



Vanguard

For an Independent Australia and Socialism

May Day Special Issue

May Day 2017

Print Post Approved 100019206

Recommended Price \$2 inc GST

Vanguard expresses the viewpoint of the Communist Party of Australia (Marxist - Leninist)

Our Day, Our Demands!

by Nick G.

May Day is the day of international working class struggle and solidarity for a world free of exploitation, imperialist wars and repression.

On May Day we express our solidarity with the struggles of the working people of all countries, and our warmest greetings to the courageous comrades in fraternal revolutionary parties and organisations.

May Day belongs to the working class

For as long as there are workers determined to fight for their own class interests, no-one can take it from us, buy it off, commercialise it or make it acceptable to capitalism.

It's a day when workers proudly proclaim our independent working class agenda that's independent of parliamentary parties and advances working people's needs and interests above all else.

Working people around the world are under immense and fierce attack from the corporate ruling class, the 1%.

The decaying system of capitalism is in economic and political crisis. Millions of people are struggling to make ends meet, more are thrown into poverty. At the same time, billions in profits, created by the labour of workers, are stashed away by the parasitic ruling class. Capital's war on the working class is relentless and escalating.

The ruling class uses the tactics of racism and religious fundamentalism to divide the working class; and war and fascism are in preparation, but there is no way out of this economic and political crisis for capitalism.

For an independent working class agenda!

An independent working class agenda, an independent set of demands and independence of action in achieving them are urgently needed. More than ever workers need to unite and fight for demands of the people and independent working class organisations.



New ACTU Secretary Sally McManus has assisted that agenda with her public support for the militant CFMEU.

In fact, McManus' statement that it was acceptable to break unjust laws is remarkable for its civility. Her statement on civil disobedience said nothing that a Gandhi or a Martin Luther King Jr hadn't already said half a century ago.

Nevertheless, Shorten moved more quickly to dissociate himself from her call than he has on most other issues. He prefaced his words with "As a parliamentarian..." Enough said!

Turnbull and Co. went into a frenzy over McManus' "support for illegal actions", but have since come out and backed Trump's entirely illegal bombing of Syria, an independent and sovereign country.

Defiance is not a bad thing, but a good thing

For our part, we fully endorse the observation that when injustice becomes law, defiance becomes duty.

Defiance of bad laws is not a bad thing, but a good thing. Everything positive in history has been achieved through, or associated with, defiance of what the then ruling classes have held to be sacred, above challenge.

Only a willingness to advance demands that directly challenge the hold of the capitalist class - the decisive sector of which is foreign multinationals

- over the economy and society, and a willingness to struggle outside the confines of parliamentary agendas and niceties will enable workers to fight for themselves as a class.

A truly independent working class agenda demands the abolition of the ABCC and removal of all laws that condemn hard working unionists from doing their job of defending and advancing the interests and welfare of workers.

It demands taxing the multinationals and big business to pay for decent public health, education, welfare, affordable housing and building local manufacturing industries; to nationalise key infrastructure such as water, oil and gas, energy generation and distribution, mineral resources and public transport, to serve needs of the working people.

It demands breaking clear of the suffocating US Alliance and promoting an independent foreign policy that promotes peace and cooperation in our region and across the globe.

There can be no reliance on Labor

The history of the Labor Party reveals continual tension between its claims to serve and represent workers and its practical service to capitalism and to big business.

It was born as a party of capitalism in that it confined its demands to those that accepted the continuity of capitalism and confined the pursuit of those

demands entirely within the capitalist political institution of parliament.

Many class conscious workers know and understand that reliance on the Labor Party will condemn them forever to the mercies of the big end of town.

In our unions and our community organisations we need to bring together the elements of our own agenda, to raise the level of struggle, and to accept the sacrifices and dignity of defiance.

For anti-imperialist independence and socialism!

Dare to struggle, dare to win!

Workers of the World, Unite!

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Build the movement against U.S. imperialist aggression

By Alice M.

In our millions the ordinary people want to live in peace with each other, in safety and well-being, and fervently oppose wars of aggression. Understanding the main forces driving imperialist wars, and recognising allies of the people, is a powerful weapon in building a broad and united anti-war movement.

More than ever the U.S. is revealing its naked face and generating a great movement of the people against imperialism.

U.S. imperialism is stepping up its aggression and belligerence against the people of sovereign countries. The bullying, provocations and threats of massive attacks in the Middle East and Asia-Pacific are undoubtedly preparations for war and sending a message to the world that America still wears the crown of the great superpower and unchallengeable global policeman.

Aggression in Iraq, Libya, Syria and Yemen, provocations against North Korea, overt and covert engineered "regime changes" and coups, invasions, occupations, assassinations, illegal bombing of sovereign countries and military build-ups in east Europe and Asia-Pacific are exposing the U.S. as a ruthless, blood drenched warmonger putting the world on a dangerous path.

It uses the screen of fighting ISIS terrorism in the Middle East and whipping up fear and panic of a North Korean nuclear attack, but its main targets are Russia and China who are challenging its world hegemony.

This is the behaviour of a desperate and dangerous imperialist super-power economically in decline, and flexing its military muscles to prop up its waning world supremacy.

