the capital to be dispatched this time would mainly be tasked to build dwelling houses and public buildings.

He called on the sub-units directly under the divisions to wonderfully complete projects with the stand of responsible educators with high construction methods and skills, improve the quality of overall recovery projects and lavishly transmit advanced construction skills to local builders.

He said that the Party Members of the ministries and national institutions should quickly send materials, equipment and goods necessary for the recovery projects in time with the attitude that they are also combatants in the sites for the recovery and thus fulfill their duty as Party Members working in the capital.

He stressed that he firmly believes that the divisions of the elite Party members of the capital to be directly organised and dispatched by the Central Committee of the Party to South Hamgyong Province and North Hamgyong Province would successfully fulfill their honourable mission and combat duty as detached corps firmly defending the celebrations of the 75th founding anniversary of the WPK and the convention of the 8th Congress of the WPK and thus register a great victory. ✪

COMMUNIST PARTY OF TURKEY WILL CELEBRATE 100TH BIRTHDAY AT 500 POINTS

Statement via the Communist Party of Turkey

Communist Party of Turkey (TKP) calls on its members and friends to meet at 500 points all around Turkey and abroad to welcome its 100th foundation anniversary.

The 100th foundation anniversary meeting of the Communist Party of Turkey (TKP) in Turkey's İstanbul is banned by the Governorship of İstanbul the other day, the epidemic being used as an excuse, despite the Party took all the necessary precautions. Only a few days earlier, Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan visited the flood-hit town in northern Turkey, making a public speech without any measures against the pandemic.

In response to the ban, the Communist Party of Turkey (TKP) made a statement, declaring that "We will welcome our 100th year at 500 points all around Turkey and abroad, sharing our determination with our people."

Turkey's communists declared that they are determined not to leave this country to anti-people governments and to strengthen the struggle despite blocking attempts. TKP will celebrate its 100th year by meeting with its friends at 500 different points across the country on September 10.

The full declaration against the ban is as follows:

According to Turkey's ruling AKP, coronavirus disappeared during the opening of Hagia Sofia as a mosque, then became a threat to Turkey's Victory Day celebrations. Again, disappearing during Turkey's President Erdoğan's rally in flood-hit Giresun, the virus has notified the AKP Government that it will re-appear during the Communist Party of Turkey (TKP)'s 100th-anniversary meeting, and the meeting that will be held in Turkey's İstanbul was banned by the Governorship of İstanbul.

Contrary to the ruling party, TKP values human health and has protected public health besides the health of its members and friends, taking rational measures in accordance with the data found out by scientific studies from the beginning of the pandemic. Thus, there were neither any problems during the 13th Congress of TKP convened last month with domestic and foreign delegates, nor any participant has had any health problems following the meeting.

TKP was preparing with this awareness for the events in Turkey's İstanbul, Ankara, and İzmir for its 100th year meeting. Yet, the Governorship of İstanbul, taking no measures against the pandemic in factories and workplaces, ignoring the conditions of shopping malls and hospitals, banned our meeting with the excuse of public health.

This will not prevent the growing attention and increasing participation of workers and students to our party. Our party is marching towards an equalitarian social order with great determination. We will share this determination with our people on September 10, welcoming our 100th anniversary at 500 different points across Turkey and the world.

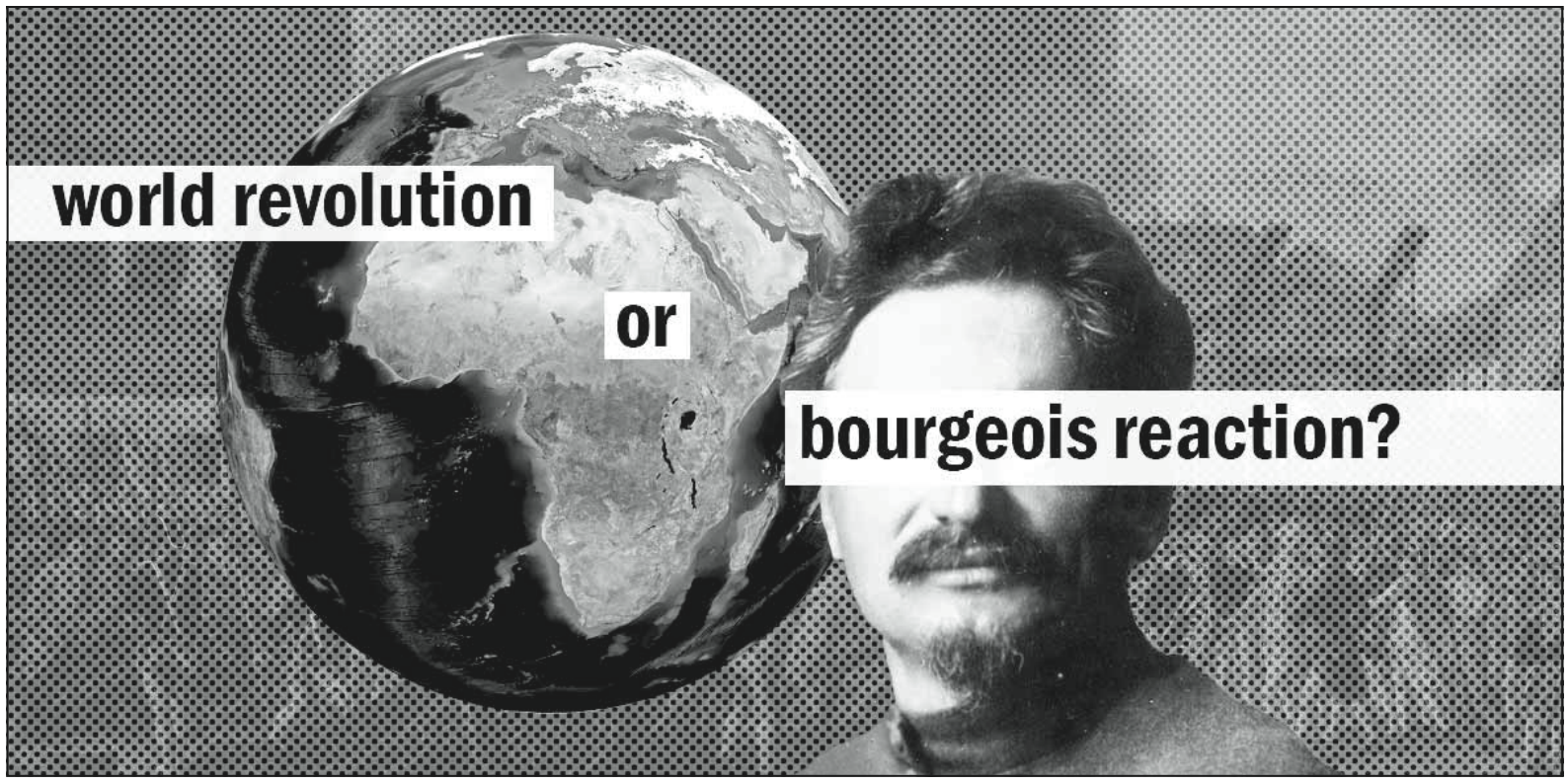
Yes, we will meet in our neighbourhoods, workplaces, public squares for socialism, independence, secularism, republic and salute the Communist Party of Turkey. We invite our people and friends to our meetings." ✪

