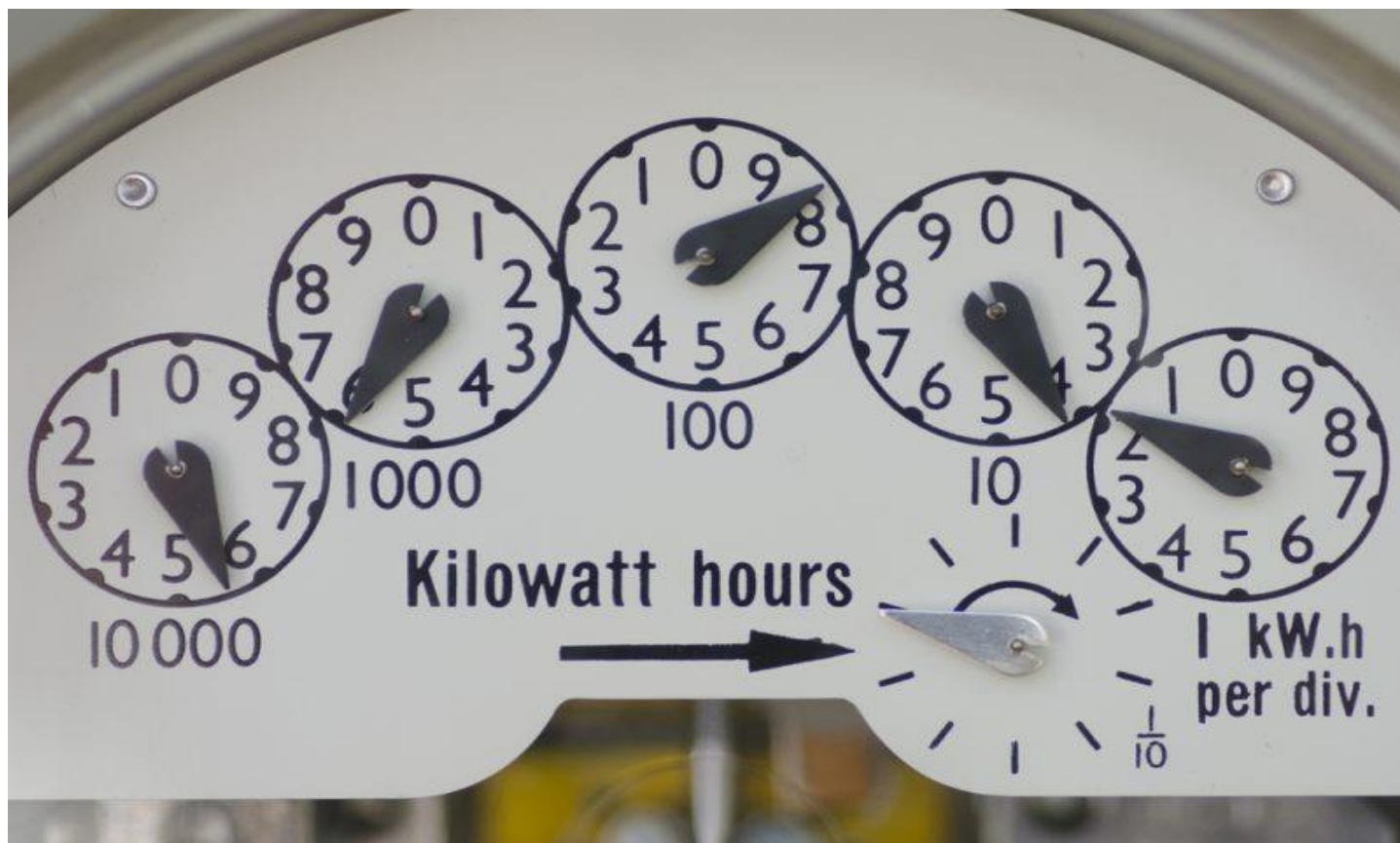


RED FIRE

ISSUE #32

\$2

WORKERS OF THE WORLD UNITE!



STOP THE POWER PRICE HIKES!

(Article sourced from www.redfireonline.com)

04-06-2023: Working people across Australia were hit with the news that from July 1, power bills will be slugged with price rises of up to 25%. In releasing its final determination of the 2023-24 Default Market Offer (DMO) the Australian Energy Regulator (AER) forecast that power price increases

for residential users will range from 20.8% to 24.9% depending on the region in which they live.¹ The DMO is the maximum limit an energy retailer can charge. AER Chair Clare Savage told ABC (Australian Broadcasting Corporation) radio that the increases could have been 50% (!) without government intervention, such as the federal imposition of price caps on gas and black coal.² The gas price cap,

¹ www.smallcaps.com.au/australian-electricity-prices-set-to-surge/ (31-05-2023)

² [www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2023/may/25/power-bills-to-rise-by-up-to-a-quarter-in-](http://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2023/may/25/power-bills-to-rise-by-up-to-a-quarter-in-parts-of-australia-after-regulator-issues-market-default-decision)

[parts-of-australia-after-regulator-issues-market-default-decision](http://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2023/may/25/power-bills-to-rise-by-up-to-a-quarter-in-parts-of-australia-after-regulator-issues-market-default-decision) (31-05-2023)

implemented by the federal government on the 23rd of December last year, is supposed to be \$12 a gigajoule (GJ).³ However, Bruce Robertson, an energy finance analyst, told the ABC that in practice, there is no price cap on gas, as the price per GJ in Sydney is \$19, while in Melbourne it is \$21.

RED FIRE is the publication of the Workers League.

The Workers League is an organisation which seeks to build a vanguard party for working people, which can lead the struggle for socialism and a world without war.

We welcome all enquires and feedback, as well as applications to join. Contact us by:

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No gas reserves

Mr Robertson explained that gas sets the price of electricity in the national electricity market, and the price that Australians pay for gas is “insanely high”, given that Australia is a major gas producer.⁴ Currently only the state of Western Australia (WA) has a policy of gas reservation, which was put in place in 2006. This means that 15% of gas produced in WA must be kept in reserve for local users.⁵ However, there is no gas reservation policy in the rest of the country, including the eastern states (Queensland, New South Wales, Australian Capital Territory, Victoria and Tasmania) which comprises 81% of the national population.⁶ Australia is in fact the world’s fifth largest gas exporter, behind Russia, USA, Qatar and Norway, and in 2021 exported some 108 billion cubic metres.⁷ Working people in

Australia therefore should have access to affordable gas, in comparable terms to the gas consumed in the Russian Federation and the US, which should flow on to affordable electricity prices.

Instead, the profits from gas production flow to the energy giants such as Woodside Energy, which in June 2022 completed a merger with BHP. The other largest oil and gas companies are: Santos, Origin Energy and Caltex Australia.⁸ While it is the case that gas is a fossil fuel, and a switch to zero carbon energy sources is vital to combat accelerating climate collapse, gas will be needed for a transition. Due to decades of privatisation, electricity prices are made up of wholesale energy costs (coal and gas plants production), network costs (charged by companies that own the ‘poles and wires’) and retail costs (electricity retailers charging for issuing bills, marketing themselves and making a profit).⁹ In other words, each stage of the production, generation and distribution of power has their own incentive to charge as much as possible for their “services”. In the case of the electricity retailers, they are mostly issuing a bill, charging outrageous prices, then debt collecting from those who are struggling.

Cost of living out of control

The basic costs of living for working people across the Western world are out of control and are pushing some over the edge. In some countries such as the United Kingdom (UK), they have never been higher. In Europe the main culprit is the self-defeating sanctions applied to Russia as part of NATO’s proxy war via Ukraine. Despite Germany’s unfortunate history with the original Nazis, Germany is now in recession partially as a result of assisting Washington funding and arming the Nazi

³ www.ministers.treasury.gov.au/ministers/jim-chalmers-2022/media-releases/gas-price-cap-take-effect (31-05-2023)

⁴ www.abc.net.au/news/2023-05-25/australian-energy-regulator-market-offer-electricity-price-rise/102385284 (31-05-2023)

⁵ www.smh.com.au/business/companies/it-s-ridiculous-architect-of-wa-policy-calls-for-national-gas-reservation-20220616-p5au8q.html (31-05-2023)

⁶ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eastern_states_of_Australia (31-05-2023)

⁷ www.statista.com/statistics/217856/leading-gas-exporters-worldwide/ (31-05-2023)

⁸ www.climatenewsaustralia.com/australias-natural-gas-companies-which-are-the-biggest-ones/ (31-05-2023)

⁹ www.yourlifechoices.com.au/finance/why-are-electricity-prices-going-up-again-and-will-it-ever-end/ (31-05-2023)

infested Ukrainian armed forces. Even in Australia, the government fantastically blames “the war in Ukraine” for power price rises. Rather, deliberate price rises are a result of Canberra, Washington and London waging multiple proxy wars against Russia and China PLUS supply bottlenecks still unravelling from two years of nonsensical “Covid” lockdowns, border closures and deliberate implosion of whole sections of domestic economies. The pre-mediated shutdown of economic activity, which involved throwing hundreds of millions of workers out of employment, had nothing to do with “public health” and everything to do with attempting to “re-set” floundering casino economies.

While capitalism has historically led to some progress, a terrible human price is paid for its rise and development, and its current state of decay is a plain catastrophe for the working class. Capitalism in the West has been largely financialised, as it has long since been unable to make an adequate profit on the manufacture of goods and services. It must draw profits from places which it originally left to the state – such as the provision of utilities. If it must do this through deliberate price gouging, then that is what it will do, aided and abetted by capitalist politicians of all stripes. Yet it is not just plain old corporate greed which drives them to extort money from the sections of society least able to afford it. It is being eclipsed by the vast productive capacity of the socialistic People’s Republic of China (PRC) combined with its partnerships with semi-nationalised economies in some Eurasian countries, such as Russia and Iran. State or semi-state control of such economies means at the very least independence from Washington and the European Union (EU) – something which imperialism cannot tolerate.

Essential services, such as electricity, gas and water, should not operate for the benefit of the obscenely wealthy power corporations. All energy sources should be nationalised and taken into public ownership. However, nationalisation of energy

sources must be linked directly to the demand for a workers’ republic. The nationalisation of energy production and distribution can lead to significant and much needed economic recovery and growth – but only when they are in the hands of a proletarian state. Hence, the enormous growth of the PRC, which drives knock-on development in its neighbours and even in the West – as long as the West continues to keep trade with the PRC open.

The collapse the so-called left and the Union officials on “Covid” means they are essentially unable to oppose new wars against Russia and China, nor take action on elementary working-class cost of living issues. Nor will plaintive demands for “nationalisation” suffice, as calls on a bourgeois government to come to the rescue are profoundly disorienting and disempowering. Instead, workers must demand: **public ownership of energy and infrastructure, overseen by a workers’ government!** No one will deliver salvation. Workers must forge a leadership which can inspire their class to achieve public ownership of the means of production, and end to forever wars, and affordable living conditions for all.



FOR A FRENCH WORKERS' REPUBLIC!



www.hurriyetdailynews.com

(The following is the text of a leaflet distributed by the Workers League at the May Day rallies in Paris.)

23-04-2023: Since January, brave and heroic French workers have repeatedly demonstrated in the streets against President Emmanuel Macron's drive to raise the pension age to 64. Previous attacks on the pension system in 1995, 2003, 2010 and 2016 have led to mass upsurges. This time, reminiscent of May-June 1968, students have been heavily involved in the protests. Hundreds of schools and universities are blockaded in solidarity with the street marches. It is no exaggeration to say that millions have mobilised against the brutal class attack throughout January, February, March and April. France's revolutionary history certainly drives the willingness of French workers to demonstrate until their just demands are met. Yet this time, it is not only Macron who is facing being ousted. The entire system of class rule in France and the European Union (EU) could be shaken.

Out with Macron!

This latest attack on aged pensions is not just because Macron is a Jupiterian banker-president, though he is certainly a part of the elite. This assault is taking place because capitalism requires it, as today it can only survive by launching direct attacks on the working class – their jobs, their standard of living and their retirement. Macron is only President today due to the fact that during the last election he was running against Marine Le Pen of National Rally, and the so-called left urged a vote for Macron rather than the "far-right" Le Pen. Yet, according to a poll, as many as 60% of French people think that Le Pen is "close to the preoccupations of ordinary people". National Rally could potentially benefit from the unrest, but only if the false left drives people towards the reformist Melenchon and France Insoumise, or even Macron again. While National Rally is not the answer for working people, as long

as it presents itself as more rational than the dubious left it will continue to gain support.

Macron using section 49.3 of the Constitution to bypass parliament signifies the potential end of bourgeois traditions. To ram the pension broadside through without even pretending that a vote in a compromised parliament is at all necessary shines a light on what the ruling elites really think of those over which they supposedly rule. In other Western countries, outright election fraud is now used to place preferred parties in power. Failing that, they pull a constitutional bureaucratic move like Macron's to remove even the semblance of a very indirect "consent of the people". Capitalist "democracy" – as distorted and deceitful as it always was – is gone forever, never to return. Hence, the pension cuts are as much a *political* attack on the working class as they are an economic one.

The publication of **RED FIRE** involves considerable expense, but it is a task which is willingly undertaken to advance the struggle for socialism.

The Workers League welcomes any donations that all supporters of the workers' cause are able to contribute. Any donation, no matter how small, is greatly appreciated.