Deeper economic and political decay

The impoverishment of millions of America's working people, shrinking commodities markets, and the resulting falling rate of profit for U.S. multinational corporations is pushing the desperation to seize more markets and resources, and go to war.

The US ruling class savagely attacks the people at home, and inflicts wars and suffering on people and sovereign countries who refuse to bow to its imperialist dictates.

U.S. driven globalisation, or free trade (NAFTA, TPP, TTIP, TISA), is now less able to rescue U.S. monopoly capitalism from its inevitable economic crash. It has only worsened the impoverishment of the people and the crisis of overproduction. It has generated strong public resistance around the world.



Unable to sufficiently re-boot the U.S. capitalist economy, and shore up its declining influence around the world, preparations are made for a major war as one of the few remaining options left to the 1% parasitic class to rescue its system.

This is what Trump means by "Make America Great Again"- return to former position of unchallengeable super-power and global policeman for the U.S. ruling class of monopoly corporations.

The merging of U.S. military-industrial-finance capital is shaping a higher form of monopoly capitalism and imperialism today. Raytheon, Lockheed Martin, Boeing, General Electrics are the main U.S. industrial manufacturers and merchants of weapons of mass destruction. They reap huge profits from the expansion of U.S. wars.

Australia – servile client state

U.S. imperialism needs loyal and servile "allies" to do its bidding and give credibility to its military aggressions and economic hegemony. The backing of servile puppet governments who unquestioningly follow their U.S. masters is essential in the U.S. armoury for executing its wars of aggression, regime changes and interference in other countries.

Since the British colonial theft and dispossession of the First Nations People nearly 240 years ago, Australia's foreign policies have been dictated by its colonial and imperialist overlords. Except for WW2 and East Timor, Australia's foreign policies and involvement in overseas wars have mirrored the British, and now U.S. global imperialist objectives. They had nothing to do with defending Australia from an external threat or our sovereignty. It is no exaggeration to describe the relationship between the U.S. and Australian governments as one of a master and its obsequious doormat servant.

Australia is the "deputy sheriff" and a key regional outpost doing the bidding for US imperialism and its monopoly capitalist class.

America's 'Pivot into Asia-Pacific' is



an economic and military expansion to shore up its waning economic power and influence in the region. The failed TPP was a last ditch attempt by the U.S. to galvanise its dominance and undermine China's economic influence.

Australia's defence policies, the military and the defence industries are now more than ever deeply enmeshed in the U.S. industrial-military complex, openly serving U.S. imperialist global military and strategic agendas.

The two main parliamentary parties, Labor and LNP, are sycophantic flunkies trying to outdo each other, grovelling to their U.S. masters to prove their unquestioning and obedient allegiance to a warmonger.

Australia's defence manufacturing industries are now designed for building U.S. weaponry, naval warships and planes for inter-operability with U.S. global military aggression, and have little to do with self-defence of our sovereignty.

The US arms monopolies are being integrated into Australia's public education system. With Lockheed Martin recently establishing a major Research Laboratory Centre in the University of Melbourne, with former Labor leader Kim Beazley as its main executive director in Australia. The Lockheed Martin Research Laboratory is its largest outside the U.S. Raytheon has been involved in South Australian state schools. It has recently been awarded a \$2 billion Federal government contract to build ground based missile defence system for the "protection" of ground troops in U.S. imperialist wars overseas.

U.S. bases in Australia, especially Pine Gap, are integral to U.S. military global aggression and service the military-industrial-military complex.

The cost to the Australian people

Australia's working people are carrying the financial cost of the U.S. Alliance. Working people's taxes have been paying for successive Australian governments servicing U.S. military agendas, and using Australia as a launching pad for its wars.

The financial cost of sending

Australian soldiers and military advisers to U.S. wars around the world, expanding, building and maintaining the infrastructure for 2,500 U.S. marines in Darwin, the expansion of Australia's air and naval bases to accommodate American planes, ships and submarines, purchasing 75 F35 war planes at a cost of \$10 billion, \$2 billion to Raytheon, and the list goes on - these are the costs carried by working people through our taxes.

This military hardware is designed exclusively for offensive wars, not self-defence of Australia's sovereignty. Most expenditure on U.S. military agendas is not publicly revealed.

In announcing the Pivot in 2011-12, Obama and Clinton made it clear that Australia would have to increase its defence spending to pay for expanded U.S. military activities in the Asia-Pacific and in Australia. The demand was repeated by President Trump, ordering the 'allies' to increase their defence spending to 2% of their GDP.

Australia has spent billions of dollars servicing and supporting US wars and integration into America's industrial-military complex. At the same time governments have cut funding to public health and education, welfare, community services, scientific and technological research and measures to halt climate change.

Much of the recently acquired weaponry, hardware and arms procurement is from the US multinational arms manufacturers – Raytheon, Lockheed Martin, IBM, Boeing, General Electric, etc. Australia is purchasing from the US, 75 F35 joint strike fighters war planes at a cost of \$10 billion; and 12 Barracuda submarines from France (member of NATO), at a cost of \$50 billion. This hardware is specifically designed and built for America's long range warfare, and has no useful value for self defence of Australia's sovereignty.

Demands are now being raised for the government to stop spending billions of dollars of people's taxes on U.S. wars and instead direct it to meet the needs of Australia's working people.