Hello comrades! Welcome to another week of Australian Communist Thought and History. This week in our theory section we have a new theoretical article from *The Workers' Weekly Guardian* editor Franc Stregone which is a response to Socialist Alternative and their characterisation of Marxist-Leninist anti-imperialism.

In similar fashion, our history section is a statement from the Socialist Party of Australia (now CPA) Secretariat on the 1973 Chilean coup.

Both of these articles highlight the CPA's commitment to anti-imperialism.

FOLLOW THE UPRISING, THE TROTSKYIST



Franc Stregone

Socialist Alternative (SAlt), in their paper *Red Flag*, published an article with the title "Communists must support uprisings everywhere." In it, they say the 90s and 00s were an easier time for supporting uprisings as the US "seemed to have achieved permanent global hegemony." However, they say two "recent international uprisings" have, for some people, complicated solidarity efforts: the Arab Spring and the "unending series of international rebellions that began in 2019."

This dogmatic call is at odds with Marxism. There is no place in Marxism for holding principles in absolute terms. Marxism is a science based on dialectics that resolves contradictions through an analysis of material conditions; thus, demanding that every revolt must be supported is antithetical to the Marxist method. Let us examine how this is so.

WARPING MARXISM-LENINISM

The people in question, says the author, are largely Marxist-Leninists, stating that: "[they don't] have a political outlook that extends beyond advocating for, and defending, the US' main rivals – hoping to achieve a 'multipolar world' by strengthening capitalist states that are competing with the most powerful empire." They state that our wariness towards uprisings is merely "conspiracy-mongering." Instead of stating it plainly, the author is disguising our support of the theory of "Socialism in One Country" (which is not simply support of a "multipolar world") and the pragmatism that this theory entails.

What is "Socialism in One Country?" JV Stalin noted prior to the success of the October Revolution, the understanding in Marxist thought was that a revolution in one country was "considered impossible" as it would require the majority of the working-class of advanced nations to achieve victory. That changed after 1917:

> "Now we must proceed from the possibility of such a victory, for the uneven and spasmodic character of the development of the various capitalist countries under the conditions of imperialism, the development within imperialism of catastrophic contradictions leading to inevitable wars, the growth of the revolutionary movement in all countries of the world- all this leads, not only to the possibility, but also to the necessity of the victory of the proletariat in individual countries."

Therefore because capitalism does not develop equally among nations, it is therefore not only possible (as the Russian Revolution showed) but *necessary* that "the victory of the proletariat" arise unevenly also. This does not discount the international character of revolution, as Trotskyists like to claim, it only contextualises it within the material conditions:

> "[T]he development and support of the revolution in other countries is an essential task of the victorious revolution. Therefore, the revolution which has been victorious in one country must regard itself not as a self-sufficient entity, but as an aid, as a means for hastening the victory of the proletariat in other countries."

While calling Marxist-Leninists conspiracy theorists for challenging the legitimacy of certain uprisings, the author is quick to acknowledge the existence of "Western intelligence and its military apparatus" overthrowing governments, name checking Venezuela and Bolivia in the process as examples.

Thus, they claim, it is "easy [...] to distinguish a genuine popular uprising from a right-wing plot." They say "the cops and security apparatus carried out the groundwork of the Bolivian coup" and additionally "the cops in Belarus are the strongest bulwark of support for the reactionary government." But what of Venezuela? There, the cops are defending the revolution against the bourgeois reactionaries. This is an example they conveniently left out because it does not fit the narrative.