Please visit:

www.redfireonline.com/donate-to-red-fire/

In one sense, the current protests are a revival of the Yellow Vest movement which almost removed Macron in 2018. They were temporarily interrupted by the fraudulent Covid "pandemic", with its own forms of state repression. The Yellow Vest movement was a systemic challenge to corporate rule, but one which was outside the control of the official left and the Union officials. While not every demand that the Yellow Vest movement raised was progressive *per se*, the overwhelming majority of them directly challenged basic capitalist pillars. They demanded products be made to last 10 years,

for a 40% increase in the pension and social welfare, and for housing for all homeless people. They demanded the effective withdrawal of France from Africa, the withdrawal of France from the EU, and an exit for France from NATO. This was effectively a call for the end of French colonialism, the break up of the EU, and the end of French participation in the endless imperialist wars of the West.



Above: French workers resisting Macron's assault on pensions. Image: www.northcountrypublicradio.org

One War

During the three years of "Covid" almost all of the ostensible political left and Union officials capitulated heavily to the capitalist state, and collaborated directly with elite politicians in imposing lockdowns, facemasks and vaccine mandates on the working class. The scale of this betrayal has set back the very notion of political contest. However, if any country has the class struggle and revolutionary traditions needed to overcome this appalling apostasy it is surely France. Even though the lockdowns derailed the Yellow Vests and many other forms of protest, there may now be a realisation that the corporate billionaires and their agents will only change the format of their onslaught, not the onslaught itself. Granted, in the current protests some of the Union officials and left parties who blocked with the state in the name of "health" are now taking part as if they did nothing wrong from 2020 to 2022. Yet broad swathes of the

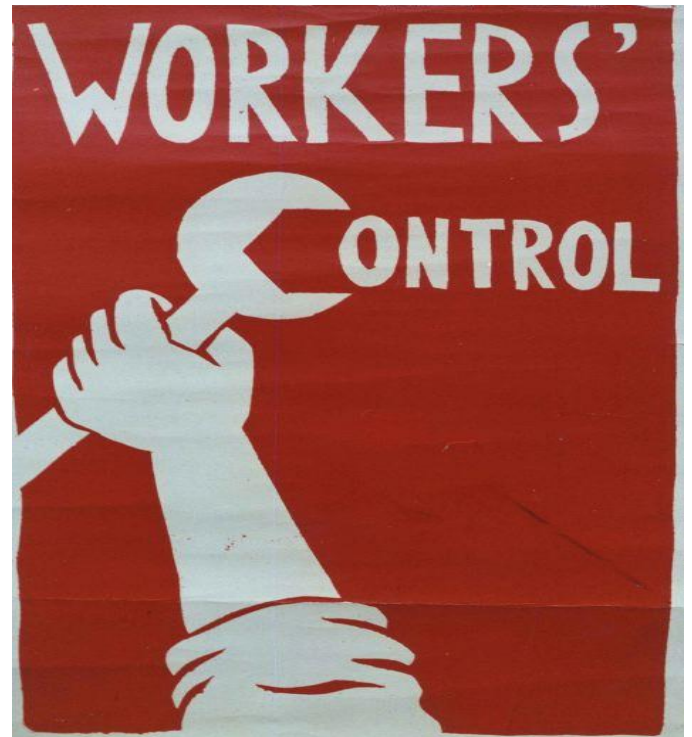
working class can see the pattern of continuity over the past few decades.

NATO's proxy war on Russia via Ukraine is another layer of problems foisted on working people, especially in Europe. Not only is the French government providing weapons for the Nazi infested Ukrainian forces, the threat of a nuclear war hangs over the head of all of Europe. The stark realisation that the West is arming and funding Nazis to fight on behalf of NATO against Russia is telling, even though France is not as reliant on Russia for energy as is Germany. What is more, the West is simultaneously provoking and needling the People's Republic of China (PRC) towards a military confrontation, in another theatre which again opens the door to nuclear destruction. In fact, the relentless economic rise of the PRC's largely nationalised and planned economy is perhaps the main reason for the pension assault in France. The Western capitalist economies are not able to compete against the PRC's socialistic state-owned infrastructure which fuels its incessant rise.

Workers internationally are thus facing one war. The deliberate driving up of the cost of living, "Covid" repression and the threat of war against Russia and China are all derived from the same source and cannot be separated from each other. In France, workers can see that the Union officials are restraining actions to one day strikes, which can be tiring and stop well short of raising what must be raised – the question of power. There cannot be a "Sixth Republic" as demanded by Melenchon, but a workers' government which begins the process of expropriating the major means of production. What is required is a workers' party which fights for a workers' republic. A genuine Marxist vanguard party must be formed, but one which is comprised of those who *consistently* defend the working class. What is needed now is an ongoing general strike, which will require organisation and coordination by strike committees, and will therefore pose the question of which class shall rule. Leninists have

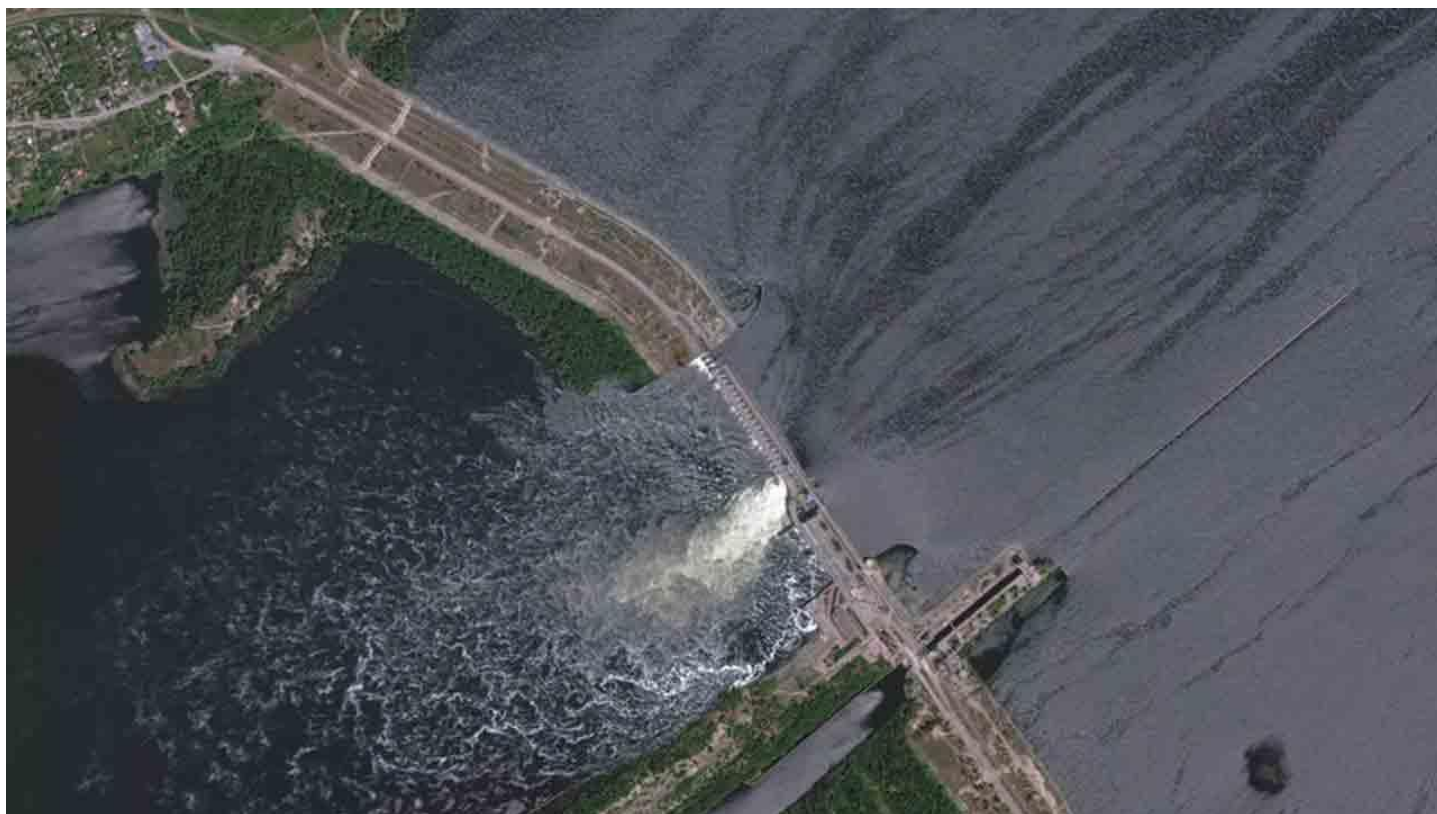
always insisted that democracy across different classes is impossible, which is why labour must triumph.

- **Full pensions from age 60!**
 - **For a six-hour workday!**
 - **Block weapons shipments to Ukraine!**
 - **No to US/EU/NATO wars on Russia and China!**
-



www.dunyanews.tv

STOP NATO's DRIVE TO WORLD WAR!



Above: An aerial shot of the Nova Kakhovka dam after it was hit with an explosion, flooding parts of Kherson. www.ntnews.com

(Article sourced from www.redfireonline.com)

17-06-2023: The current danger of a World War fought with nuclear weapons cannot be understated. A nuclear war may well mean the end of human civilisation on planet Earth. There is *one side* which is responsible for this potentially catastrophic situation, and that is the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) alliance led by the ruling regimes of the United States of America (US) and its allies in the European Union (EU) and other satellite states such as Canada and Australia. The NATO led proxy war on Russia via Ukraine is being constantly escalated, even despite the manifest impossibility of any substantial victory over the Russian Federation, a military superpower. In fact, the main reason why the world is not now engulfed in a horrific global war is the seemingly limitless restraint shown by Russian President Vladimir Putin

and his administration in the face of outrageously provocative geopolitical, economic and military broadsides set up to sabotage or even overthrow Moscow.

Steps to War

Three examples stand out as blatant and deliberate crossing of “red lines”, ultimately authored by the imperialist powers leading NATO. Firstly, the blowing up of the Nord Stream Pipeline between Germany and Russia was an environmental disaster as well as being a move to keep Washington’s “ally” Germany from becoming even a smidgeon of an economic rival. Yet it was also a move to derail any potential growth for the Russian economy. There is not a shadow of doubt that Washington was behind this massive act of terrorism, as reported by the

towering investigative journalist Seymour Hersh.¹⁰ Russia's oil, gas and natural resources are vast and largely state owned, providing Russia with a powerful base for its economy. Secondly, the drone attack on the Kremlin appeared to be an attempt to grab headlines to divert attention away from faltering Ukrainian "offensives" in the South and East. This brazen attack was also almost certainly authored by Washington, and not at all in Kiev, according to former CIA officer Larry Johnson.¹¹ Thirdly, the blowing up of the Nova Kakhovka Dam in Kherson – another environmental disaster - was almost certainly the work of the Kiev regime, in an attempt to cover for the failure of the first phase of the NATO backed Ukrainian "counter-offensive".¹²

Russia would be more than justified in retaliating against the West in relation to any one of these moves, let alone the previous 30 years expansion of NATO to Russia's borders. Russia is responding, but via a "special military operation", rather than open war against the US and the EU. The steady gains of this campaign are prompting ever more desperate and dangerous moves to expand and escalate the proxy war on Russia by NATO and its allies. On June the 10th, Canadian President Justin Trudeau and Deputy Prime Minister Chrystia Freeland made a surprise visit to Ukraine, only to announce another package of \$500 million and weapons for Kiev.¹³ In Australia, without even the semblance of a discussion in a parliamentary committee, there are reports that the Australian government plans to send Ukraine 41 F/A-18 Hornet fighter jets.¹⁴ If this wasn't enough, former NATO Chief Anders Rasmussen stated that if the coming NATO summit does not offer Ukraine a path to membership,

Poland may lead a "coalition of the willing" and send troops across its borders.¹⁵

Who are the real Nazis?

Perhaps more jaw-dropping than the realisation that Polish intervention into Ukraine would likely mean the entry of NATO troops and a direct confrontation with Russia, is the now open recognition that Ukraine's forces are infested with Nazis, as even the *New York Times* has had to finally admit.¹⁶ The *Times* only complains that Nazis are only ruining Ukraine's "brand". Yet the more glaring conclusion, long known by many others, is that the West is arming and funding Nazis to wage war on behalf of NATO. No one should have to explain that Nazis are fascists, but the narrative of the Western corporate media is almost one which claims that Nazis are fighting for "democracy" in Ukraine! This is beyond ludicrous, and of the world outside the West are having none of it. Almost all of Asia, Africa and Latin America are very well aware that it is the US Empire and the former European colonial powers which have provoked this conflict, and is even supporting Russia in its efforts to defend itself.¹⁷ It is not just a sentiment in favour of protecting imports of Russian agriculture either – it is a recognition that Russia is standing in the way of the West's plans for yet more war.