Public calls for an independent and peaceful Australian foreign policy are widening and gathering momentum. From the late Malcolm Fraser, retired Defence personnel, lawyers, unionists, former politicians, faith organisations, community groups, medical doctors and thousands of others, the tide towards independence and breaking out of the U.S. Alliance is gathering pace.

It is our view that real independence can only be guaranteed in a socialist Australia, where the working class will protect the people's needs and interests.

Fight for Science!

by Jamie C.

(With some content from a Spirit of Eureka leaflet distributed at March for Science)



Science is important not only because of its obvious technological benefits to humanity, but also because it gives us an ever-deeper understanding of the universe.

Science never upholds theories based on inadequate evidence and unfalsifiable ideas, but rather seeks its truths from facts.

Research and experiment give rise to ever better theories, or models, explaining more and more phenomena in the real world.

A good theory explains more than the facts it was designed to explain. But no theory is sacred: there is always a myriad of scientists trying to show a theory is, at least partially, false.

Additionally, research papers need evidence-based results and go through a strict peer-review process.

Consequently, when there is a large consensus amongst relevant scientists, that consensus should be respected.

Recently, however, the Western world has treated science contemptuously ignoring many a consensus.

When profits of multinational corporations are threatened, the 98% of consensus scientists are given equal or less time in the billionaire-owned media, than the 2% opposing. In this way, doubt is created, and the short-term interests of the big end of town take precedence over the long-term interests of Jack & Jill Citizen.

Climate Science Research

Multinational companies & their associations have opposed climate science findings for years, while publicly giving lip-service support.

A 2012 US Union of Concerned Scientists report noted that General Electric backed six environmental research groups accepting the scientific climate change consensus, whilst funding four organisations questioning it. The

multinational oil giant, ConocoPhillips said in 2011 that it “recognises” human activity leads to climate change, yet in 2009 argued against the Environmental Protection Agency’s determination that heat-trapping greenhouse gases were pollutants endangering public welfare.

The US Chamber of Commerce and the US National Association of Manufacturers have doggedly fought greater environmental regulation.

Now the situation is even worse with a climate change denier as US President.

David Suzuki, the well-known Canadian scientist, pointing out that Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper cancelled virtually all Canadian research on climate change, put it well: “...the politicians and corporate executives are driven by a totally different set of values, by the drive for profit, for growth, and for power”.

Australia’s plight: business first, science last

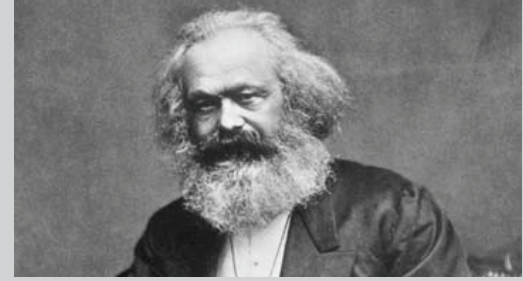
Although Turnbull renewed the CSIRO climate science focus — research which once led the world — and reversed some of the more than 1000 sackings of the Abbott era, irreplaceable experts such as the CSIRO’s Dr John Church, an expert in estimating & understanding sea-level rise, have lost their jobs.

As the Climate Science Centre head said, “You can’t cut a third of a climate science group and not suffer some damage to reputation” and agreed that the losses would have a major negative impact on Australian research.

Whilst “crying poor” that it must lower the deficit and leaving hundreds of scientists jobless, the Turnbull administration sings from the multinational hymn book, somehow finding money to reduce taxes for smaller businesses as the first step towards implementing the Business Council of

Editorial

A Year of Anniversaries



This year marks the centenary of the Great October Socialist revolution – the Bolshevik revolution – and it also marks the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the publication of Marx’s *Capital*. Both of these events mark major milestones in the struggle for the emancipation of the working classes from the yoke of capitalism; a step on the way to building the classless society of communism.

First published in 1867, in Hamburg, *Capital* sought to lay bare the ‘laws of motion’ of capitalism so as those exploited and oppressed by it could have a clear understanding of the source of their exploitation and oppression.

What Marx accomplished in *Capital* was to go beyond the insights of Adam Smith and David Ricardo (two of the founders of bourgeois political economy), in particular, correcting mistakes that Smith and Ricardo had made in their expositions on the labour theory of value.

Marx demonstrated that the value of commodities is determined by the quantity of socially necessary labour time spent on their production.

As Lenin pointed out in a very succinct piece on the three sources and three components of Marxism, bourgeois economists prior to Marx had seen a relationship between things (commodity exchange) whereas Marx astutely revealed the relations between people masked by the surface phenomena of the exchange of commodities.

Marx in *Capital* highlighted how with the advent of capitalism as the dominant mode of production in Britain (spreading to Western Europe and beyond in relatively quick succession) a worker’s capacity to labour – labour power – was turned into a commodity itself.

By paying the price of this commodity (wages) a capitalist is able to extract from workers more value (over the course of the working day, week, month, year) than what they are paid in wages; that is to say, *surplus value* is created by workers. Surplus value being the source of profit, the Holy Grail of capitalists.

Marx undertook the arduous task of researching and writing *Capital* to arm the proletariat in the class struggle against capitalists and capitalism. It is a book that requires diligence and hard study to understand. For those of us struggling to build socialism here and abroad though, it is required reading.