A FALSE EQUIVALENCE

This lack of analysis, whether by omission or ignorance, of the material conditions is what leads to perhaps the most insulting part of this article. After establishing that Marxist-Leninist anti-imperialism is confined purely to rejecting US hegemony, they pose the question: "would a modern 'anti-imperialist' have supported the Russian revolution?" This is how they liken the situation:

> "A new government, led by the well-known socialist Kerensky, had been installed by a workers' revolution only a few months earlier. Other socialists, from parties that had recently been forced to operate underground, had taken up ministerial positions. The government had the strong backing of workers' soviets, revolutionary bodies built from the bottom up by working-class activists. On civil liberties, it was well known that Russia was the 'freest country in the world' since its revolution in February. The new government had promised sweeping reforms on a range of questions, including a new constitution. This all compares pretty favourably to politically stagnant and repressive market economies like China, Syria or contemporary Russia.
>
> "And Kerensky's Russia was menaced by internal and external oppositions in the most extreme form: monarchist generals were openly planning coups, and the Kaiser's Germany had been attempting to invade for three years of open warfare.
>
> "Into this volatile situation comes Lenin – with the assistance of German imperialism, which arranged his travel from exile into Russia. Did he, displaying the principles of a modern 'anti-imperialist,' call for critical support for the new Russian government in its military struggle against German invasion? No: he and his Bolshevik Party called for workers to intensify their strikes, demonstrations and political attacks on the government, to build up to a second revolution in which workers would seize power– and defeat world imperialism by overthrowing capitalism."

There is *a lot* to digest in the above, but let us remain on task: Why would Lenin support the provisional government? Kerensky's government *supported* the imperialist war which Lenin from the start qualified as having the "character of a bourgeois, imperialist and dynastic war." What's more is that the war was deeply unpopular and the Bolshevik's slogan of "Peace, Land, and Bread" resonated with the working-class and peasantry. It was a socialist party presenting a genuine (dare I make the pun?) socialist alternative to Kerensky's faux-socialism. One can clearly examine the platform of the Bolsheviks in contrast to that of the provisional government and conclude that the differences were stark.

The most sinister aspect of this description is the attempt to give Lenin the veneer of being an agent of German imperialism (a lie that has existed for decades, as recently as a *New York Times* article "Was Lenin a German Agent?"). Dressing Lenin in such a way is crucial for their argument here and we examine why below.

HONG KONG: AN ANALYSIS

In HK, an "uprising" has broken out. The impetus was an extradition bill that would allow for extradition request for heinous crimes such as rape and murder, which came about after a HK man murdered his pregnant girlfriend. Many were worried that the bill would be used to extradite political dissents despite the bill lacking that language. As a result, a riot has broken out over HK "sovereignty." Is this movement a popular, socialist (or at least, progressive) force?

It definitely *appears* that the movement is "popular" – but is it really? The Civil Human Rights Front (CHRF) claim hundreds of

SAID

thousands of protestors in attendance at rallies, the police estimates temper those numbers significantly (so have independent media outlets). However, one petition supporting the national security laws received nearly 100,000 signatures from HK citizens in *a single day*. Furthermore, pro-Beijing rallies were held that have had not dissimilar numbers. HK's largest trade union federation, Hong Kong Federation of Trade Unions, also backed the legislation. Suffice to say, that at the very least, those rioters are met by supporters in equal measure.

Next we must ask, what is the character of this movement? The author has qualified the recent uprisings as having "a sense of authentic, internationalist anti-imperialism." Do the dozens, upon dozens, of photos over the entire course of these riots showing hundreds of protestors waving British Hong Kong flags and "Trump 2020" banners sound anti-imperialist? Does receiving funds from the AFL-CIO's solidarity centre, who receive funding from the National Endowment for Democracy (an organisation funding the "right-wing plot" in Venezuela) sound anti-imperialist? Does wanting to establish a "free and fair competition in our market economy" as the Democratic Party of HK promotes (and who supports the riots) sound anti-imperialist?

Additionally, to qualify the HK riots as internationalist is even more of a joke. The HK rioters have largely been mum on the police brutality in the US because they've drawn support from US President Donald Trump. While Joshua Wong (a figurehead of the riots) has tweeted his support for BLM what is it worth when he has been cultivating close ties with Republican Senators Ted Cruz, Marco Rubio, and Tom Cotton who have been demanding a crackdown on the BLM riots? Even more grotesque is HK billionaire Jimmy Lai, another revered figure of the movement (who has provided financial support), thanking Avi Yemini (a far-right Zionist) for his support in a video where Yemini said comparing the HK riots to those in America is "bloody disgraceful." So much for solidarity.

And it is here that we return to the sinister characterisation of Lenin. Show me a photo of Lenin posing with the Kaiser, or writings encouraging German imperialism, or anything as incriminatory as the promotion of neoliberalism by Wong and leaders of the HK riots and I'll eat my CPA membership card. SAlt needs to tease the possibility of Lenin being a conspirator because it permits the possibility that characters like Wong are legitimate regardless of where their funding or support comes from. It displays nothing but utter contempt for Lenin's legacy.

In every possible, conceivable measure the HK riots are nothing but a promotion of bourgeois liberalism and socialists should be well-versed in where that leads. By comparison, in the seventy years since its founding the People's Republic of China has achieved the following: High School enrolments have gone from 1.1 per cent to 88.8 per cent; There are 56.7 times the amount of public libraries; the average life expectancy has risen from 35 to 77; The urban population employment has gone from 15.33 mil to 434.19 mil. These stats are virtually endless but highlight the achievements of Marxism-Leninism in action; it is a state with the interests of the working-class at its centre. Destabilising the PRC only serves those who wish to rip its resources away from the hands of the Chinese people into the hands of the capitalist class, and largely foreign interests.

Wong and Lai do not speak of a dictatorship of a proletariat, and nor do their supporters. Thus, SAlt, play into the hands of the bourgeoisie, promote their propaganda, and romanticise "revolution" to every starry-eyed university student who takes their first steps onto a university campus.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

If all uprisings are equal, it leaves one to wonder: was the Kronstadt rebellion an uprising or a "right-wing coup" (since these are the only options they present in their article), and do they support it?

Where does the author sit on the Soviet-Afghan War? Does the author have a high opinion of the CIA-backed Mujahideen, the present-day offshoots of which include the Taliban and Al-Qaeda? Does the author support their uprisings?