While it is true that the Russian government is not a political ally of the international working class (witness its implementation of nonsensical Covid lockdowns and associated vaccines), this is hardly the point when the future of the world could be at stake. Yet many of those of the so-called left which capitulated to the Covid narrative have walked into a trap of following NATO into a war in defence of

¹⁰ www.seymourhersh.substack.com/p/how-america-took-out-the-nord-stream (14-06-2023)

¹¹ www.planet-today.com/2023/05/the-decision-to-drone-attack-kremlin.html (14-06-2023)

¹² www.theautomaticearth.com/2023/06/kievs-long-term-plans-to-blow-up-the-kakhovka-dam/ (14-06-2023)

¹³ www.globalnews.ca/news/9760011/justin-trudeau-ukraine-surprise-visit-2023/ (14-06-2023)

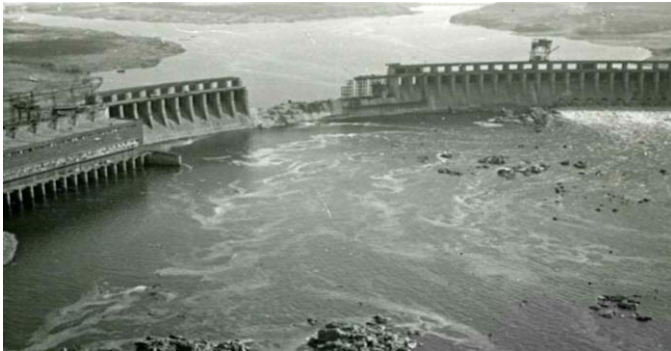
¹⁴ www.19fortyfive.com/2023/06/ukraine-could-soon-get-australian-f-a-18-hornet-fighters/ (14-06-2023)

¹⁵ www.theguardian.com/world/2023/jun/07/nato-members-may-send-troops-to-ukraine-warns- (14-06-2023)

¹⁶ <https://humanevents.com/2023/06/05/new-york-times-finally-acknowledges-ukrainian-nazis-claims-they-are-ruining-ukraines-brand-in-war-against-russia> (14-06-2023)

¹⁷ www.rt.com/russia/577894-hersh-us-ukraine-biden/ (14-06-2023)

Nazis.¹⁸ For example, the Party for Socialism and Liberation (PSL)¹⁹ and the Socialist Equality Party (SEP)²⁰ both claim to oppose NATO and Russia's "invasion" at the same time. This hapless equivocation demonstrates the same buckling before imperialist propaganda which had the synthetic left cheering on internment camps in the name of "public health". It also poses the question directly, if such organisations are echoing Western governments in calling for the withdrawal of Russian forces – which would mean the victory of NATO armed Nazis – just who are they in practice?



www.rattibha.com

The current war demonstrates the realisation of the West's rulers that it is not able to compete against the giant socialistic economy of the People's Republic of China (PRC), and their allies such as Russia, so war is its only option. NATO is the characterisation of capitalism in its death throes, and it must be abolished along with the regimes which animate it. In the West, rampant inflation and a skyrocketing cost of living is the war the ruling classes are waging at home. A struggle for socialism is urgent, via the construction of internationally linked Marxist vanguard parties. On this road, workers need to demand their right to a future for their children and for humanity itself. ***End all financial and military "aid" to Ukraine! Block weapons shipments to Nazis in Ukraine! Fascism Never Again!***

¹⁸ <https://real-left.com/covid-and-ukraine-ctrl-c-ctrl-v-part-1/> (14-06-2023)

¹⁹ www.liberationnews.org/psl-editorial-u-s-nato-responsible-for-one-year-of-needless-war-in-ukraine/ (14-06-2023)



²⁰ www.wsws.org/en/articles/2023/06/13/tozn-j13.html (14-06-2023)

LIFT THE BAN ON TIK TOK!



www.watchdogsgazette.com

(Article sourced from www.redfireonline.com)

16-04-2023: In a media release on April 4, the Australian Attorney General announced a ban on the social media platform Tik Tok for government devices under the “Protective Security Policy Framework”. This move follows corresponding actions of the governments of New Zealand, Canada, Denmark and the United Kingdom (UK), while the European Commission banned its employees from installing or using Tik Tok.²¹ At the moment, this ban is for government owned devices, but the precedent may be set for a total ban affecting all sectors of the population of these countries. These moves follow the banning of China based telecommunications giant Huawei from

involvement with 5G technology in most Western countries.²² Earlier this year, the Australian Defence Minister Richard Marles – with a straight face – ordered the removal of 1000 security cameras from government sites, because they were manufactured by the Chinese firms Hikvision and Dahua.²³

The threat of dance videos?

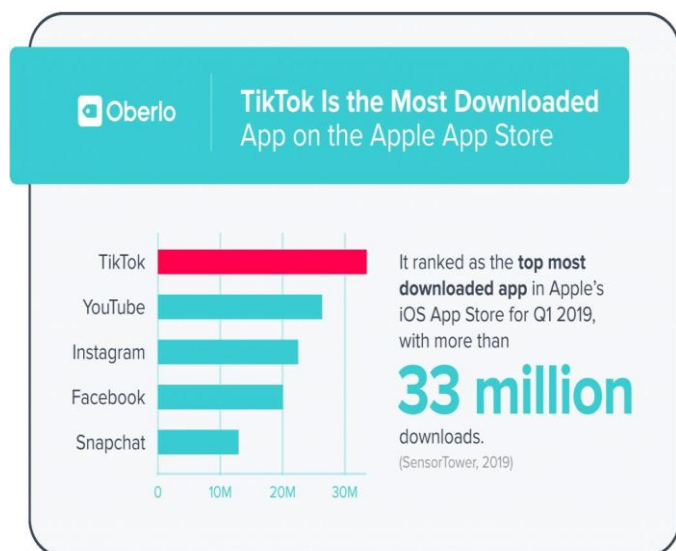
Tik Tok came to prominence by users often posting funky dance videos of themselves or others, which then garnered a large following online. The very notion that Western countries are threatened by popular dance videos is alone another indicator of the stark decline of the US led empire. The US and allied governments are making the ludicrous

²¹ www.harpersbazaar.com.au/tiktok-ban-australian-impact/ (12-04-2023)

²² www.channele2e.com/business/enterprise/huawei-banned-in-which-countries/ (12-04-2023)

²³ www.9news.com.au/world/china-security-cameras-australia-government-ban-removal-news/ (12-04-2023)

assertion that gadgets produced by Chinese owned tech companies pose a national security threat and could be used for spying by the government of the People's Republic of China (PRC). Yet the hypocrisy of the US state in accusing the PRC of potential spying is stunning. Section 702 of the US Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA) allows US intelligence agencies to conduct *warrantless* spying on foreigners' email, phone and other online communications. US lawmakers are also potentially renewing powers that force US big tech firms such as Google, Meta (Facebook) and Apple to facilitate untrammelled spying on non-US citizens located overseas.²⁴ While accusing the PRC of potentially using Tik Tok to spy on people, Google is already impelled to spy on almost half of the world's population by the US state.



Above: Already by 2010, Tik Tok had surpassed Western social media apps Youtube, Instagram, Facebook and Snapchat in being the most downloaded app on the Apple App Store. In recent years, Tik Tok has attained more users than Twitter, Telegram, Reddit and Pinterest. Imperialism cannot tolerate any competition, let alone allow any business to surpass their own floundering for profit tech industries. This is but one reason why Western governments have moved to ban and discourage the use of Tik Tok. www.delhicourses.in

Yet Tik Tok is far more than just amusing dance videos. Some Turkish labourers have posted videos which document their harsh and intensive working conditions.²⁵ Tik Tok has 1 billion monthly users, which has already surpassed Twitter, Telegram, Reddit, Pinterest and Snapchat.²⁶ Tik Tok has huge usage amongst the youth or Generation Z in the US itself. In fact, some speculate that the Democrats may even oppose a blanket ban on Tik Tok for fear of alienating young voters who would usually support them at the polls.²⁷ Yet the US state charges on regardless, and Tik Tok is effectively being given two options. ByteDance (the owner of Tik Tok) must sell its stake in the app to an entity supposedly not under the control of the Communist Party of China (CPC) or, if ByteDance is unwilling to sell – the app could be banned in the US market altogether. In the “land of the free”, the operation of the “free market” and “free enterprise” does not apply to those who can challenge the top end.

Blatant moves to block the PRC

The overt moves by the governments of Western countries to block Huawei, security camera manufacturers and now Tik Tok is an undisguised attempt to slow down the PRC's rise to an economic superpower. It is enacted under the false rhetoric of national security, and also thinly veiled racism and sly anti-communism. There are also demands that the Chinese mobile app WeChat cease operating in the US. Yet the WeChat app is far better and more powerful than its US mobile counterpart WhatsApp, and Tik Tok's AI (artificial intelligence) is two years ahead of anything produced in the US. Huawei's 5G technology is ahead of all world competitors.²⁸ Even the US and Australian government and Western weapons manufacturers funded think tank ASPI (Australian Strategic Policy Institute) produced a report admitting that the PRC is leading the world in

²⁴ www.aljazeera.com/economy/2023/3/28/bid-to-ban-tiktok-raises-hypocrisy-charge-amid-global-spying (12-04-2023)

²⁵ www.youtube.com/watch?v=WvLAaxpYRfs (12-04-2023)

²⁶ www.backlinko.com/tiktok-users (12-04-2023)

²⁷ www.thehill.com/policy/technology/3939936-progressive-lawmakers-tiktok-ban/ (12-04-2023)

²⁸ www.globalresearch.ca/washington-regime-ban-china-tiktok-app/5723578 (12-04-2023)

37 out of 44 cutting edge technologies. These include: nanoscale materials and manufacturing, AI algorithms and hardware accelerators, supercapacitors, electric batteries, advanced robotics and quantum communications.²⁹



Above: The world's first quantum computing machine was built in the People's Republic of China. The socialistic state is able to direct billions of yuan into building up China's technological and scientific capacity, due to the fact that capitalist rule was overthrown in 1949.
www.deccanherald.com

In fact, not only does the capitalist West resent the increasing market share of PRC based firms, the more users of its social media technology there are, the less can they be used by the deep states of the "Five Eyes" countries (USA, UK, AUS, NZ, CAN) to surveil and spy on "their own" citizens. It is the West that needs to snoop, censor, block and prevent people from being informed and aware about what is really happening. It is the rapidly deteriorating economies of imperialism which is driving working people to seek more information about systemic political alternatives, as the cost of living is driven up, the political repression that occurred under "Covid" continues, and the ongoing threat of a catastrophic world war increases. This is not to say

that every aspect of life in the PRC is fine and dandy, but their living standards are steadily improving in a more or less linear fashion.

The fact that the PRC's vast economy is leaving the West for dead, that it is way ahead in the development of science, technology, engineering, mathematics, computing power, manufacturing, infrastructure building, space exploration and much more is yet more evidence that the PRC does NOT operate any form of "capitalism", or one which is "state-directed". Rather, the PRC operates a planned economy which at every step is guarded by the workers' state which emerged out of the momentous social revolution which triumphed in 1949. It is not just the vast size of the PRC which provides decades and decades of more or less uninterrupted economic growth which is *three or four times* that of the capitalist West in *one very good year* of one of their sporadic booms. It is the consolidation of a popular revolution, bolstered by a proletarian state which administers a socialistic society.

Alas, the political leadership of the PRC is crippled by the Stalinism of the Communist Party of China (CPC), which seeks above all endless political and military compromise with imperialism, rather than assisting a world struggle for socialism. And imperialism is running out of time for compromises. *Workers internationally should demand the lifting of all bans on Tik Tok, and the end of all economic, political and military moves against the PRC.* Capitalism has had its day and must now step aside.



²⁹ www.cybernews.com/editorial/us-china-tech-war/ (12-04-2023)

SUDAN: WASHINGTON AND LONDON TRIGGER DEADLY COUP



Above: General Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo (“Hemedti”) of the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) in Sudan (at left) and General Abdel Fattah Al-Burhan of the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF). Image from www.americanchronicles.news

(Article sourced from www.redfireonline.com)

01-05-2023: Sudanese paramilitary group the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) agreed to a partial ceasefire on April 21, after six days of attacks on the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF), following an appeal to both sides from the United Nations (UN) Secretary General Antonio Guterres. The casualties known so far are at least 330 dead and 3300 wounded since hostilities began.³⁰ As the shaky truce took effect, the SAF accused the RSF of attacks in Omdurman, a twin city of the capital Khartoum, and releasing a large number of inmates from prison – which the RSF denies.³¹ Some of the most intense fighting has

taken place in Khartoum around the compound housing the army headquarters and the residence of SAF chief and head of the Republic of Sudan Abdel Fattah Al-Burhan.³² Some civilians have begun to flee the capital Khartoum, and some witnesses report that RSF soldiers are patrolling the city in pick-up trucks while fighter jets loyal to the SAF target RSF positions.³³

West feigns concern

The Western corporate media report on the conflict as if their governments are innocent bystanders, who are simply making moves to evacuate their

³⁰ www.inews.co.uk/news/world/sudan-fighting-us-citizen-dead-rsf-paramilitary-group-ceasefire-2288595 (23-04-2023)

³¹ www.uk.news.yahoo.com/fighting-sudan-enters-second-week (23-04-2023)

³² <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/4/20/sudan-fighting-enters-day-6-what-to-know> (23-04-2023)

³³ <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-65325382> (23-04-2023)

citizens. In fact, the governments of the United States of America (US) and the United Kingdom (UK) have in practice lit the fuse of the current conflict, perhaps hoping no one notices. The British Council has already evacuated its staff from Sudan, while US Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin stated that the US had deployed military forces “in theatre”. The UK has moved troops to an undisclosed base close to Sudan, while the US has sent a large number of troops to its base in neighbouring Djibouti.³⁴ An observer may well note that actions such as these indicate moves which may well have been prepared in advance by the US and the UK, with some foreknowledge. Such an observation would not be far from reality.

The RSF is headed by General Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo, a.k.a “Hemedti”, who also holds the position of the deputy head of Sudan’s ruling Sovereign Council. Analysts estimate that the RSF numbers about 100 000, which has their own bases across the country.³⁵ Some reports say that the RSF has recruited thousands of fighters seeking an escape from poverty from neighbouring countries such as Chad, the Central African Republic, Libya and South Sudan with or without the knowledge of Khartoum.³⁶ The RSF was originally created by former long term President Omar Al-Bashir in 2013, and includes the feared Janjaweed militia which fought on the government’s side against “rebels” in the Darfur region in the early 2000s. General Dagalo claimed that the SAF is a historic institution which “will not be captured by any party”³⁷ as he seemingly seeks to integrate the RSF into the SAF – despite the current pitch battles. Dagalo appears to

be setting himself for a tilt to replace General Al-Burhan.