Nor was he only a great theorist, but also a committed activist who declared, “Philosophers have hitherto only interpreted the world in various way; the point is to change it.”

Australia’s goal of an across-the-board business tax reduction to 22%. The Business Council allows only the very largest corporations as members.

“Clean coal” nonsense

The current administration also peddles the anti-scientific “clean coal” theory. Burning coal for electricity emits toxic & carcinogenic substances into our air, water & land.

The Australian Academy of Technological Science and Engineering estimated coal’s health impacts cost taxpayers \$2.6 billion per year and the new plants still produce about 80% of the emissions of an equivalent old plant, while renewables such as wind & solar emit zero emissions.

Moreover, “clean coal” prevents Australia meeting its obligations to reduce emissions, by 2030, 26-28% below 2005 levels.

What is the answer?

The attitude to science is a class question: the ruling class often ignores science when its short-term profits are at stake whereas genuine respect for science advantages the working class and its allies.

We need to fight for an independent working class agenda including proper respect for scientific conclusions, and work towards an independent and socialist Australia in which evidence-based science research is not at the mercy of imperialist greed.

Marxism Today

Peoples' livelihoods are being crushed by capitalism's economic crisis

by Max O.

Capitalist production has placed enormous pressure on ordinary peoples' lives to the extent that we are again seeing the immiseration of the working class.

Corporations are ceaselessly escalating their exploitation of workers who are pressed to do more in less time.

But their wages and livelihoods don't reflect the increased demands made on them. In fact the phenomenon of the working poor, whose size is ever increasing, has become commonplace this century.

More and more of the value they create, what Marxists call **Surplus-Value**, goes to the boss class.

Life is a battle when it comes to *work, housing, transport, health and education*. These needs are the five fundamental pillars to our day to day existence. Trying to maintain these pillars of life has become a misery for workers who are increasingly sliding into poverty.

Australia's slump continues

Capitalism's frequent economic crises come about due to its inbuilt tendency for the rate of profit to fall, which causes a withholding of investment by investors who prefer to divert their capital to speculative activity, amassing fictitious capital that adds to the pressures for a crisis of devalorisation. This combined with over-production creates a disruption in the circuits of capital:

Stage 1. The capitalist's money purchases commodities, this first stage of circulation is shown as Money to Commodities or $M - C$.

Stage 2. Capital goes through the process of production, resulting in commodities of greater value or $P...C^1$

Stage 3. The capitalist goes back to the market and sells commodities for money; the final circulation stage or $C^1 - M^1$. Karl Marx's formula for the circuit of money-capital is:

$M - C \dots P \dots C^1 - M^1$, the dots indicate that the process of circulation is interrupted, and C^1 and M^1 designate that C and M have increased by **Surplus-Value**.

Australia continues to suffer a damaging four-year slump in corporate investment. Expenditure by business on new machinery, equipment and buildings has slid 2.1% compared to the previous three months to February this year. This was a twofold contraction than was predicted by bourgeois economists and a fourth straight quarter decline since 2016.

- New capital expenditure fell overall from about \$42 billion a quarter in 2012 to \$27 billion per quarter in 2016, a drop of 36%.

- Mining investment nose-dived almost 60% since its high in 2012, and is projected to fall by another 27% in 2016-17; and there has been no rise in non-mining investment.

- Australia's dependence on foreign investment looks ominous; annual foreign direct investment inflows halved, to less than \$30 billion, between 2013 and 2015.

- Roy Morgan polling surveys show unemployment and under-employment now affects more than 2.4 million workers, or nearly 18% of the workforce: 1.3 million are jobless and 1.1 million are under-employed.

- Wages figures continue to show record low growth with average weekly earnings rising just 1.6% in 2016, just slightly above the consumer price index rise of 1.5%. Reserve Bank delusion of a higher wages growth to boost the economy hasn't come to pass.

Work

Capital relentlessly seeks to discipline labour-time so that workers do the job as quickly and as cheaply as possible.

The 9-5 work-day is now a by-gone era. Smart technology has blurred the boundaries between work and home; now businesses can command their workers 24/7.

Research commissioned by The Australia Institute (TAI) reported that more than half of all workers said that their employers insisted they work unpaid hours, or work at home outside of normal hours.

Australian workers delivered \$128 billion in unpaid overtime annually, and are cajoled by employers not to take their entitled annual leave.



Housing

Demographia early this year reported that Australian housing has become one of the most unaffordable in the world; soaring housing costs have priced millions of young workers out of the market. In an international survey of 51 assessed Australian housing markets, 33 were considered largely unaffordable.

Mortgage repayments often outstrip the wages of those who do purchase a house. Rental costs have also continued to climb, consuming about a third of the median household income - the median weekly rent for a Sydney apartment is over \$500.

Mobile apps are now available for people to use to bid for rental accommodation - a measure to push up rental prices. Although 1.3 million households received welfare payments and the \$130 fortnightly Commonwealth Rental Assistance supplement in 2016, they still suffer rental stress.

Transport

Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) 2013 data reported that the average weekly commuting time for full time workers in Australia's largest cities increased by almost 20% from 2002 to 2011, to five hours and 45 minutes a week.