This line of questioning can go on forever and it only places Trotskyists like the author into extremely precarious positions. One cannot, as the author suggests, clearly delineate support based on where the police presence is (none of these uprisings were furnished with the support of the police/state), it requires a serious analysis of the class-character of the powers in play. It sometimes means offering critical support, and not playing puritan, ultra-leftist politics, especially when the lives of millions depend on it. ✪

NO RECOGNITION FOR CHILEAN FASCISTS

Statement by SPA Secretariat

This article was originally published in *SPA*, October, 1973.

All progressives and democrats will be shocked and angered by the brutal murder of President Allende of Chile, the massacre of the Chilean people, the arrest of government ministers and the overthrow of the democratically elected government by a military-fascist coup.

The courageous Chilean people are continuing the country's struggle for democracy and socialism in every way at their disposal including with guns in hand. They will defend their nationalised factories and the land which has been handed back to them by the land reform. They will not easily return to the rapacious multinational corporations the copper mines, oil installations and other industries which for decades past have been the means for the ruthless exploitation of the labour of the Chilean people.

While the struggle goes on inside Chile the task in other countries is one of solidarity action and protest. Not a single government should recognise or deal with the illegal military regime.

The United Nations should condemn the military coup and the imposition of civil war on the people and call for a complete boycott and non-recognition until the military-fascist regime quits. The Chilean workers and peasants call on their brothers in all countries for solidarity and support in this, their greatest hour of need.

Under the government of Popular Unity which comprised a coalition of the Socialist, Communist and other Parties, important reforms had already been achieved which restored the natural resources of Chile to the people.

Foreign and basic industries built by the labour of the Chilean people had been nationalised. An extensive land reform gave land to the peasants who work the soil. Workers took over the running of many factories in co-operation with the State making democracy an everyday reality for the first time.

National independence had been secured from the multinational corporations which previously dominated the economic and political life of the country.

But the multinationals did not forgive Allende and his supports and they didn't give up the struggle to overthrow his government.

The International Telephone and Telegraph Coy, Gulf Oil, Anaconda and Kennecott Copper Coys, Guggenheim Nitrates, along with other notorious robbers of the wealth of nations and exploiters of the working people are the backers and financiers of the counter-revolutionary insurgents. Along with other Wall Street monopolists, the Pentagon imperialists are making use of their CIA manipulated fifth column of agents inside Chile.

The present period of Chilean crisis began with the parliamentary elections in March of this year when the Popular Unity parties got forty-three per cent of the vote (36.1 per cent in 1970) and buried hopes of the right to "legally" depose President Allende.

Since that time the reactionary forces have been working to create a situation of civil war. They have resorted to massive economic sabotage, assassinations, bomb outrages, and disruption in every possible way. Reaction started an open conspiracy in order to pressure the Armed Forces into a military "white" putsch.

Faced with this offensive the parties of the Popular Unity called for a general mobilisation of the working class and of the Chilean people. Voluntary Fatherland Brigades were organised to bring provisions to the people, protect the factories and railways and accompany trucks and buses during the reactionary strike of lorry owners.

The process of development of the revolutionary movement in Chile has been watched by the world with great interest holding out the possibility of socialist change within the constitution and without civil war. Imperialism could not let this experiment succeed and they used their last strongholds in the state machine to tear up the constitution, murder an elected President and impose a military dictatorship which would take away the economic and social gains made by the Chilean people, hand the factories back to the Wall St corporations and the land back to the old land-owners.

The General Secretary of the Communist Party of Chile recognised the real situation and tasks confronting the Chilean people when he said in 1972, "The 1970 election gave the people only part of the political power. The enemy is trying to dislodge us from our position. We are trying to consolidate it and carry our offensive further. This means that the class struggle resolves around the crucial issue of the revolution, the issue of power [...] The Rightists hold strong positions in the radio and press. They use them to spread panic, lie to the people, vilify the government and the President of the Republic."

About the army he said, "Under the Constitution the Army does not intervene in political controversies. But, of course, the Army consists of people [...]. One cannot rule out that a military leader thirsting for power may appear, as was the case when ex-General Viaux at the end of 1969 refused to obey the former Government and attempted to prevent the Popular Unity victory. The plotters have set out to cause economic and political chaos so as to force the Armed Forces to abandon their traditional stand and induce them to interfere."

This analysis is of profound importance to all socialists as well as being a timely warning. The people held only "part of the political power." The nationalisation of industries and the participation of the workers in running them in itself is insufficient if important elements of the state machine (the army, navy, air force, and courts) remain in the hands of the capitalist class. The people of Chile could only be said to hold the full power when they had destroyed the capitalist state apparatus and built a State machine which was loyal to the will of the people and the government.

If the people of Chile can organise and mobilise sufficient forces, if sufficient solidarity is given by the progressive and democratic forces of other countries, the defeat of the military coup may yet be achieved and the last stronghold of the reactionary forces in Chile destroyed.

The most important battle against imperialism is now going on in Chile.

Every possible solidarity action, every possible message of protest to the military junta, every possible message of support for the democratic forces should be sent.

No recognition of the illegal military regime! Complete boycott until the military regime quits! Out with the monopolies and their CIA assassins! HANDS OFF CHILE!

The revolutionary experience of the Chilean people is of profound importance to the world socialist movement and all people struggling against local and foreign monopoly capitalism and imperialism ... including the progressive movement in Australia.

The central task of any revolutionary transition is the question of winning political power for the working people and other progressive forces, and how this is done. Reforms, as introduced by the Australian Labor Government, can only go a certain distance. They will come up against the resistance and sabotage of the reactionary capitalist class irrespective of the democratic decisions of the people.

Reforms can become real and lasting and a new socialist society constructed only by ending the economic domination of capitalism over the economy AND by ending the control of the state machine by previous capitalist governments.