Yet General Dagalo is hardly acting on his own initiative. Just 48 hours before he launched the coup as the head of the RSF, Dagalo met with high-level representatives of the governments of the United States of America (US), the United Kingdom (UK) and Norway.³⁸ He held a joint meeting by phone with the US Envoy for East Africa, Sudan and South Sudan, Peter Lord; the UK Special Envoy for Sudan and South Sudan, Robert Fairweather; and the Norwegian Special Envoy for Sudan and South Sudan, John Anton.³⁹ There may well be a power struggle between the RSF and the SAF, and between General Dagalo and General Al-Burhan. Yet the notion that this stand off is taking place on its own, without the direct interference of Anglo/US imperialism, is a long way from reality. General Dagalo’s statement that the October 25, 2021 restoration of military led government was a “mistake”, and that he and the RSF are on the side of the people against Sudan’s elites⁴⁰, is little more than sand thrown in the eyes of the credulous within Sudan and internationally.

Sudan and Russia and China

The real reason for both the current deadly coup, and the utterly contrived “uprising” against the military restoration in 2021 is not difficult to uncover. In November 2017, when former long term ruler Omar Al-Bashir was still in office, Sudan and the Russian Federation signed co-operation agreements on military training and the entry of warships into the ports of the two countries.⁴¹ The driving factor behind this original agreement was

³⁴ www.express.co.uk/news/world/1761292/british-troops-standby-sudan-embassy-airlifts (23-04-2023)

³⁵ www.reuters.com/world/africa/who-are-sudans-rapid-support-forces-2023-04-13/ (23-04-2023)

³⁶ www.newarab.com/analysis/poverty-drives-chadian-youth-join-sudans-brutal-rsf (23-04-2023)

³⁷

www.thenationalnews.com/mena/2023/02/20/commander-of-sudans-most-powerful-paramilitary-committed-to-single-army/ (23-04-2023)

³⁸

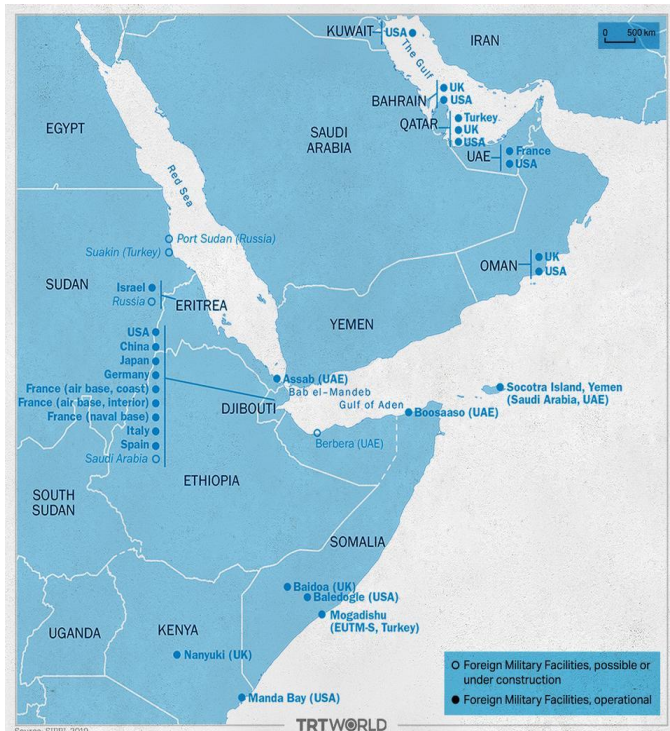
www.twitter.com/jcokechukwu/status/1647591545237823489 (26-04-2023)

³⁹ www.msn.com/en-xl/news/other/daglo-phones-three-international-envoys/ar-AA19SiVb (26-04-2023)

⁴⁰ www.zeebiz.com/world/news-sudan-fight-crisis-causes-and-solutions-africa-parties-general-burhan-dagalo-rsf-230973 (26-04-2023)

⁴¹ www.sudantribune.com/article264733/ (26-04-2023)

the need to counter US led destabilisation attempts. Despite the fall of Al-Bashir in 2019, in November 2020, Sudan and the Russian Federation signed a 25-year agreement for the operation of a logistics facility for the Russian Navy on the Red Sea. It would house a maximum of 300 troops, and a maximum of four ships at any one time – some of which would be nuclear powered. Under the agreement, Russia would be able to use the air space of Sudan, while Sudan would be responsible for the protection of the base on its side. Russia, in turn, would be responsible for its protection from the sea and air.⁴²



Above: Map showing the location of Port Sudan on the Red Sea, where Russia's logistics facility for its Navy will be built with the agreement of the government of Sudan. www.trtworld.com

So despite the fall of Al-Bashir, the transition to a civilian-military government, and then the restoration of a military lead government, the Russian Federation has, with some degree of diplomatic skill, maintained the original agreement signed in 2017. This is what has caused apoplexy

amongst the high levels of the US state, and what has led to the current fighting on the streets of Khartoum. In September only last year, the US Ambassador to Sudan, John Godfrey, warned of “consequences” if Sudan decided to allow the construction of a Russian military facility on the Red Sea. He complained that Russia was attempting to implement the agreement (!) it signed with Sudan in 2017.⁴³

Once again we see the US state attempting to block economic, trade, infrastructure and military agreements between African states and Russia, and, it must be added, the People's Republic of China (PRC). Sudan was one of the first countries to sign up to the PRC's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), and China has been the largest trading partner for Sudan for many years consecutively.⁴⁴ The economic and developmental opportunities the PRC can offer African countries far surpasses anything from US and European countries. The PRC's predominantly state-owned socialistic economy drives tremendous growth in infrastructure, technology and other sectors critical for development. While it is true that PRC firms themselves benefit from infrastructure and resource agreements in Africa, the African states will never come across the chance to develop without being plundered wholesale if they do not deal with the PRC today. While this remains a thorn in the side of the West, the military co-operation with Russia by African states is a more immediate concern. If the African states can deter US and European interference with Russian assistance, imperialism suffers yet another blow.

2021 colour revolution

Arguably, Washington and London have today opted to trigger a military coup and stoke a fratricidal war due to their failed colour revolution attempt in 2021. In December 2020, the US government removed Sudan from their “state

⁴² www.interfax.ru/russia/737364 (26-04-2023)

⁴³ www.aa.com.tr/en/africa/us-warns-sudan-of-consequences-if-it-hosts-russian-military-base/2696410 (26-04-2023)

⁴⁴ www.globaltimes.cn/content/1205416.shtml (26-04-2023)

sponsors of terrorism” list⁴⁵ more or less as a quid pro quo for the military removing Al-Bashir from office in 2019. However, in October 2021, the SAF seized power and dissolved the joint military-civilian Sovereign Council.⁴⁶ Regardless of one’s opinion of the SAF, this move effectively restored sovereignty to Sudan. The Washington security state was thrown into a tailspin and reacted immediately. All of a sudden, the US foreign policy machine was for “democracy” in Sudan. While it activated its NGOs (“Non” Governmental Organisations) and CSOs (Civil Society Organisations) on the ground in East Africa, little more than two months later the US Congress passed the “Sudan Democracy Act”, which was supposedly “to support a civilian-led democratic transition, peace and stability in Sudan”.⁴⁷ The cover for geo-political manoeuvring is unmistakable.

While liberals in the West swung behind “pro-democratic” and “civil society groups” in Sudan,⁴⁸ the US government suspended \$700 million in aid, and, according to the US Agency for International Development (USAID), “expanded activities that support the Sudanese people in their democratic aspirations”.⁴⁹ The notorious National Endowment for Democracy (NED), the “public relations” arm of the CIA, admits to funding dozens of organisations in Sudan, with hundreds of thousands of dollars during 2021. This included \$200 000 for a “Democratic Thought Project”!⁵⁰ Where the US state department operates, inveterate anti-socialist billionaire regime change specialist George Soros and his “Open Society Foundation” inevitably follow. Soros’ Open Society Initiative for Eastern

Africa (OSIEA) offers supposedly harmless grants to “pro-democracy” organisations in the region.⁵¹

In the months prior to the October 2021 overturn, the US government had donated 600 000 Johnson & Johnson potentially deadly Covid vaccines ostensibly to “combat” the fraudulent pandemic, to a generally skeptical African continent.⁵² Not coincidentally, a swathe of Covid left parties internationally fell for the three-card trick and threw their support behind the US state backed regime change operation. Fooled by contrived front organisations of imperialist subterfuge, such as the “Forces for Freedom and Change” (!) and the Sudan Professionals Association, they ranted for so-called democracy against military rule.⁵³ What they were doing in practice, as usual, was giving a “left” cover to yet another regime change operation, which could only benefit imperialism at the expense of Sudan and all of Africa. The US and the UK ruling classes are determined to block African states’ economic co-operation with the PRC, and military co-operation with the Russian Federation by any means necessary. This could mean a colour revolution, as in 2021 (which did not succeed), or it could mean fomenting a deadly coup and proxy civil war – as is occurring today. It is in the vital interests of working people in Africa and internationally to put an end to the relentless regime change operations, coups, colour revolutions and proxy wars the West ignites against Moscow and Beijing.

The colonial West no longer welcome

In an open case of projection, some Western media reports farcically claimed that Russia is behind the current violence in Sudan, as the Wagner private

⁴⁵ www.sanctionsnews.bakermckenzie.com/us-government-removes-sudan-from-state-sponsor-of-terrorism-list/ (26-04-2023)

⁴⁶ www.news.cgtn.com/news/2021-10-26/Geostrategic-dimensions-of-Sudan-s-latest-unrest-14GblZgQrW8/index.html (26-04-2023)

⁴⁷ www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/senate-bill/3275/text?r=7&s=1 (26-04-2023)

⁴⁸ www.vox.com/2021/10/29/22751437/sudan-coup-protests-al-burhan-hamdok (26-04-2023)

⁴⁹ www.usaid.gov/sudan (26-04-2023)

⁵⁰ www.ned.org/region/africa/sudan-2021/ (26-04-2023)

⁵¹ www.opensocietyfoundations.org/grants/open-society-initiative-for-eastern-africa (26-04-2023)

⁵² www.unicef.org/sudan/press-releases/united-states-donates-more-600000-single-dose-johnson-johnson-covid-19-vaccines-help (26-04-2023)

⁵³ www.redfireonline.com/2021/12/20/sudan-resists-fake-uprising-led-by-foreign-funded-csos/ (26-04-2023)

military organisation has allegedly been supplying the RSF with weaponry. Larry Johnson rubbished this claim on his website, writing that there is no earthly reason why the Russian government would foment a coup against a government which it has made several deals with in relation to military co-operation.⁵⁴ The naval base for Russia in the Port Sudan area would ensure the Russian naval access to the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean, and would spare its ships from long voyages to reach the region. The US deep state had assumed that with Al-Bashir gone, Sudan's agreement on the naval base with Russia would be scuttled. Then the SAF effectively retook control in October 2021, and restarted the talks with Russia on the agreements made with the previous Al-Bashir administration. Then the US state triggered a colour revolution in an attempt to reverse the military consolidating Sudan's sovereignty. This has not succeeded so far, so the internal pro-Western NGO types were temporarily sidelined in favour of a civil war option. Sudanese who die in this fracas are but "collateral damage" for Washington and London.

Incorrigible regime change and proxy war operative Victoria Nuland, the US Under Secretary of State, was in Sudan on March 9 this year, supposedly to "discuss democracy".⁵⁵ Little more than four weeks later, Sudan is being torn apart by war, in a similar way to which Ukraine was after Nuland and Co orchestrated a violent Nazi led coup in Kiev in 2014. Without offering political endorsement of either the SAF or the government of the Russian Federation, the agreements Sudan makes with Russia are a necessary step taken to ward off relentless US and British imperialist interference. If Sudan does not work with Russia in the military sphere, and with China in the economic sphere, Sudan will most likely be Balkanised further into smaller states, and its

economic development will stall. This is one reason why the US, Britain and France are generally no longer welcome in Africa – if they ever were.

It is in the interests of workers the world over to defend Sudan against Anglo/US imperialist meddling, whether that be through disingenuous "NGOs", the NED, USAID and Soros backed "democracy" projects OR direct military subversion. Sudan's right to trade with China and uphold military agreements with Russia or whomever they choose must be respected. At the same time, the assistance from Russia and China is not aimed at allowing Africa to finally break from Western imperialism through the establishment of a network of workers' states, the nationalisation of the major means of production and regionally integrated planned economies. This requires the assembly of Marxist vanguard parties throughout the African continent and beyond, linked to workers' struggles in the West, in a crusade to finally end capitalist exploitation, proxy coups and regime change wars.



⁵⁴ www.sonar21.com/why-is-the-western-media-lying-about-russias-role-in-sudan/ (29-04-2023)

⁵⁵ www.uncoverdc.com/2023/04/25/the-sudan-war-the-u-s-and-ukraine-look-deeper/ (29-04-2023)

THAILAND: WASHINGTON MANOEUVRES ITS PROXIES INTO POWER



Above: Pita Limjaroenrat (centre) launches the Western backed Kao Klai (Move Forward) Party in 2020, after the dissolution of the Future Forward Party in Thailand. www.thaipbsworld.com

(Article sourced from www.redfireonline.com)

12-06-2023: There are several diverse ways that imperialism can conduct a colour revolution in a smaller country, in order to place its proxy forces at the head of a government which will acquiesce or blindly follow the dictates of its sponsors. In Thailand, Washington and its European sidekicks appear to have chosen the method of funding a whole series of opposition political parties and organisations, which eventually take power through the ballot box. To be sure, the pro-US Move Forward Party (MFP) in Thailand has some obstacles to overcome before it can form government but it is on its way to doing just that. Its May 14 election has

seen the MFP win 151 seats, which means it could potentially form government in a coalition with the Pheu Thai Party (PTP) and a number of smaller parties.⁵⁶ The PTP is run from afar by fugitive billionaire former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra, who fled Thailand in 2008 to avoid facing time in jail.⁵⁷ In practice, both the MFP and the PTP are subordinate agents to the US state department and its endless interference and subversion of Thailand's domestic political scene as part of its proxy war against Thailand's giant neighbour, the socialistic People's Republic of China (PRC).