In Brisbane, public transport fares that cost \$3.40 in 2008 had risen to \$6.20 by 2012. Data shows that in the outer city suburbs, fares go up and incomes fall.

Health

Recent annual Medicare statistics revealed that half of those suffering from chronic health conditions skipped treatment because of the high costs of "out of pocket" expenses incurred by patients. The national average out-of-pocket expenses for Medicare services increased from \$3.95 in 1984-85 to \$54.60 in 2014-15.

The Liberal-National government

attempted to slash health funding in its 2014-15 budget by around \$1.8 billion over four years, and \$57 billion over a decade. In effect Australia's publicly-funded Medicare insurance scheme is a "two-tier" healthcare system - excellent for the rich, lousy for the poor.

Education

Governments had three objectives in implementing NAPLAN (National Assessment Program—Literacy and Numeracy) in schools.

The first was to excuse education spending cuts and prepare the ground for future austerity measures; the second is to socially sort students into winners who go to university and losers who become low wage work fodder; third is to attack teachers' working conditions and enforce retrograde teaching practices, such as "initiatives proven to boost student results."

The Turnbull government abandoned the scheduled "Gonski" school funding for 2017 and 2018. The Gonski funding model, introduced by the former Labor government, was to fund schools on a needs basis. After winning office the Liberal-National government abandoned much of the planned funding, amounting to around \$4 billion.

Build a people's 5 pillars movement

Ordinary people are focussed on their immediate needs to survive from day to day. Therefore to combat capital's exploitive intensification of workers and its austerity budget cuts that target worker's social welfare, ways need to be found to coalesce unions, unemployed, homeless, community support groups etc. into a fighting movement.

The common denominator for these groups are the 5 pillars of livelihood - *work, housing, transport, health and education* - to mobilise and campaign around, so as to challenge capital and show another way of running society is possible.

No workers, no worries? A case of automation

by *Danny O.*

Two new cold storage facilities currently under construction in the western suburbs of Melbourne provide an opportunity to consider some trends in the future of work under capitalism.

The state-of-the-art warehouses are being developed by rapidly expanding Dutch cold storage and logistics company NewCold Advanced Logistics, with the actual construction being overseen by local notorious anti-union builder Hansen & Yuncken, in the outer-western Melbourne suburb of Truganina.

With the help of the Victorian state Labor government, NewCold will establish its Asia-Pacific headquarters in Truganina and is looking to roll-out similar facilities in other states as well as New Zealand, Singapore, Malaysia and Hong Kong. The company already has facilities in France, Germany, UK, and Poland, and have just started construction in USA.

The specs: huge, state-of-the-art, fully automated

The first warehouse is a giant freezer with the storage and loading docks to be at -23°C. It will stand at 34m high with a footprint of 176m x 100m and have a total storage capacity of over 102,000 pallets.

The second warehouse is a giant refrigerator with different compartments at +2°C, +8°C and +11°C. It will stand at 34m high with a footprint of 176m x 140m and have a total storage capacity of over 110,000 pallets.

Both facilities have the ability to handle over 10,000 pallets per day and have shipment buffer zones that can hold over 900 pallets at a time to create minimal waiting time for trucks before loading.

The entire process will be computer controlled and automated using in-house control software developed by NewCold, and operate using state-of-art picking and stacker cranes and conveyor belt systems to handle the products from storage to the truck loading bays for distribution.

Multinationals leading the move

It will probably come as no surprise to readers of *Vanguard* that the giant multinationals are the first to get behind such new technology.

According to various reports, the first warehouse will be used by Canadian multinational frozen food company McCain Foods who have signed a 10-year contract with NewCold, and plan to store all the frozen products of their

Australian arm in the warehouse by July 2017.

New Zealand-based multinational Fonterra, the world's largest dairy exporter, will occupy the second warehouse on a similar long-term agreement. Fonterra plans to consolidate its entire Australian distribution network and six existing warehouses under the one new fully automated warehouse in Truganina, a move that is sure to mean lost jobs for hundreds of workers around the country.

It's a fact that didn't seem to occur to the Victorian Premier Daniel Andrews as he talked up the creation of 127 full-time jobs across the two facilities. Considering the two warehouses will operate 24/7, a quick bit of math will reveal that at any given time of the day only a handful of people will actually be working at either warehouse. Their role will be primarily to monitor the computer systems to ensure they are operating smoothly and efficiently, as well as security staff.

The capitalist logic of technological innovation and automation

Capitalism is a system that depends on the creation of *profit*. It is only from that fundamental premise that we can fully understand the continuous and rapid development of technological innovation that capitalism enables.

Karl Marx, as long ago as the mid-1800s, recognised some of the factors that led to this continuous technological change we see today.

Marx noted that capitalists in any given industry continually try to undercut their competitors by trying to produce their commodities more cheaply than their rivals in order to capture a larger share of the market, and therefore make a larger profit.

One way to do this is drive down the workers' wages and increase their work load; a limited approach.

A more effective method is to increase the overall efficiency of the production process by re-investing in new technology to produce commodities faster.

This allows the individual capitalist to gain an advantage in the market place, though only temporarily, as before long their competitors will soon adopt the same new technology or develop even more efficient systems in order to avoid going out of business. This continual drive to realise more profit by ever more efficient production processes is a major factor behind the technological dynamism we see under capitalism.