Theses lessons will undoubtedly be fully analysed in the future but in the meantime ...

ALL AID AND SOLIDARITY FOR THE CHILEAN PEOPLE. ✪

Letters to the Editor
The Guardian
74 Buckingham Street
Surry Hills NSW 2010
email: editor@cpa.org.au

Dear Editor,
I am not sure what article Dorothy Costa read but it is not the one published in #1928. At no time do I refute the experience of 20th Century Socialism nor the gains made. The references to Independence are to countries struggling against the colonial powers and imperialist domination.

I also do not put forward a model or any other scheme for Socialism outside of the developments in the countries mentioned. What I was looking at was the role that is played by the working-class and socialism in national independence. The critic would do well to study the works of Ho Chi Minh, Fidel Castro, among others, and particularly the thoughts that they expressed on their National Liberation struggle and Socialism.

It appears that she has seen the words 21st century Marxism and not explored the content.

Unlike some advocates of some new model, I do not advocate against the basic principles that are universal in these examples of a Communist Party and the dictatorship of the Proletariat. Forms are different and have their basis in the existing conditions of the nations in which the class rule arises.

It is easy to win arguments when you distort or misrepresent what has been written. I am disappointed in the intellectual weakness displayed in the criticism. It is an unfortunately dishonest criticism and therefore adds nothing to the discussion.

Comradely,

David Matters

REVIEW: *TALES OF WO-CHI-CA: BLACKS, WHITES AND REDS AT CAMP*

By June Levine And Gene Gordon

Eileen Whitehead

Having always revered the great Paul Robeson, I found this book on a possibly little-known part of his life extremely relevant during this painful time in America's history which has given rise to the Black Lives Matter movement.

Wo-Chi-Ca was the abbreviation for the Workers' Children's Camp, an interracial co-educational summer vacation camp in New Jersey, sponsored by the International Workers' Order, a left-wing insurance plan of the pre-World War II years.

The camp was made up of the summer vacation homes designed for people with ties to the Communist Party and were originally inter-generational. However, realising that young people needed their own summer community, the first interracial camp was set up in 1934, after a New Jersey farmer and his wife donated 127 acres of land. It began as "Camp Unity," supported by the communist party in the United States, but was later called the Workers' Children's Camp or Wo-Chi-Ca for short.

It operated for twenty years in the "wilds" of New Jersey, and became an ideal world of its own for the thousands of young children of all races and nationalities, most of whom were from the crowded, poverty-stricken areas of New York. Their time at the Camp was a high point in their lives, until forced out of existence by a combination of the McCarthyite forces during the height of the Cold War in 1954 and the Poliovirus.

The turmoil of the times during the camp's existence provides an invisible thread throughout the book, but for me the highlight is the humanity of Robeson which shines through. He was an African American with a powerful bass baritone voice that delighted the world. Born into a Quaker family in 1898, Robeson spent his life fighting for peace and equality, becoming the target of "witch hunters" in America during the Cold War years, when many artists were ruined because of their political affiliations – real or otherwise.

Robeson first went to the Camp in 1940, but returned every year to sing and take part in their activities. He was a man of many talents and passions: an accomplished concert singer and recording artist, an athlete and actor, as well as being active in the civil rights movement.

But aside from Robeson, many other artists, such as Charles White, Canada Lee, Kenneth Spencer, Pearl Primus, Ernest Crichlow, Elizabeth Catlett, Jacob Lawrence, Rockwell Kent, and political figures such as Mother Bloor, Albert Kahn, Howard Fast and Dr Edward Barsky, also went to the camp, sharing their experiences and struggles to change the world.

The book – published July 2002 by Avon Springs Press – is a compendium of personal memories, along with accounts of daily life at a camp that stressed interracial harmony and respect, and social and political consciousness, combined with cultural, sports, and varied other recreational activities. The authors are June Levine, whose dream it was to write a book about Camp Wo-Chi-Ca, and her partner Eugene (Gene) Gordon formerly a reporter for the *Daily Worker*. In their book, Levine and Gordon say that "Half a century has flown since Wo-Chi-Ca folded its tents forever, and yet Wo-Chi-Ca lives on, not only as a long-lost utopia or childhood dream, but in lifelong principles and progressive ideals."

It re-awakened my memories of Cuba, where children from many different ethnic backgrounds are educated in a society proud of its egalitarian principles. ✪

AUSTRALIA'S COVID-19 SPARKED RECESSION – NOW IS NOT THE TIME TO SCALE BACK JOBKEEPER

Statement by United Workers' Union

Workers, who have been left in the lurch with a reduced rate and even harsher eligibility as JobKeeper changes were passed in Parliament yesterday [1st September], have today learned of Australia's first recession in thirty years.

JobKeeper changes are due to come into effect nationwide in less than four weeks' time, despite the fact Melbourne is currently still under strict lockdown and the threat of COVID-19 remains across the country.

Employers have also been given the power to cut workers' hours even if revenue has nearly returned to pre-COVID operations.

From 28th September, payments for part-timers (working less than twenty hours) will fall to $750 a fortnight from the end of the month, then to $650 a fortnight at the start of next year.

The full-time JobKeeper payment will fall to $1,200 a fortnight, followed by a further drop at the beginning of January 2021 to $1,000.

These changes during this unprecedented economic and public health crisis will cost jobs, livelihoods and destroy communities.

Sydney hospitality worker Melissa said, "With the changes to JobKeeper, I will go from having enough income to survive with three children, to having to decide what bill won't be paid so I can feed them.

"I've withdrawn super, I've cut off all non-necessities, I'm budgeting every cent already. I have applied for over 100 jobs – it is not easy to get another job when so many other people are all doing the same thing.