⁵⁶ www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/5/14/thailand-election-results-what-we-know-so-far (07-06-2023)

⁵⁷ <https://english.kyodonews.net/news/2023/03/86b301c0f581>

[-ex-pm-thaksin-vows-to-return-to-thailand-post-election-face-jail-time.html](https://www.bbc.com/news/health-67444444) (07-06-2023)

MFP front man and potential Prime Minister Pita Limjaroenrat may yet be disqualified, as Ruangkrai Leekitwattana, affiliated with the military linked Palang Pracharath Party, had filed a complaint with the Election Commission claiming that Pita violated the constitution. Thailand's constitution bans House of Representatives candidates from owning stock in media companies, but Pita has inherited shares in a broadcaster from his father, according to Ruangkrai.⁵⁸ It is easy to understand why a politician should not also own parts of the media in the country in which they are running for electoral office. One way Washington avoids such self-regulation is simply by funding opposition media within Thailand, which then projects pro-US narratives. An example is *Prachatai*, which claims to be an independent news website, but is actually funded by the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) – the public relations arm of the notorious CIA in the USA. The director of *Prachatai* is Chiranuch Premchaiporn, who is an NED fellow, and who was once sentenced to eight months in jail for failing to remove comments deemed offensive to the Thai monarchy from the *Prachatai* website.⁵⁹

In 2021, the NED admits to spending in the vicinity of \$3 million dollars to allegedly promote “human rights”, “democracy”, “civic engagement” and “labour standards”.⁶⁰ In reality, this money ends up in the pockets of front organisations such as the MFP, which then subverts the internal political and societal discourse to benefit US foreign policy objectives. The previous Thai government did make some moves to rein in this blatant interference in February 2021, by requiring NGOs (Non-Government Organisations) to simply register with the Interior Ministry. The then deputy government

spokeswoman Rachada Dhnadirek stated that there were around 100 NGOs operating in Thailand, many of which were not registered and received money from other countries.⁶¹ These rational moves turned out to be too little, too late, as the US backed parties spearheaded by the MFP rode a wave to electoral success in May.

Geopolitical moves in South-East Asia

The US ruling class is prepared to play the long game in Thailand, as in other countries in South East Asia. It has funnelled money to opposition forces for years there, and for many decades in neighbouring Myanmar to its West, and Malaysia to its South. The US state has already manoeuvred a pro-Washington government into power in Malaysia (headed by Anwar Ibrahim), and is aiding violent terrorism in Myanmar to the West after the Tatmadaw (Myanmar's military) finally removed the Western government funded “National League for Democracy” (NLD) front headed by Aung Sung Suu Kyi in 2021.⁶² The primary aim of all of this overt meddling is to contain and encircle the PRC with hostile regimes on its borders. These pro-US proxy governments are then used to break these countries away from trade and cooperation with the PRC, to provide a springboard for the break-up, and/or, the counter-revolutionary overthrow of Beijing. This of course means all out war, but the faltering capitalist US economy is in a dire state and cannot hope to compete against the largely state-owned and planned economy of the PRC, which is of a gargantuan scale given its population base of 1.4 billion people.

The PRC is Thailand's largest trading partner⁶³, and is a central part of the China-Laos-Thailand corridor of the PRC's flagship development Belt and Road

⁵⁸ www.asia.nikkei.com/Politics/Thai-election/Thai-PM-hopeful-fights-accusation-of-election-wrongdoing (07-06-2023)

⁵⁹ www.ned.org/fellows/ms-chiranuch-premchaiporn/ (07-06-2023)

⁶⁰ www.ned.org/region/asia/thailand-2021/ (07-06-2023)

⁶¹ www.bangkokpost.com/thailand/general/2073783/govt-to-regulate-all-ngos (07-06-2023)

⁶² www.landdestroyer.blogspot.com/search/label/Thailand (07-06-2023)

⁶³

www.atlas.cid.harvard.edu/explore?country=216&queryLevel=location&product=undefined&year.. (07-06-2023)

Initiative.⁶⁴ Such cooperation benefits Thailand, South East Asia and the PRC, and this is why US-led imperialism seeks to undermine or sabotage it. The European Union (EU) also seeks to break Thailand away from cooperation with the Russian Federation, despite Thailand's long standing friendly and stable relations with Russia. The EU has demanded that Thailand vote with the West in the United Nations (UN) in favour of Ukraine in NATO's proxy war against Russia. Yet the previous Thai Prime Minister, Prayuth Chan-o-cha, had insisted that Thailand will maintain its neutrality in the Russia-Ukraine conflict, which mirrors the position of the PRC.⁶⁵



Above: Former Thai Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-o-cha meeting with Vladimir Putin, the President of the Russian Federation. Strong Thai-Russian relations will be vastly undermined if the Move Forward Party manages to push Pita Limjaroenrat into office. www.bangkokpost.com

Now, Thailand's friendly and stable relations with both the Russian Federation and the neighbouring People's Republic of China are set to erode or be reversed. The *New Atlas* has been prominent in altering the region and the world to the fact that

the MFP has already vowed allegiance to US foreign policy⁶⁶ even before officially taking office. Two months before the Thai election in May Pita Limjaroenrat raised a demand for Russia to remove troops from Ukraine "immediately" – which would mean victory for NATO armed Nazis and further escalatory steps towards world war. The MFP had also urged the Thai government to place harsh sanctions on the State Administration Council in neighbouring Myanmar, and give unconditional welcome to refugees from Myanmar regardless of "Covid-19".⁶⁷ Unfortunately, the governments of Thailand, Myanmar, Vietnam and the PRC all fell victim to the nonsensical Covid narrative, or imposed it on their populations in an effort to stay the hand of imperialism. Yet Washington and Europe demand total ideological obeisance, not just a salute to *one* form of repression.

MFP vows to inflame terror in Myanmar

Little more than a week after the Thai election on May 14, a key foreign affairs advisor to the MFP stated that the incoming government will no longer be "quiet" on the political situation in neighbouring Myanmar. Fuadi Pitsuwan, who studied at the prestigious Harvard University and Georgetown University in Washington DC, indicated that Thailand will take a more active role the region and highlighted the importance of the Burma (the former name of Myanmar) Act.⁶⁸ The Burma Act is not Thai legislation, nor that of any country in South East Asia, but is in fact an act of the US Congress which authorises the US government to supply "non-lethal" aid to "resistance" forces in Myanmar. The Act enables the US government to impose sanctions on Myanmar's state-owned Oil and Gas Enterprise, may prohibit the import of precious and semi-precious gemstones from Myanmar, and

⁶⁴ www.journal-neo.org/2021/07/13/belt-road-the-china-laos-thailand-corridor/ (07-06-2023)

⁶⁵ www.journal-neo.org/2022/03/03/west-pressures-thailand-to-take-their-side-against-russia/ (07-06-2023)

⁶⁶ www.youtube.com/watch?v=MDLmjxcXATU (10-06-2023)

⁶⁷ <https://thedi diplomat.com/2022/03/what-would-thailands-foreign-policy-look-like-under-pita-limjaroenrats-leadership/> (07-06-2023)

⁶⁸ www.irrawaddy.com/news/the-world-myanmar/thailand-will-no-longer-be-quiet-on-myanmar-incoming-coalition.html (10-06-2023)

facilitates funding from the US Agency for International Development (USAID) to “democracy activists” and “reconciliation efforts”.⁶⁹

The overblown “democracy” rhetoric of the US government should give the game away. Washington is attempting nothing less than full scale regime change in Myanmar, as retaliation for the Tatmadaw moving to end the decades long interference in its domestic politics by removing the NLD amid substantiated claims of overt electoral fraud in the 2020 election.⁷⁰ Whatever the politics behind the Tatmadaw, the only way to prevent Myanmar being totally subverted to the dictates of both Washington and London, was to end the situation where no party could be elected apart from the imperialist backed NLD. In response, the US and UK governments have encouraged and activated violent terrorism on the ground, dressed up in the verbiage of “democracy” against “military rule”. There is even a fake self-declared government (National Unity Government – NUG) in exile, which directs and links with the absurdly named “People’s Defence Force” (PDF). The PDF has targeted any local government official, state electricity workers, and informants (any civilian which does not support the PDF) with *assassination*, usually by bombings in public places.⁷¹

Washington and London may not have to resort to violent terror in Thailand, as it has in Myanmar, if the MFP, leading an eight-party coalition, does form government in Bangkok. The MFP is already willing to subvert Thailand to the aims of imperialism in the region, which is primarily to contain and encircle the socialistic PRC with hostile governments. The aim is to not only sever vital trade and commercial links with China but provide a political and potentially even military staging post for sabotage of the critically needed economic development in South-

East Asia. All of this runs directly counter to the interests of working people. While economic co-operation with the PRC is necessary, the working class needs the expansion of the *economic* gains of China’s 1949 revolution *combined with* a political resurgence of genuine socialism in the region. This requires a rupture from the strict “socialism in one country” dictates of the ruling Stalinist castes in the PRC, Vietnam and Laos via proletarian political revolutions, led by forces animated by authentic Leninism. As far away as this appears today, only the formation of vanguard parties animated by Permanent Revolution throughout South-East Asia can guide workers towards these goals. Imperialist interference – through elections, foreign funded parties and civil society groups, street and/or military violence – will only be finally brought to an end with proletarian rule.



⁶⁹ [www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/senate-bill/2937](https://www.congress.gov/bills/117/congress/senate/bills/2937) (10-06-2023)

⁷⁰ www.thestar.com/news/world/asia/2021/11/16/myanmar-election-body-charges-suu-kyi-with-electoral-fraud.html (10-06-2023)

⁷¹ www.redfireonline.com/2021/11/22/fake-government-fuels-terrorism-in-myanmar/ (10-06-2023)

LABOR FUNDS AND ARMS NAZIS – AGAIN



Above: Australian M113 armoured personnel carriers, of the type being sent to Nazi infested forces in Ukraine. www.reddit.com

(Article sourced from www.redfireonline.com)

03-07-2023: The Australian Labor Party (ALP) federal government has once again used taxpayers' money to funnel funding and weapons to Ukraine. In a media release from the office of Prime Minister Anthony Albanese, the Australian government announced a new \$110 million "assistance" package for Ukraine. The package includes 70 military vehicles, including M113 armoured carriers, a supply of 105mm artillery, and \$10 million for the United Nations (UN) overseen Ukrainian Humanitarian Fund.⁷² This latest tranche of "aid" brings the total Australian government contribution to Ukraine to a staggering \$790 million, which includes \$610 million in military hardware.⁷³ The

"opposition" Liberal Party of Australia (LPA) criticised the ALP – for not providing enough money and weapons. Opposition Leader Peter Dutton described the package as a "garage sale" of unwanted and obsolescent military vehicles that needed to be decommissioned anyway. The M113 armoured vehicle does date back to the Vietnam War, and some military commentators say that they would have depreciated in value to zero many years ago. Dutton also complained that Australia should have sent the new Australian built Hawkei vehicles, given that Ukraine has specifically requested them previously.⁷⁴

Danger of world war

⁷² www.pm.gov.au/media/australia-pledges-further-support-ukraine (28-06-2023)

⁷³ www.thenewdaily.com.au/news/politics/australian-politics/2023/06/26/australia-aid-military-ukraine/ (28-06-2023)

⁷⁴ www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/we-re-starving-ukraine-opposition-blasts-government-aid-package-20230627-p5djun.html (28-06-2023)

Every dollar and every weapon that the West now ships to Ukraine continues to add to the extreme danger of a nuclear world war. The West, via NATO and other quisling governments such as Australia and Canada,⁷⁵ is not only waging a proxy war on Russia via Ukraine but is recklessly endangering the future of human civilisation. More than this, the US and UK governments – along with their allies – are funding and arming Nazis in Ukraine to do their bidding. It is undeniable that the Ukrainian government, since it was overthrown in a US backed coup in 2014, has integrated Nazi militias into its state – the Azov Battalion being only the one which is most well-known. Ukraine is the only state in the world to have Nazi formations as part of its state, and some say that the Azov Battalion has even built a “state within a state”.⁷⁶ Yet the so-called liberal and supposedly progressive Labor Party does not even bat an eyelid at dumping money and military vehicles directly into the hands of Nazified forces with a vitriolic hatred of Russians to aid NATO’s endless war escalations.

Albanese’s rhetoric about Russia’s “immoral invasion” of Ukraine is daily exposed as a wild inversion of the facts on the ground. NATO has been provoking Russia for at least 20 years, and Russia has demonstrated almost limitless restraint in responding to dire threats to its security. Meanwhile the Nazified Ukrainian forces, knowing that they are being totally overwhelmed by Russia’s military and manufacturing capacity, are resorting to all kinds of provocations in an effort to draw NATO directly in to confront Russia. Reports say that “UkroNazi” junta forces have effectively taken over the South Ukraine Nuclear Power Plant in Yuzhnoukrainsk in the Nikolayev region.⁷⁷ Speculation is rife that the Ukrainian forces will set off some type of nuclear

explosion in the plant, blame Russia, and then somehow invoke Article 5 of NATO’s charter to draw the US directly into the conflict. This comes after the Ukrainian armed forces have repeatedly launched air strikes on the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant,⁷⁸ in a seeming effort to trigger an explosion at the plant which Russian forces secured in the early days of its Special Military Operation (SMO). Yet much of the Western corporate media barely reported these deliberate efforts to blow up the largest nuclear power plant in Europe.