However, all is not well. Fundamental to Marx's understanding of capitalism

Marxism Today



is that the source of profit is *surplus value* which can only be added to commodities by being extracted from human workers' *labour-power* in the production process.

As the capitalists invest in ever more efficient technology reducing the average labour time necessary to produce an individual commodity, the ratio of investment in machines (*constant capital*) to human labour (*variable capital*) becomes more and more skewed. This means that the amount of surplus value embodied in each individual commodity produced becomes less and less. This phenomenon is what is referred to as *the tendency of the rate of profit to fall*.

And so, the central contradiction of technological advancement under capitalism is revealed. Human labour-power is the source of surplus value and profit, yet competition between capitalists compels them to replace humans with more machines and robotic labour, collectively undermining their own rate of profit.

Some future trends and what is to be done?

In the short term, very little will fundamentally change. There is still sufficient surplus value being produced through the whole system. The workers who extract the raw materials, the workers who design and make the machines, the software engineers who write the computer programs, the workers who build the warehouses and facilities etc. all produce value.

Importantly however, as the trend towards automation continues greater responsibility will fall on workers such as I.T and software engineers. It is crucial for unions and revolutionaries to throw off 20th century prejudices and to

make serious headway into organising this sector of workers.

Longer-term, as automation gains deeper roots in ever more diverse fields, the systemic disruptions and potential for crisis will become more pronounced.

Huge sections of the global working class will be made redundant and disposable, thrown in to long-term unemployment and their very existence made more precarious. For capitalism, this raises the question of who will buy all the products that technological efficiency enables.

For revolutionaries, it poses important questions of revolutionary strategy.

As greater numbers of the masses are removed from the point of production, how does the revolutionary party go about organising the masses for the revolutionary transformation of society that is needed for the sake of the planet and humanity as a whole?

Automation under socialism – the real solution

Automation in itself is not the problem. In fact, automation has the real potential to enrich the lives of the people by freeing them from a lifetime of menial labour, giving them the opportunity to realise their full potential as human beings.

The real problem is the capitalist system under which it is developing. A system that puts the creation of enormous profits for a tiny few over the well-being of the vast majority of humanity.

Only a system that can put the interests of the vast majority of the people first, and a system that can develop automation in such a way as to do just that, provides the real solution.

That system is socialism.

Land. Life. Language. Liberation: Sovereign Peoples' struggle intensifies

by Louisa L.

Sovereignty and Treaty lie at the heart of building socialism in this continent.

Throwing off colonial shackles is unfinished business along the path to socialism, but it's impossible without Treaty, a concept encompassing the myriad of Treaties, first between Sovereign Peoples themselves, then with people's organisations and much later with government.

An Australia based on invasion and theft, cannot progress to a republic of any worth, with its own independent institutions emerging from struggle, let alone independence from corporate rule or socialism.

Over a year ago, Narungga Elder, Tauto Sansbury said that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples were 'being cut into pieces,' but that Treaty marked a way forward no matter how long it took to achieve.

Sovereign Peoples have long highlighted John Howard as the godfather of constitutional recognition, his aim to undermine the 30-year united demand by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples for Treaty's fundamental change.

First Nations' leaders and groups like Sovereign Union have outlined constitutional recognition's legal potential to destroy Sovereignty, never ceded in 230 years of invasion and illegal occupation.

Since then, Sovereign Peoples' fightback has made in-roads even within the massively-funded Recognise roadshow, which operates as invitation only, locking out those First Peoples who disagree.

Burning brighter

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples reject deals done behind closed doors.

While First Nations caution that current treaties being discussed with governments have grave dangers too, Elders have inspired the young to take the fight for unity forward. Their grass roots' organisations ignite powerful and intensified struggles.

National Unity Government organised the five-day Sovereignty Workshop just held in Canberra in conjunction with the Frontier Wars March on April 25.

Another gathering at Uluru this year to discuss strategy and tactics and their underpinnings in Land, and the Law that



arises from it, promises to build on the Wave Hill Walk Off's 50th Anniversary gathering of 2016, and previous smaller meetings called by Elders.

The Tent Embassy's fire is burning brighter, its slogan, 'Land. Life. Language. Liberation', pinpointing the heart of struggle and the reparations Treaty must bring.

Young people build struggle through Warriors of the Aboriginal Resistance, drawing 50,000 people onto Melbourne streets and round the country on Invasion Day, and through FISTT, Fighting In Solidarity Towards Treaties.

In these, and other organisations and numerous smaller events across the country, new leaders are created in struggle, not by corporate training packages.

Both Elders and young people are targeting corporations and capitalism. They reject division and disunity.

Inheritors of invasion

The inheritors of invasion, multinationals, organised and led by the Business Council of Australia, are the chief source of division amongst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

This Business Council drive to disunity has many aspects, detailed in a forthcoming *Spirit of Eureka* publication recently seen by *Vanguard*, and soon to be available for download from... <http://spiritofeureka.org/>

For years Sovereign Union, among others, has consistently highlighted one aspect, the use of Recognise to create

a corporate-backed mass movement, undermining the pre-existing demand for Treaty by Sovereign Peoples.