"I have worked and paid tax for 20 years, this is the first time I find myself needing help and it's a terrifying place to be. We work, we vote, and we need help to get through this hard time in our lives."

It remains unclear whether Melissa's workplace will be eligible for JobKeeper past September 28. Her story is only one of the thousands of workers who are facing uncertain and dire consequences.

United Workers' Union National Secretary Tim Kennedy said, "Now is not the time to scale back JobKeeper. Workers have reached out to Scott Morrison and the federal government over the past few months to say they're hurting, and they can't afford to be left even further behind. Their calls for help have fallen on deaf ears.

"This government needed to expand JobKeeper not strip it back while we're still in the middle of this crisis. Now we have workers facing a reduced rate that's below the minimum wage or who will be removed from the scheme altogether.

"They will join casuals working less than 12 months, temporary visa workers and international students as workers who have been left behind by this government." ✪

REPUBLICANS' RABID ANTI-COMMUNISM IS A SIGN OF THEIR POLITICAL WEAKNESS

CJ Atkins

Joe McCarthy would fit right in at this year's Republican National Convention (RNC). Denouncing communists — both real and, more often than not, imaginary — was the bread and butter for the 1950s red-baiting senator from Wisconsin. At the dawn of the Cold War, the bogeyman of the Soviet Union was the stick used to beat back a strong labor movement and a growing left in the United States. Today, Trump and the GOP are trying the same trick. History repeats. But as the granddaddy of communism, Karl Marx, might say, if McCarthyism was the tragedy, then the anti-socialist antics of the Republicans are surely the farce.

The message beamed to the televisions of America from the RNC this week is one of impending doom if Trump is not re-elected. It was more than implied, several times, that Joe Biden and Kamala Harris are secretly plotting to install a communist dictatorship to kill freedom and hand the country over to Black Lives Matter protesters and foreign countries. Peruse some of the claims made by speakers at the convention's opening night and you will descend into an alternative universe, an apocalyptic world conjured up to distract, divide, and deceive.

Florida Rep Matt Gaetz, one of the top Trump toadies in Congress, declared the "Woketopians" – woke utopians? – will make Biden "an extra in a movie written, produced, and directed by others." The Democrats will apparently disarm everyone, empty out the prisons, lock all of us in our homes, and invite violent gangs to move in next door.

Cuban-American businessman Maximo Alvarez praised Trump for standing against "the forces of anarchy and communism" and implied Biden might be possessed by the ghost of Fidel Castro. When the Cuban revolutionary was asked decades ago if he was a communist, Alvarez claimed, he replied that he was a Roman Catholic. The Democratic nominee, also a Catholic, is hiding the truth, just like Castro did, Alvarez warned, in order to trick America into "swallowing the communist poison pill."

26-year-old Charlie Kirk, who heads up the billionaire-backed right-wing astroturf student group Turning Point USA, pitched the election as "a decision between preserving America as we know it and eliminating everything we love." His speech peddled in the kind of racial anxiety that motivates many a white supremacist. Trump, Kirk said, "is the bodyguard of Western civilization," the only thing standing between "our families" and the "vengeful mob." It doesn't take too much reading between the lines to see exactly what Kirk was really saying: Trump is the defender of white America against angry Black protesters, immigrants, and foreigners.

The coded racism and rabid anti-communism (the two almost always go together) continued in the remarks of Mark and Patricia McCloskey, the barefoot gun-toting lawyers who are facing charges for threatening peaceful Black Lives Matters protesters in St Louis back in June. Trying to gin up despair among middle- and upper-income whites living outside the cities, they claimed that the Biden-Harris "socialist agenda" includes "abolishing suburbs," eliminating single-family homes, and letting "crime, lawlessness, and low-quality apartments" invade thriving neighbourhoods.

As they spoke, GOP convention producers cut to an image of Black protesters supposedly marching into white suburbia to destroy it – led by none other than St Louis's soon-to-be Congresswoman Cori Bush, referred to by the McCloskeys as "the Marxist liberal activist leading the mob to our neighbourhood." The whole speech, equating the entry of Black families into majority white neighbourhoods and Black working-class people standing up for justice with Marxist revolution, was dripping with blatant racism.

But it was Donald Trump, Jr and his girlfriend Kimberly Guilfoyle who most determinedly fanned the anti-communist flames and strove to whip the non-existent convention crowds into a rabid frenzy.

With an anger and intensity that could rival Mussolini, Guilfoyle railed against "Biden, Harris, and the rest of the socialists," who will allegedly let "rioters destroy our cities," allow "human sex drug traffickers ... cross our border," and turn America into "a land of discarded heroin needles in parks." It's all part of a plan, apparently, to send all our jobs to China and enslave everyone to the "weak, dependent, liberal victim ideology."

Junior, no doubt eager to impress his father, stuck to repeating the conspiracy theories and lies proffered by the president over the last several months. Coronavirus struck us "courtesy of the Chinese Communist Party," which "favours Biden." The Marxist millionaires (if ever there was a more paradoxical notion) backing Biden, according to the little Trump, are salivating at the chance to destroy "freedom of thought, freedom of speech, freedom of religion, and the rule of law." The election is really about "church, work, and school versus rioting, looting, and vandalism." It is Donald Trump against the "evils of communism and radical Islamic terrorism."

The convention's opening night showcased everything Republicans must have been hoping to roll out if they'd gotten the chance to run against Bernie Sanders, an actual socialist. Instead, they got Biden, leaving their already lame anti-communist harangues seem more ill-fitting than ever.

Now, they have to settle for making Biden and Harris the puppets of the "radical left"—which, translated from Republican-speak, usually means progressive working-class women of color like Reps Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, Ilhan Omar, Rashida Tlaib, Ayanna Pressley, and, now, Cori Bush.