The “left” and “democracy”

Potentially, these latest weapons shipments from Western governments to Ukraine come in the wake of an attempted coup by parts of the Wagner private military corporation in Russia, led by Yevgeny Prigozhin.⁷⁹ This coup failed and was extinguished by Vladimir Putin’s government in less than 24 hours, arguably resulting in a strengthening of the Russian government and its steady military gains. Meanwhile, the Ukrainian shell government of Volodymyr Zelensky has long since carried out its own coup against “their own” people, demolishing any pretence of elective democracy. In 2022, Zelensky simply banned eleven opposition political parties in Ukraine, for allegedly maintaining ties to Russia. The largest opposition party which was banned was the Platform for Life, which until that time held 44 out of 450 seats the Ukrainian parliament, the Verkhovna Rada.⁸⁰ If this wasn’t enough of a shredding of the remaining scraps of democracy, Zelensky recently announced a cancelling of any elections at all in Ukraine, supposedly because of martial law.⁸¹

In a situation where NATO is waging a proxy war against a nuclear superpower, and US imperialism

⁷⁵ www.cbc.ca/news/politics/trudeau-ukraine-visit-counteroffensive-russia-1.6871411 (28-06-2023)

⁷⁶ www.theinteldrop.org/2022/06/25/ukraines-neo-nazi-azov-battalion-has-built-a-state-within-a-state/ (28-06-2023)

⁷⁷ www.infobrics.org/post/38703/ (28-06-2023)

⁷⁸ www.sott.net/article/474471-Ukrainian-forces-hit-Zaporozhye-plant-12-times-nuclear-cooling-waste-storage-amongst-areas-hit (28-06-2023)

⁷⁹ www.sputnikglobe.com/20230626/putin-mutineers-wanted-russian-soldiers-to-kill-each-other-kyiv-wanted-the-same---1111480880.html (28-06-2023)

⁸⁰ www.nationalreview.com/news/zelensky-suspends-opposition-parties-in-ukraine-with-russia-ties/ (28-06-2023)

⁸¹ www.republicworld.com/world-news/russia-ukraine-crisis/no-elections-in-country-until-martial-law-ends-ukrainian-president-zelenskyy-articleshow.html (28-06-2023)

and its satraps are funding and arming Nazis to defend a government which bans opposition parties and cancels elections, one would expect the political left to be up in arms. Yet almost all of what passes for the left in the West remain silent, or even quietly applaud the warmongers to “stand with Ukraine”. Phil Shannon skillfully draws the parallels for this nominal left which fell holus-bolus for both of the Covid and Ukraine psy-ops.⁸² Firstly marching in lockstep with an imperialism which shut down economies, threw millions of workers out of employment and subjected them to house arrest with the excuse of “health”, this so-called left heeled on command to prosecute NATO’s perilous war on Russia. In the process, this fraudulent left has aligned itself with Big Pharma, capitalist states, the CIA, censorship and more,⁸³ while lowering itself to cheering on near genocidal Nazis as “democrats”.

To be sure, it is not only the Socialist Alliance⁸⁴ and Socialist Alternative⁸⁵ which have either stumped for imperialism or remained silent as the West drives the globe to war. Trade Union officials remain totally silent, which once again demonstrates their fealty to Australian and international capitalism. This betrayal of the ostensible left on Covid and imperialist war has led to a situation where the Aussie Cossack⁸⁶ is virtually the only figure who has the position to call anti-war actions, given his leading role in stirring opposition to Covid lockdowns and mandates, and now facilitating a defence of Russia against all kinds of anti-democratic acts. The extreme Russophobia being perpetrated by the government includes the terminating of a lease on land which the Russian government was planning to build its new embassy in Canberra.⁸⁷ The Aussie Cossack, despite his pro-

Tsarist views, is exposing the so-called left as willing foot soldiers for a declining empire, all while being effectively detained in the Russian consulate in Sydney. Working people should demand the dropping of the entirely trumped-up charges weighed against the Aussie Cossack by the New South Wales Police.⁸⁸



Above: These Australia wide rallies against NATO’s proxy war in Ukraine against Russia were called by the Aussie Cossack. For his leadership against Covid repression and defending Russia against imperialism, the Aussie Cossack has been targeted by the Federal and New South Wales police. Now seeking asylum in the Russian Consulate in Sydney, he faces arrest on trumped-up charges if he steps outside. Despite some of his pro-Tsarist views, working people should demand that all charges against him be dropped. Image from www.twitter.com

⁸² www.real-left.com/covid-and-ukraine-ctrl-c-ctrl-v-part-1/ (28-06-2023)

⁸³ www.real-left.com/covid-and-ukraine-ctrl-c-ctrl-v-part-2/ (28-06-2023)

⁸⁴ www.greenleft.org.au/content/us-socialist-we-should-support-ukraine-against-russias-military-imperialism-and-vests (28-06-2023)

⁸⁵ www.redflag.org.au/article/ukraine-war-russia-out-no-nato (28-06-2023)

⁸⁶ t.me/AussieCossack (<https://t.me/AussieCossack>) (28-06-2023)

⁸⁷ www.abc.net.au/news/2023-06-15/government-to-terminate-lease-for-new-russian-embassy/102482098 (28-06-2023)

⁸⁸ www.redfireonline.com/2023/03/06/release-the-aussie-cossack/ (28-06-2023)

No to war on Russia or China

Those aghast at the apparent lunacy of Washington and Canberra risking nuclear war by constant escalations directed against Russia need only glance at a few economic statistics to find out why. Despite all of the Western sanctions levelled at the Russian Federation, its inflation rate remains at a measly 2.3%.⁸⁹ Yet many realise that Russia is currently being targeted by imperialism only as the precursor to the larger confrontation with Russia's ally the People's Republic of China (PRC). In the PRC, thanks to predominantly public ownership of the means of production and a planned economy, its inflation rate in May this year is a virtually negligible 0.2%.⁹⁰ Due to private profit not being the primary driver of economic activity in the PRC, almost 30% of *world* manufacturing output now takes place in China – which is more than that of the US, Europe and Japan *combined*.⁹¹ In the critical fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), it is estimated that the PRC will produce 77 000 PhD graduates each year compared to 40 000 each year in the US. If international students in the US are excluded from its count, Chinese STEM PhD graduates would outnumber their US counterparts by a ratio of more than three to one.⁹²

Socialistic rule is today only the case for China, and not at all for Russia. Nevertheless, their strategic alliance combined with Russia's military superiority, still largely inherited from the former Soviet Union, fuses to form a formidable non-imperialist bloc which is attracting many countries of the Middle East, Africa, Latin America and South-East Asia. 25 countries have expressed interest in the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa) alliance, and eight have formally applied to join.⁹³ The US and Europe are in the throes of losing centuries of dominance, so it is lashing out in a catastrophically

dangerous last-ditch attempt to remain in power. Yet their capitalist mode of production has long since proved obsolete on the scales of history, and now it only produces entirely absurd political contradictions, such as the funding and arming of Nazis in the name of “democracy”.

Despite the fact that neither of the leaderships of Russia or China attempt to provide political direction, the working class internationally has a vital stake in defending them militarily against the encroachments of US and Australian imperialism. A final escape from the danger of war means the overthrow of the rule of finance capital in the West, combined with proletarian political revolutions in the East, and especially in the PRC. Key to this historic task is the forging of internationally linked vanguard parties with a foundation of the Marxist theory of Permanent Revolution. Meanwhile, *workers should demand an end to, and seek to block, all funding and weapons shipments to Ukraine.*



Above: The BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa) economic and political alliance is forming a formidable alternative to the US and European dominated West. www.mediasat.info

⁸⁹ www.statbureau.org/en/russia/inflation (01-07-2023)

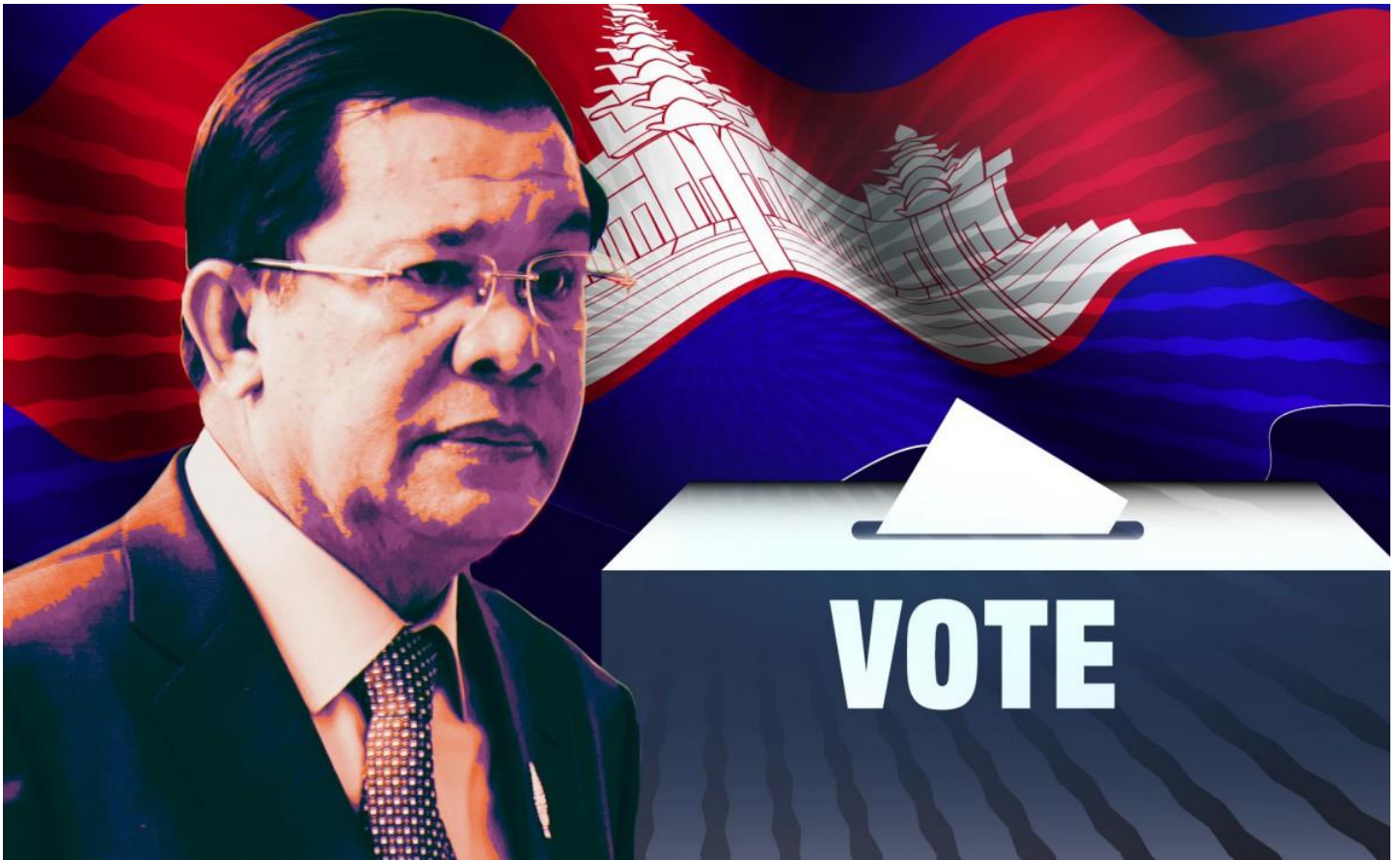
⁹⁰ www.tradingeconomics.com/china/inflation-cpi (01-07-2023)

⁹¹ www.weforum.org/agenda/2020/02/countries-manufacturing-trade-exports-economics/ (01-07-2023)

⁹² www.cset.georgetown.edu/wp-content/uploads/China-is-Fast-Outpacing-U.S.-STEM-PhD-Growth.pdf (01-07-2023)

⁹³ www.watcher.guru/news/brics-full-list-of-countries-that-want-to-join-alliance (01-07-2023)

CAMBODIA RESISTS WASHINGTON'S ELECTION INTERFERENCE



Above: Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen www.cambodiadaily.com

(Article sourced from www.redfireonline.com)

10-07-2023: The quinquennial Cambodian elections are set to take place in the South-East Asian nation on July 23, and US imperialism is up to its old tricks once again. This time, Washington has employed US based social media giant Facebook to do its bidding. Prime Minister Hun Sen had his Facebook account suspended after “The Oversight Board”, which supposedly is run independently of Meta (Facebook’s owner), overturned Meta’s decision to leave up a video in which Hun Sen allegedly threatened his political opponents with violence.⁹⁴ In response, Hun Sen said he would move to Telegram, Tik Tok and local television to spread his

political message. US government funded Human Rights Watch’s Phil Robertson pushed the bounds of rationality by claiming that Hun Sen was called out for inciting violence against his opponents by Facebook, and had moved to Telegram which is supposedly “the favoured media messaging system of despots ranging from Russia to Myanmar”.⁹⁵

Facebook expelled

In reality, Facebook is being utilised by the US deep state to prosecute its ongoing meddling in Cambodian affairs, with the aim of installing a pro-Washington regime hostile to Asia’s largest economic and military power – the People’s

⁹⁴ www.cambodianess.com/article/pm-hun-sen-hits-back-after-facebook-suspension (05-07-2023)

⁹⁵ www.abc.net.au/news/2023-06-29/cambodia-prime-minister-hun-sen-facebook-swap-telegram-election/102539208 (05-07-2023)

Republic of China (PRC). To their credit, Hun Sen and the Cambodian People's Party (CPP) are aware of this blatant interference and in recent years have taken legitimate actions to remove pro-US political proxy forces from their small nation. On July 3, the Cambodian Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications expelled all Facebook representatives and ordered the social media giant to halt all activities. The ministry stated that it had reviewed Facebook for irregularities, the creation of fake accounts, the dissemination of false information and interference in the political affairs of the country.⁹⁶ Arguably, if many more governments around the world had taken such action 10 years ago, there would never have been the "Arab Spring" and a host of attempted "colour revolutions" throughout Eurasia, Africa and Latin America in the time since.