Currently over 300,000 Indigenous and non-Indigenous people and organisations are registered supporters of Recognise, the overwhelming majority of them oblivious of the BCA's agenda.

Sovereign Peoples not only have much to teach about how to live sustainably on this continent. They have survived violent invasion and dispossession, yet still they organise and struggle.

They have done this under the most difficult circumstances imaginable since 1788.

While unease and outright fear grip many Australians as new-style fascism grows, Sovereign Peoples have 230 years of collective lessons of courage, unity and refusal to accept dictatorship.

Sovereign Peoples find strength in the experience and tenacity of Elders and in the energy and fire of youth. We all have much to learn.

Alongside a re-organised, re-invigorated, fighting movement of non-Indigenous Australians led by the working class, united Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples have a power and strength far beyond their small numbers.

It's time to listen to and learn from them. It's time to organise and fight.



Trump and Turnbull – Imperialism’s climate vandals

by Bill F.

US President Trump has signed an executive order scrapping climate change laws that applied environmental restrictions to oil, gas, coal and coal seam gas extraction, and sure enough, the subservient Australian government is echoing Trump’s call to vandalise the environment.

Trump has torn up regulations that protect rivers and lakes from mining pollution, has reduced coal company taxes, approved two more oil pipelines that were previously blocked by environmental and social protests, and wants to lift fuel efficiency standards on cars and trucks.

The Turnbull government is heading down the same track, but won’t need to do much about cars and trucks as our standards are pretty weak already.

The Trump administration is also considering withdrawing from the 2015 Paris Climate Agreement which limits US greenhouse gas emissions to 26-28% by 2025 (compared to 2005 level). Australia’s commitment is similar, but even less – 26-28% by 2030.

These moves are designed to boost the profits of the giant resource and energy monopolies that stand at the core of US imperialism.

Plunder and Pollution

In Australia, companies such as Chevron, Woodside, Santos, Exxon, BHP, Origin, Arrow Energy and Shell have long-term contracts to supply gas to Japan and other Asian countries.

Not content with their current reserves and with limited access to coal seam gas, they are now hell-bent on plundering domestic supplies, not only to meet their contractual obligations, but also to impose higher prices on the domestic market through the creation of an artificial shortage.

At the bidding of the gas export monopolies, the Turnbull government has launched a frantic campaign to force the state governments to lift their bans and moratoriums on coal seam gas extraction. It panders to the climate change deniers who disparage solar and wind and other sources of clean, renewable energy.

And, it ignores the fact that the gas giants already sit on massive untapped reserves on land and off-shore, and that any so-called “shortage” is contrived and manipulated.

It also ignores the widespread community opposition to the whole idea of fracking and the devastation of water catchments, farming land and wildlife



that follows.

The Australian people have time and again registered their opposition to fracking and will certainly mobilise once more to defeat Turnbull’s plans.

The federal government has also proposed that the resources of the Clean Energy Finance Corporation, originally established to finance renewable energy projects such as wind farms and solar-thermal power, be turned over to funding new coal-fired power stations based on the myth of “clean coal” and the speculative carbon capture and underground storage system.

Appeasing the climate deniers and apologists for imperialism, the Turnbull government is moving to grant the notorious Indian-owned Adani Corporation a \$1 billion loan to build a railway line to haul coal from its Carmichael mine in the Galilee Basin in Queensland to an upgraded port at Abbot Point on the edge of the endangered Great Barrier Reef.

Missing out

While our public schools, hospitals and social services are suffering cut-backs in government funding and plenty of cash is flowing to support US wars and military provocations, the taxes paid by the corporate monopolies are minimal and the benefit from their plunder of resources is even less.

A *Fairfax* report investigated the application of the Petroleum Resource Rent Tax (PRRT) by the federal government on the oil and gas industry. This sector is dominated by multinational ventures off the Western Australia coast and coal seam gas (fracking) in Queensland and NSW.

It uncovered shameful information that just 8 out of 149 resource projects paid any PRRT in the year 2014-15, in spite of collective revenues in excess of \$25 billion!

The PRRT is structured to tax only “super-profits” and is not a royalty based on the amount of oil or gas extracted.

Companies can then write off their exploration and construction costs to reduce the amount of tax due and carry forward this credit for years to come.

According to the Tax Office figure obtained by *Fairfax Media*, these tax credits are now worth \$187 billion.

From its production of 100 billion cubic metres of LNG, Qatar currently picks up \$26.6 billion in royalties. For a similar amount of gas, the Treasury estimates the Australian government will get a miserable \$800 million!

This massive betrayal of Australia’s national interests demonstrates the abject collaboration of the local ruling class with the corporate beneficiaries of imperialism.

Choking on their muck

In our part of the world, Australia’s greenhouse gas emissions have increased 7.5% since the 2014 scrapping of the carbon price.

Kelly O’Shanassy, chief executive of the Australian Conservation Foundation said, “This latest data provides more evidence Turnbull government policies that are supposedly designed to cut Australia’s climate pollution are simply not doing the job.”

The latest National Pollution Inventory listed 93 key toxins, including particulates that can spur premature death by worsening existing heart and

lung conditions.