When you think about it, it seems confusing that the election strategists and media managers in the Republican Party actually assume their Cold War redux fantasy land TV program will convince very many people that there is an imminent danger of a communist takeover via the supposed maven of Marxism Joe Biden.

Do they really expect people to believe all that nonsense?

No, they don't.

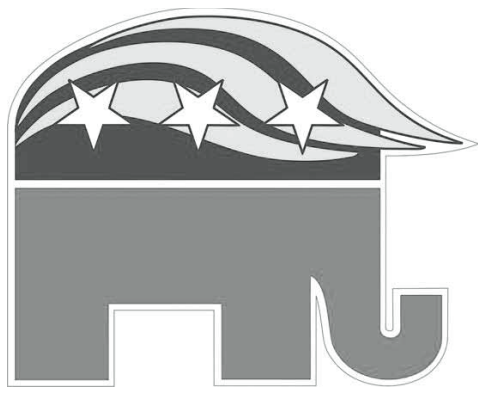
Trump's response to the coronavirus has been a total and complete failure. His incompetence has contributed to making the COVID-19-sparked downturn into possibly the worst economic crisis in our country's history. His allegiance to the ideology of white supremacy is repulsive to most Americans at a time when righteous anger against systemic racism has brought as much as a tenth of the US population into the streets in protest. These are the things worrying most voters – not the socialist apocalypse.

The narrative being spun at the RNC is so narrowly focused and so extremist that one can only conclude the puffed-out chests and anti-socialist muscle-flexing are actually nothing but a sign of the GOP's political weakness. It's a sham show of strength. Republicans know that stoking racial hatred and demonising the left are tactics that will only work with a relatively small segment of voters – and that small segment is exactly who the party intends to reach this week.

The average of current polls shows Trump pulling in 42 per cent against Biden's 51 per cent. Give or take some marginal movement, the gap hasn't changed much for months. That spells trouble for Trump come November 3. Most analysts have already concluded that winning the popular vote is totally out of reach for Trump (reminder: he didn't win the most votes in 2016, either), and with several swing states leaning toward Biden, squeaking out an Electoral College win is also a tall hurdle.

The path to re-election for Trump, therefore, rests on activating every single member of his hard core base. One advantage the president has going for him, though, is that his support among that crowd is solid and enthusiastic. The convention programming is intended to fire them up and not let even one MAGA [Make America Great Again] loyalist stay home on Election Day.

There is no intention whatsoever of really



doing much to expand the Trump electorate; it's too late for that. If putting a few Black Republicans on stage can make some white moderates feel Trump's not too racist to give him their vote, then all the better. If some of the white suburban women who've been wavering in their support for the president can be made to ponder her family's safety, that's a bonus. If an ageing anti-Castro fighter convinces some Miami voters to think twice about Biden, that's a gain.

But the clear audience for the RNC is precisely those who have been with Trump from the very start. And to mobilise them, the Republican Party is doing exactly what ruling elites throughout recent history have done anytime people united to stand up for working people and fight back against racism. Trump and his crowd throw out charges of communism in order to distract from their own corruption, theft, and failure.

Whatever actual Communists propose – such as health care for all, jobs for all, peace, democratic control of the economy, an end to racism – is irrelevant to the discussion for the GOP. The humanist, democratic ideals of real Marxists – not Biden, Harris, or Trump's other targets – are never allowed to enter the conversation.

When 180,000 people are dead from coronavirus and over 50,000,000 jobs have evaporated, the ruling party has nothing left to run on. There is no platform; there are no policy proposals. There is nothing left except worshipful praise for the leader and fearful denunciations of everyone and everything else as communism.

It's been said that anti-communism is the last refuge of scoundrels. In an era when more than half of Americans under thirty express positive views of socialism, the audience for scoundrels like Trump and his coterie is shrinking. The panicked, knee-jerk anti-communism on display at the Republican National Convention shows the clock is ticking for this farcical strategy.

Anti-communism just won't work like it used to, and Trumpism is destined to go the way of McCarthyism. But it's still going to take a fight to finish it off.

People's World

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EXTINCTION "REBELLION": GREEN CAPITAL AGAINST THE WORKING CLASS

Editorial Team via *Challenge* – a magazine produced by the Young Communist League (YCL)

XR is back. Yesterday swarms of idealistic citizens young and old, worker and student, precarious, off-grid and cringingly middle class, once again descended on central London to wreak havoc in protest at the government's inaction around the climate change crisis – occupying Parliament Square, blocking off roads and encouraging supporters to be arrested as martyrs to the cause.

Indeed, the situation is increasingly dire. With the percentage of Earth's landmass too hot for human life set to rise to a staggering nineteen per cent by 2070, we cannot afford to delay this fight any longer.

To this extent, as young communists we stand in common with XR's cause. In seeking to represent the working-class majority, it is our duty to fight for the future of our home planet – to work tirelessly to force the shift to renewable forms of energy, sustainable techniques in productive industry, and ecologically-responsible ways of conducting social life.

But there our common ground gives way. Our analyses of the underlying socioeconomic forces behind anthropogenic climate change, and our respective programmes for heading off the catastrophe, could not be more different.

While XR claims to be "apolitical," we recognise that climate issues are political to the core – it is precisely capitalism that has ravaged the planet, and in the death drive for profit will continue to do so. So, while we salute the commitment of the rank and file and their direct action approach, we cannot support the official XR line of non-violence – any policy based on "persuading" climate criminals to change their ways is doomed to fail.

The presence of The Young Communist League (YCL) members at the demonstration was therefore not to support XR organisationally but to propagandise for socialism, to be the voice of the working class, the only class which can tackle head on the myriad crises of capitalism and globalisation – climate change included.