Unlike its neighbour Thailand, in recent years the Cambodian government has acted to punish those who work with the US state department in order to overturn or destabilise society. In 2017 the Cambodian Supreme Court dissolved the US backed Cambodian National Rescue Party (CNRP) and its leader Kem Sokha was charged with treason for plotting the overthrow of Cambodia in collusion with Washington. During the hearing at the time, the Cambodian government's lawyers presented 26 pieces of evidence that proved the CNRP was involved in a plot to topple the administration.⁹⁷ When Kem Sokha was subsequently sentenced to 27 years in prison for conspiring with the US to oust Hun Sen, the liberal Western media claimed that such moves were "politically motivated".⁹⁸ Yet this was no trumped-up charge. A video which was cited by the Cambodian prosecution has Kem Sokha

clearly stating that he does not "do anything at my own will. Their experts, professors at Universities in Washington DC, Montreal Canada, hired by the Americans in order to advise me on the strategy to change the dictator leader in Cambodia."⁹⁹ In the same video Kem Sokha admits to visiting the US every year since 1993 !

The CNRP was clearly a front for US state sponsored regime change in Cambodia, and its successor the Candlelight Party (CLP) has also been denied the right to run in the July 2023 elections. Cambodia's election commission demand the CLP produce its original registration document from the Ministry of Interior in order to run for the election. The CLP, however, claim that the document was lost in police raids on the CNRP offices in 2017.¹⁰⁰ The Western corporate media blares that the CPP has banned the "main opposition party" prior to the election. This is a likely story. Reporting conducted by the New Atlas has exposed the role of the CIA public relations arm – the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) - in Cambodia over previous decades.¹⁰¹ The NED itself admits to funnelling more than one million US dollars just in the calendar year 2021 to a host of "civil society" organisations in Cambodia ostensibly promoting the "rule of law", "press freedom" and "citizen participation".¹⁰² It can scarcely be more apparent that these activities only act to build a political pole of opposition to the Cambodian government and society in general in favour of US foreign policy interests for Asia and the Pacific, via willing or misled dissidents and impressionable youths.

Target China

⁹⁶ www.english.cambodiadaily.com/politics/cambodia-expels-facebook-reps-after-pm-deletes-account-183300/ (05-07-2023)

⁹⁷ www.chinadailyhk.com/articles/36/250/122/1510843732941.html (05-07-2023)

⁹⁸ www.theguardian.com/world/2023/mar/03/us-condemns-fabricated-case-as-cambodian-opposition-leader-is-jailed-for-27-years-treason-kem-sokha (05-07-2023)

⁹⁹ www.phnompenhpost.com/national/sokha-video-producer-closes-phnom-penh-office-fear (05-07-2023)

¹⁰⁰ www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/5/17/cambodias-main-opposition-party-barred-from-july-election (05-07-2023)

¹⁰¹ www.youtube.com/watch?v=93v4qKrEzXs (05-07-2023)

¹⁰² www.ned.org/region/asia/cambodia-2021/ (05-07-2023)

US foreign policy interests in South-East Asia are primarily bound up with attempting to sever, break or sabotage relations with the PRC. Cambodia, as a small country historically mired in poverty, has little choice but to engage in mutually beneficial relations with the PRC, given its vast and predominantly state-owned economy which fuels ongoing economic growth for itself, its neighbours, and those who trade with it. The PRC is Cambodia's largest trading partner, with China accounting for 21.6% of the Cambodian Kingdom's total trade of \$44.56 billion from January to October of 2022.¹⁰³ A China-Cambodia Free Trade Agreement officially took effect on January 1, 2022, after two years of negotiations. This is not a free trade agreement with winners and losers, however. Under its terms, more than 90% of products attract zero tariffs on both sides, and Cambodia and China agree to deepen co-operation with the PRC's flagship trillion-dollar infrastructure and investment project the Belt and Road Initiative, as well as in areas of e-commerce and economic technology.¹⁰⁴

As one result, by the end of 2022, Chinese firms had invested more than 10 billion US dollars in Cambodia.¹⁰⁵ With a per capita Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of approximately 1600 dollars,¹⁰⁶ Cambodia can hardly turn down the offer of working with the gargantuan socialistic PRC economy. Yet this is precisely the aim of US imperialist meddling in Cambodia, as well as Thailand, Myanmar, Laos, Vietnam and any other country in Red China's vicinity. Cambodia's growing economic ties with the PRC infuriate Washington, which is largely powerless to stop them short of provoking a civil war, or indeed some kind of war against the PRC in the Pacific. This is unfortunately what the US seeks to provoke in the South China Sea, where it openly taunts Beijing by sailing warships through the area,

and even through the Taiwan strait. In addition, the US Biden administration continues to pressure Cambodia over the building of the Ream Naval Base in the Gulf of Thailand. Cambodian officials have insisted that the Ream Naval Base will be accessible for multiple nations, not just the PRC.¹⁰⁷ The US government is not convinced, given that Chinese firms were involved in its construction, which took place after US built buildings at the base were demolished in 2020 to make way for it.¹⁰⁸



Above: One of the many construction projects that Chinese firms are involved with in Cambodia, which greatly assists Cambodia's economic development. The West is not in any position to offer similar mutually beneficial projects. www.southeastasiaglobe.com

US sanctions

As with many other countries, the US state has applied sanctions on Cambodia in a vain attempt to undermine or reverse its economic and military co-operation with the PRC. In September 2021, the US House of Representatives passed the "Cambodia Democracy Act" which allows the President to

¹⁰³ www.khmertimeskh.com/501184696/cambodia-china-trade-rises-7-to-9-62-billion/ (05-07-2023)

¹⁰⁴ www.globaltimes.cn/page/202111/1239571.shtml (05-07-2023)

¹⁰⁵ www.china.org.cn/china/Off_the_Wire/2023-02/10/content_85099586.htm (05-07-2023)

¹⁰⁶ www.macrotrends.net/countries/KHM/cambodia/gdp-per-capita (05-07-2023)

¹⁰⁷ www.foreignpolicy.com/2022/12/05/us-china-cambodia-ream-naval-base/ (05-07-2023)

¹⁰⁸ www.asiatimes.com/2020/10/cambodia-playing-us-to-squeeze-more-from-china/ (05-07-2023)

impose sanctions on individuals in the Cambodian government, military or security forces which supposedly “undermine democracy” and commit “serious human rights violations”.¹⁰⁹ The US government had already imposed an arms embargo on Cambodia as a “military end user” alongside Myanmar, the PRC, Russia and Venezuela.¹¹⁰ These sanctions have little effect, given the fact that Cambodia was long tilting away from economic and military deals with the US in favour of those with its Chinese near neighbour. It is entirely to be expected that any nation that asserts a shred of independence from the US Empire will in return be labelled a “dictatorship”, with a “lack of human rights” and a supposed non-democracy. With the economic rise of the PRC, many such nations can now afford to ignore this black propaganda and simply discontinue ties to Washington.



To be sure, the CPP is not always a friend of the working class. During the fraudulent “Covid-19 pandemic”, Cambodian government officials stridently defended nonsensical vaccine mandates as “normal” which has “nothing to do with human rights violations”.¹¹¹ In fact, forcefully injecting people with a potentially deadly substance is the very definition of a violation of human rights. Despite this, the governments of China, Australia and the US strongly supported the Cambodian governments widespread imposition of vaccines during “Covid”, even if they did not impose brutal lockdowns as hysterically as they were in China, Australia, New Zealand and the US. Hun Sen and the Cambodian government proved wholly inconsistent in seeing through imperialist narratives.

Despite this, it is in the interests of workers internationally to *defend Cambodia against the encroachments of US and Western imperialism*, from election interference to funding pseudo-progressive “civil society” fronts up to and including regime change. Cambodia has the right to engage in trade and military co-operation with the PRC, and whichever country they choose. At the same time, neither the CPP nor the Communist Party of China (CPC) has the political outlook which can guide workers of South-East Asia forward. The CPC is enmeshed in Maoism/Stalinism, and one result is that it does not propagate socialism or even class struggle inside or outside China. Neither does the CPP, even while it partially defends itself from Western interference. What is required are *workers’ states* in Cambodia, Myanmar, and Thailand, combined with *proletarian political revolutions* in China, Vietnam and Laos. The precondition for this upheaval is the assembly of Trotskyist vanguard parties throughout the region, to ensure the triumph of socialism and the subsequent end of US imperialism.

¹⁰⁹ www.congress.gov/bills/117/congress/house-bills/4686 (05-07-2023)

¹¹⁰ www.sanctionsnews.bakermckenzie.com/us-government-tightens-export-controls-for-cambodia/ (05-07-2023)

¹¹¹ www.phnompenhpost.com/national/officials-mandatory-jab-policy-standard-practice-pandemic (05-07-2023)

REAL LEFT AUSTRALIA BEGINS



(Article sourced from www.redfireonline.com)

08-05-2023: March 2020 signaled the beginning of the “Great Reset”. Ostensibly in response to a new and potentially deadly virus, Australian federal and state governments led a gigantic assault on working people, aided by saturation level propaganda from all wings of the corporate media. Lockdowns – previously never known outside of prisons, were announced and enforced by the police and the army. Facemask mandates were imposed and often overseen by all kinds of state operatives. Whole sections of the economy were shut down, throwing hundreds of thousands out of work. State and international borders were closed, in clear violation of the Australian Constitution. Vaccine mandates were to follow, forcing millions of workers into a

horrific “choice” of taking an untested and potentially deadly injection, or losing their employment. Restaurants, gyms, cinemas, theatres and more were ordered to cease trading. Attendance at weddings and funerals was restricted or banned. Public assemblies were banned, effectively removing the right to free speech. Big Tech censored social media platforms. Those questioning the crackdown were stifled or removed.

The Great Reset led to the Great Capitulation

We could go on, but many now do not wish to relive these horrendous times. The gravity of state repression was immense, and millions felt that something was wrong. Yet what was the response of the political left – those who supposedly stood

against the power of finance capital, against the minority rule of billionaires, for democratic and human rights, for civil liberties and for pluralism? With a few exceptions, virtually the entire “Left” capitulated heavily to the pressure of imperialism. All of their declamations against capitalism vanished overnight. All class differences, the gap between rich and poor, between the powerful and the powerless, between labour and capital – became obsolete at the drop of a hat, according to this “Left”. Everyone was now “all in this together”, politicians and voters, scientists engaged by Big Pharma, state governors, school children, corporate magnates and wharf labourers, the captains of industry and hospitality workers and on and on.

This “left”, the lockdown left which became the Covid left, from “socialist” groups to Union officials to “progressive” intellectuals, were essentially making the fantastic claim that Labor, Liberal and Green politicians tell lies about everything else, but they were telling the truth about “Covid”. Likewise with the corporate media, Big Media inculcates false narratives about everything else, except “public health”. What was perhaps most astonishing was that these “Marxists” were effectively saying that when it comes to health care, the capitalist state is neutral. They implied that the state represents *everyone*. More than this, they intimated that the primary function of this state is to care for people’s health, and that all measures it took to counter an alleged virus, were attempts to save people’s lives!

If the state is primarily, or in any way, trying to “save the lives” of the working class, then there is no reason to politically oppose it. If what the Covid left was saying was true – that labour and capital have the same interests when it comes to health, then all other issues must be subordinated to this fact. The state may be driving up the cost of living, enriching the elite, desecrating the environment, stripping

funding from schools and hospitals – but it is most concerned with the well being of the masses! Yet not only is no class struggle possible if your class adversaries are trying to save your life (!), then there can be no politics at all. If “we are all in this together” then society is not divided into classes, and in fact there are no divisions in society whatsoever. Whatever this is, it is obviously not left-wing.

The Covid left not only rejected the Marxist theory of the state, they rejected the very basis for political and ideological struggle *in toto*. Shockingly, many of them practically merged with the state. What was most apparent during what could be termed lockdown fascism, was that *Covid was the class line*. The bitter invective levelled at those who refused to get vaccinated, and the millions who formed the freedom movement, was unmistakably class hatred *even if* whole sections of this movement had political views which were anything but left-wing. Questioning, much less opposing, lockdowns and the litany of hardly legal rules which beggar belief (the banning of singing and dancing..??) was seen as an unpardonable deviation from the totalitarian ideology of the “pandemic”. Those who were skeptical of an “emergency” were assumed to be “anti-vaxxers” and “conspiracy theorists”. This was a knee-jerk dehumanization of anyone who retained their own views. The base betrayal and treachery of the Covid left which impelled others to comply to this maniacal terror should be obvious.