One of the worse was the recently closed Hazelwood brown coal-fired power station which emitted 61,425 tonnes of toxins in the last year, including 700 tonnes of fine particulates that can enter the human blood stream.

Other notable polluters include Bayswater in NSW (770% increase in five years), Tarong in Queensland (237% in one year!), Bulga in the Hunter Valley (32% in one year), and Drake Coal in Queensland (25% in one year).

Nationalise the power industry!

Critical resources like oil, gas, coal and water and the associated infrastructure such as refineries, mines, ports, pipelines, power stations and transmission lines should be owned and controlled by the people, not these greedy foreign and local monopolies.

Only then can these industries be managed for the benefit of the people, with regulated pricing and strict environmental and export controls.

Only then can the people make rational decisions on the phasing out of fossil fuels for energy and re-building manufacturing and other industries on a clean and sustainable basis.

This just isn’t going to happen under the current system of imperialism/capitalism when the dominant US imperialist ruling class and their local agents are profit-addicted to fossil fuels.

Revolutionary change is what is called for – as the contradiction between monopoly capitalism and the working people is sharper than ever.

Centenary of the October Bolshevik Revolution - The oppressed need another October!

by Max O.

November (Gregorian calendar Nov 7th/ Julian calendar Oct 25th) this year marks the 100th anniversary of the October Bolshevik Revolution that took place in Russia. This momentous historical event was the first time workers and peasants overthrew the exploitative power of the capitalist class and took state power completely into their own hands.

Imperialism world-wide trembled with fear because the bourgeoisie was annihilated by an armed revolution that was led by a communist party.

Through the Soviets (Councils) of Workers, Peasants and Soldiers a dictatorship of the proletariat was established.

In other words a democracy for the working class emerged, whereas the bourgeoisie's 'democratic right' to exploit and oppress workers came to an end.

One sixth of the world was liberated from the rule of capital, one sixth of the world broke free from the imperialist exploitation system and one sixth of the world created socialism.

Under the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics the means of production were run for and by the working class.

However the Soviet revolution had to withstand a violent civil war against counter-revolutionary forces backed directly by imperialist states of Europe, the United States and Japan.

This took a tremendous toll on the first socialist state. Nevertheless it survived because it had the active support of the overwhelming majority of workers, peasants and soldiers in Russia, guided by a tried and tested Bolshevik (Communist) Party that had deep connections with the labouring masses.

Why did the October Revolution Happen?

The October Revolution was the result of the terrible devastation wreaked on soldiers at the front and labouring masses at home during the First World War.

This war was an imperialist struggle between the two rival powers, the Anglo-French-Russian and the Austro-German who were determined to conquer each others markets, resources and labour, for a territorial division of the world as a result of capitalism's unfolding contradictions of economic expansion.

The horrors of war had revolutionized soldiers and the shortages and inflation had done the same to the workers and



peasants.

Towards the end of 1917 the push to overthrow the bankrupt Tsarist and bourgeois state had swelled support amongst the overwhelming majority of the working class, poor peasants and soldiers, who were thirsting for a better livelihood, land and peace.

From February to October 1917 the Bolsheviks carried out a consistent policy of isolating political parties that wanted to compromise with the Tsarist Duma in the February Revolution and with the Provisional Government in the October Revolution.

The Bolshevik Party had only small support in the Soviets at the start of 1917 but it grew as it unwaveringly opposed bankrupt policies of continuing the war, first by the Duma and later by the Provisional Government, calling for "Peace, Land and Bread" and "All power to the Soviets".

Through uncompromising political agitation the Bolsheviks continually isolated and condemned those parties that compromised with and supported the Duma (bourgeois parties such as the Kadets) and the Provisional Government (social democratic parties such as the Socialist Revolutionaries and Mensheviks). These parties supported a 'capitalist democracy' continuing the war and opposed a socialist revolution, in effect becoming enemies of the revolution.

The Bolsheviks by October had hundreds of thousands of worker-members and a solid majority within the Soviets.

Support from within the army and the navy enabled them to set up the Petrograd Military Revolutionary

Committee that successfully carried out the October uprising.

The October Revolution was an inspiration to working classes in other countries, and later insurrections occurred in Germany and Hungary. Unfortunately these revolts were crushed by far stronger bourgeois forces whose control of the state and armed forces had not weakened enough from the First World War.

Uneven development and Class Struggle

"Uneven economic and political development," said Lenin, "is an absolute law of capitalism..." as a result of which revolutions successfully breaking out in other countries is not always guaranteed.

Socialism in the Soviet Union survived and was later joined by Eastern European countries, China, Cuba, Vietnam etc after the Second

World War.

Regrettably, Imperialism did not collapse despite its defeat at the hands of the October Revolution and successes of other peoples' revolutions.

In fact imperialism recovered ground with the help of revisionists, opportunists and bourgeois-aspiring technocrats within the Soviet Union and China who overturned socialism and reintroduced capitalism.

This left the world's working classes severely weakened and demoralised; nevertheless, it confirmed Mao's point that 'class struggle continues throughout socialism'.

However imperialism's and capitalism's own contradictions have not gone away. It is an inherently unstable mode of production that immiserates its working class and is predisposed to fight wars of hegemony.

That is why the oppressed in the world will inevitably have to carry out two, three and more Octobers!



Red Army - Defending the Revolution