This distinction was not lost on XR officialdom. Following outrage from the usual right-wing hacks and Tory MPs on Twitter in the wake of our proclamation of "socialism or extinction," the official XR account entered the fray. In a shockingly predictable turn of cowardice, XR did not go to bat for the young socialists that had come out to support their cause – instead taking the side of the hacks and denouncing us outright [via twitter].

This position is obviously delusional. It is precisely capitalism, the political and economic power of the profit-hungry bourgeoisie, that causes climate change; and only socialism, which would control and plan these industries in the common domain, can stop it. So long as polluting industries remain in private hands, the planet and its people will be in jeopardy. A bunch of "randomly"-selected "citizens," many of whom will have a financial stake in hindering change rather than accelerating it, will only lead us smiling further down the road to destruction.

Hundreds of young supporters have since said as much, expressing their outrage at the baffling shortsightedness of XR's tweet and in many cases rescinding their support. Cracks are even beginning to form between XR UK and some of its lower-level organisations, with XR Youth Cambridge denouncing the official line on Twitter and citing "patriarchal colonial capitalism" as the root cause of the climate crisis, and XR Croydon stating that they "do not understand how any environmentalist can dismiss socialism so casually."

Fortunately, it is not at all difficult to explain why XR has taken its bankrupt position straight from the mouth of the bourgeois-liberal establishment: XR is not an organisation of the working-class, but of green capitalism.

XR is up to its neck in the rich's money, making it an appendage to the whim of certain billionaires and their speculative capital hedge funds, many of which are the very finance-industrial juggernauts who have contributed to the destruction of our planet in the first place. Enormous sums have been sent their way by the likes of the Climate Emergency Fund – a project ran by Trevor Nielson, a member of the liberal aristocracy who networked through the Clinton administration; Rory Kennedy of the Kennedy dynasty; and Aileen Getty, whose own family dynasty made its fortune in oil.

Billionaire Christopher Hohn has donated £150,000 to XR through the Children's Investment Fund – which formerly owned a two per cent stake in Coal India, a firm which extracted more than 400 million tonnes of coal in 2014. Hohn himself has pocketed more than £800 million in dividends from TCI Fund Management

The Young Communist League (YCL) London's banner.

over the past four years while investing vast sums in scandalous firms – including a US rail company suspected of having caused a spate of cancers in the Houston area through contamination, and a Canadian company which was fined $1.9 million in 2017 after pleading guilty to gross negligence relating to massive spills of diesel into a river. This same firm was responsible for killing at least half a million fish after spilling 10,000 gallons of caustic soda in 2005.

Other TCI Management investments include Raytheon, a £50 billion American arms manufacturer which makes its living through environmentally destructive wars all around the world.

By following the money, we gain a much clearer understanding of Extinction Rebellion's politics – were XR and its organisers to take a principled position against capitalism, the very wheels of its organisation would stop turning. XR's paid activists, even at the lower level, therefore have an objective interest in brushing any class aspect of climate justice under the rug; the position XR expressed on Twitter is a simple reflection of that same false claim to be "non-ideological" capitalism has been making for years.

Just as the capitalist state – beholden to the free market and its crony benefactors in fossil fuels and agribusiness – is not equipped to handle the impending climate catastrophe; XR, being equally steeped in money from the dark heart of finance capital, is unable to propose any realistic solution to climate change. They are on the very payroll of its perpetrators.

It is equally important to remember that the big names in green investment – biofuel companies, wind-farmers, organic cell manufacturers – while developing tech which might be crucial to this planet's future, are still driven by one thing and one thing only – market penetration and the bottom line. They have no more affinity for democracy or the working class than any other profit-seeking firm. If we put all our faith in them, instead of ourselves, we will simply find ourselves exploited by a new pantheon of green capitalists.

Taken to its conclusion, XR's "rebellion" will constitute nothing more than a dispute between rival factions of the capitalist class, rather than any meaningful transfer of "power to the people". In the words of Chico Mendes, Brazilian trade unionist and environmentalist murdered by ranchers in 1988, "ecology without class struggle is just gardening".

Only a government with democratic control over industry, which plans its economy free from the vagaries of shareholder profit and the bottom line, is capable of meeting climate change head on. Only the workers of this planet can save it by democratic means. We do not have time for this petulant, class-collaborationist anti-politics. The rich will only ever be out for themselves.

What should be the relationship of the communists to XR and the climate struggle?

As the only major organisation taking action that reflects how serious climate change is, XR is currently essential. However, the danger is in their misdirection of people's militant desperation on the behalf of capitalism.

The generation who should be invading the homes of ExxonMobil's executives and the headquarters of Shell are instead blocking workers going about their business, occupying public spaces instead of those owned by our enemies. Working class people are being willfully and cynically thrown to the police for symbolic arrests by paid liberal organisers in hi-vis jackets. If left to its own devices, XR will let the people responsible for climate change get off scot-free – instead of forcing them to bear the brunt of the transition to a post-carbon economy.

As socialists, it is our responsibility to lead the working class away from the futile politics of class-conciliation, of symbolic stunts and grandstanding, and towards the politics of class struggle and independent organisation. We have to take the fight to the perpetrators of the climate crisis, not take their money and include them on our executive boards.

Above all though, our role is to be where the masses are. Our criticisms of XR and its tactics aside, time is too short to sit out this fight. We must find allies at every stage of the struggle and take these alliances as far as they will go, working with any and all progressive forces – while also making it clear where our interests diverge.

Our policy in praxis as well as theory must be dialectical in nature – one of unity and struggle, synthesis and divergence, alliance and independence. The longstanding Marxist principle that the communists must always and everywhere represent the interests of the working class, must be the voice of their revolution, is as true and salient as it ever was.

Socialism is the only way forward for humanity in the current crisis. Only the working class can lead us in weathering the storm. We must be its vanguard.

Socialism or extinction!

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