The Real Left

This monumental capitulation by the Covid left immediately posed the need for a new left to emerge. In the United Kingdom (UK), a group of left-wing dissidents formed the Left Lockdown Skeptics. Recently, after lockdowns and other “pandemic” measures have finally faded away, the group was renamed the Real Left.¹¹² This was bold, but in our

¹¹² www.real-left.com (03-05-2023)

view, most apt. It is not only a new left that must be built, but a real left, with real left-wing positions. The left-wing/right-wing dichotomy does still exist, despite many in the freedom/anti-lockdown/anti-mandate movement having their doubts. Such doubts are understandable, given what has occurred during three years of horror for the vast majority. Of course the billionaires made stupendous amounts of money from the lockdown and Covid mania – which indicates one of the real reasons for it all. Patently, a real left must stand against the immense gap between rich and poor, and not help it along! A real left must retain some traditional left-wing values, while adapting to the post-Covid situation. This period is arguably just the next phase of capitalist crisis.



Above: One of the many freedom rallies held in Melbourne during the period of horrific Covid lockdowns. Hundreds of thousands of mainly working class people fought against them with all they had, but they were abandoned and betrayed by almost all parties and individuals who thought of themselves as left-wing. www.heraldsun.com.au

Following the lead of the Real Left UK, the Real Left Australia (RLA) has now begun.¹¹³ In time, we hope

¹¹³ t.me/RealLeftAustralia (03-05-2023)

it grows towards something approaching the Real Left UK, and that other international sections of the Real Left begin in other countries. RLA is at one level an attempt to reach those who were a part of the freedom movement who see or saw themselves as left-wing. They may be former members of socialist organisations, or former or current Union members. We understand how flabbergasted they must have been with what formerly passed for the “left” in Australia, and elsewhere, given their behaviour from 2020 to 2023. In addition, such people probably did not come into contact with other current or former left-wingers who were scattered amongst a sustained mass freedom movement.

It is difficult to believe that every single member of what we term the Covid left were as gung-ho in enforcing Covid terror as the leaders of the Covid left parties and Trade Union officials were. We are sure that there were at least some members and supporters of these organisations that felt extreme unease at melding with Big Tech, Big Media, Big Pharma, the politicians and the liberal intelligentsia during an unprecedented period of conflict. We hope that there are some within these parties that knew something was very wrong, but for various reasons, were not able to speak out against their leadership during a time when the pressure of the capitalist state was intense. The Real Left Australia is an attempt to reach these individuals, to assure them that they are not alone. There is a left that survived the wave of political and ideological suppression, and that it is re-grouping. The Real Left Australia will hopefully be the first step towards nothing less than a redemption of the left.

The Workers League

The Workers League (WL) will seek to help build, organise and work within the RLA. We urge readers and supporters of *Red Fire* to join and aid us with this task. We still see our program and positions as

vital, and will not abandon them in favour of a position of a larger and broader organisation. We may argue and attempt to convince RLA members and supporters of them but will not seek to disrupt the organisation of the RLA in the process. In fact, the process of working together on a common project tends to minimise finer ideological and political positions. While these specific positions remain important, they should not be barriers to working together on other issues.

There MAY be a tendency to adapt to the broader positions of the RLA. If this was to occur, the defined positions of the WL may be “watered down”. This is always a danger when entering a broad coalition. But we are confident that will not be an issue, and will soon become apparent if so. In any case, currently WL positions are welcome within the RLA, while not necessarily receiving universal agreement. RLA is a loose-knit organisation containing differing positions and political and ideological trends, but this is a positive at this stage. Further down the track, it may move towards more of a party type structure. For now, common positions may attempt to be determined for campaigning purposes – however, differing positions will still be welcome within the framework of a Covid critical left.

At this stage, the Real Left Australia will contain all those who are Covid critical and identify themselves as left-wing. That is to say that it will contain those who are pro-freedom but also anti-capitalist. This may include socialists, feminists, anarchists and others. This means the RLA may contain a variety of left-wing views, with the proviso of rejecting fraudulent “pandemics” and all other issues where all classes supposedly have the same interests! This leads on to other issues where there should be a left-wing position. Other international sections of the Real Left may emerge in the next period. We would view this positively. While we seek to work with the founding Real Left UK organisation, we seek to build a “local” Real Left – the RLA.

While the various classes exists objectively, classes are led by parties. Given left parties vie for the allegiance of the working class in its struggle to overthrow capitalism. In this struggle, we regard our interpretation of authentic Leninist-Trotskyism as crucial. We recognise that virtually all Covid left parties who claim to be Trotskyist embarked on an epic betrayal of the working class during the faux “pandemic”. Almost all Stalinist and Maoist parties capitulated to “health” tyranny without a breath of protest. While the Trotskyist vs Stalinist divide remains important for socialist workers to grapple with, even this fundamental dissection was put to one side during the contingencies of the handful of leftists who marched with the freedom movement for basic democratic and civil rights under Covid repression.

In Australia today, the cost of living is deliberately being driven up by the same elite who imprisoned us in lockdowns. Vaccine mandates were an attempt to both drive workers out of employment and a nefarious effort at a covert genocide. Australian politicians are dragging us into insane wars against Russia and China. The banks cannot remain stable as the economy lurches deeper into recession. What Australia desperately needs is a social revolution, where those who labour build their own state and their own administration, as the first step towards a socialist order on a worldwide basis. We hope that Real Left Australia may begin to collate the forces needed for this historic task.

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“Colour Riots” in France as Payback for Dissension



www.interaksyon.philstar.com

(Article sourced from www.redfireonline.com)

17-07-2023: Very little can be ascertained by appearances in politics these days. The “left” sounds like the right, the right sounds like the left that once was, and protests which declare they stand for an issue turn out to be a vehicle for another cause altogether. In the last days of June, France was swept by riots ostensibly in response to the police shooting of Nahel Merzouk, a 17-year-old French delivery driver of Algerian and Moroccan descent, after being pulled over during a traffic stop.¹¹⁴

¹¹⁴ www.heavy.com/news/nahel-m/ (11-07-2023)

French President Emmanuel Macron was quick to denounce the police action as “unforgivable”, and stated that “nothing can justify the death of a young person”. Certainly, there has been a history in France of disaffected youth who have responded to police brutality often against those from Arabic and North and West African backgrounds with somewhat understandable rioting and targeting of the state. One of the most notable was three weeks of riots and a state of emergency in the *banlieues* of Paris in 2005 after two teenagers were electrocuted as they tried to evade police.¹¹⁵ Yet the scale and

¹¹⁵ www.news.sky.com/story/why-are-people-protesting-in-france-and-why-is-there-a-history-of-rioting-12911541 (11-07-2023)

scope of the riots in the last days of June and first days of July in France indicate that something else was afoot.

France on fire

Much of the “left” leapt to the defence of the rioters, while Jean-Luc Melenchon of La France Insoumise (LFI or “France Unbowed”) did ask the youth not to harm schools, libraries and gymnasiums (many of which were torched or otherwise vandalised), but refused to “call for calm” and countered with a “call for justice”.¹¹⁶ Much of the political right reflexively blamed the problems on immigration, and the problems allegedly flowing from too much of it, leading to some ethnic petty crime and a supposed “failure to assimilate”. A demand to assimilate into a society in which many from migrant backgrounds are discriminated against in areas such as employment is unreasonable and unpalatable. Yet Nahel was born and raised in France, as are many of those who inhabit the suburbs of Paris and other French cities, so immigration *as such* is not directly the issue. While it cannot be denied that racism, low paid jobs, marginalisation and police brutality remain in France, these factors alone cannot explain the extraordinary speed and extent of the extreme violence which ensued.

Some reports had 41 police stations attacked, 2560 fires in streets, 1360 cars burnt and 234 buildings set alight.¹¹⁷ At the transport depot at Aubervilliers in the north of Paris, 12 *public buses* were totally destroyed as they were burnt to a cinder.¹¹⁸ The house Mayor Vincent Jeanbrun was rammed with a

burning car, and his wife suffered a broken leg as she fled with her children.¹¹⁹ The public library in Marseille was set on fire, and masked rioters were hurling objects into the Victor Hugo College as it was encased in flames.¹²⁰ The rioting continued for six nights, with police making over 700 arrests.¹²¹ Unusually compared with previous French riots, this time the riots occurred also in small regional towns far away from the major metropolitan centres, such as Quissac. All told, the damage or destruction waged included some 1100 buildings and more than 6000 vehicles.¹²²

Two decades of French “insubordination”

The so-called left pointed the finger at racism as one of the main motivating factors in the riots. Yet the riots can scarcely be “anti-racist”, given that a bus filled with tourists from China was attacked in Marseille, leading to complaints to the French government by China’s Consular Affairs Office.¹²³ The conservative right pointed the finger at immigration, but less than 5% of France’s population are those who acquire French nationality after birth.¹²⁴ While the issues that the nominal left and the conservative right raise may have some bearing on the events, they both discount the most essential driver – French ruling class dissent with US led imperialism. Granted, most of the time, the French elite are totally on board with the political agenda of maintaining the political rule of world capitalism led by Washington. Yet France’s revolutionary history, stemming from the classical bourgeois revolution in 1789, means that French politics has always been more left-wing than

¹¹⁶ www.lemonde.fr/en/opinion/article/2023/07/06/riots-in-france-the-trouble-with-jean-luc-melenchon_6044385_23.html (11-07-2023)

¹¹⁷ www.policetribune.com/french-riots-spread-to-belgium-switzerland-reports-of-rioters-targeting-christians-conservatives/ (11-07-2023)

¹¹⁸ www.theguardian.com/world/2023/jun/30/monument-french-rage-buses-torched-riots-police-killing (11-07-2023)

¹¹⁹ www.cbsnews.com/news/nanterre-france-riots-arrests-latest-lhay-les-roses-mayor-home-attacked/ (11-07-2023)

¹²⁰ www.humanevents.com/2023/06/30/paris-race-rioters-torch-middle-school-library-after-algerian-teen-killed-at-traffic-stop (11-07-2023)

¹²¹ www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-12255699/Rioters-ram-French-mayors-home-burning-car-assassination-attempt-injures-family.html (11-07-2023)

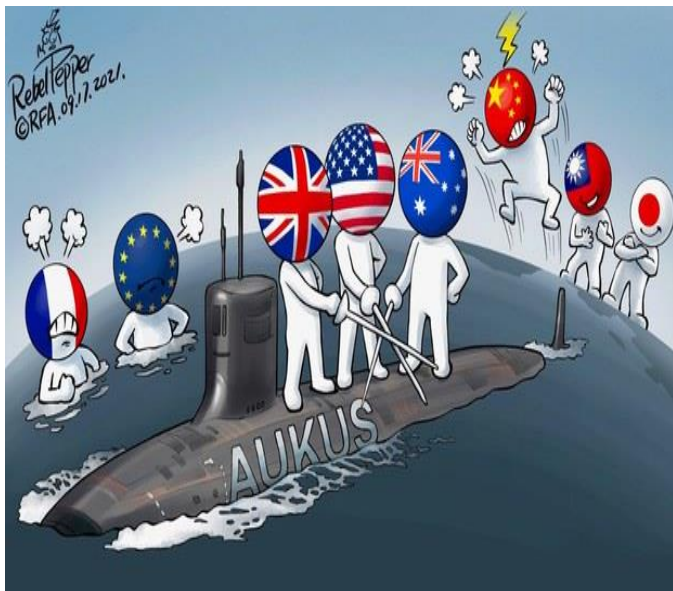
¹²² www.apnews.com/article/france-riots-protests-small-towns-36ea7d521f583bfad35b0d3a234ff909 (11-07-2023)

¹²³ www.reuters.com/world/europe/china-complains-france-after-chinese-tourists-hurt-riots-2023-07-02/ (12-07-2023)

¹²⁴ www.statista.com/statistics/466028/distribution-population-nationality-france/ (12-07-2023)

that which prevails in today's United States of America (US) and the historical United Kingdom (UK).

This means that French politicians over the last 20 years have occasionally taken positions which are unacceptable to Washington and London. In 2003, then French Foreign Minister Dominique de Villepin declared at the United Nations (UN) that France would not support a unilateral US invasion of Iraq, placing France directly at odds with Washington.¹²⁵ In 2008, French Prime Minister Francois Fillon declared that France would not support Georgia and Ukraine becoming members of NATO, due to strong opposition from Russia and a need to have a dialogue with Russia on this question.¹²⁶ In 2019, President Macron infamously declared that NATO was “brain-dead”, referring to the fact that there is no co-ordination between the US and NATO on major security issues.¹²⁷ In 2022, President Macron dropped another howler by merely suggesting that Russia should be offered “security guarantees” in order to facilitate negotiations for an end to the conflict in Ukraine.¹²⁸



This open dissension to the incredibly dangerous war machine agenda of the ruling classes of both the US and the UK can barely be allowed to stand. For, if France is allowed to stand up and say no to Washington, this example may well spread to other smaller nations. In 2021, the US and the UK governments showed utter contempt for France when it forced the cancellation of a \$40 billion deal between France and Australia on the construction of new submarines for the Australian Navy. The deal, which was signed in 2016, was torn up when the governments of Australia, the US and the UK declared the AUKUS military alliance. Apart from obviously being yet another dangerous move towards imperialist war against the People's Republic of China (PRC), Australia would dump its submarine construction deal with France to immediately sign up to one with the US. This outrageous breach of contract, let alone of basic diplomacy, led France to recall its Ambassadors to the US and Australia in response, citing the “unacceptable behaviour” of the US and Australian governments.¹²⁹ The AUKUS snub by Washington, London and Canberra demonstrated what these respective ruling classes really think about their counterparts in Paris.

The BRICS trigger

Arguably, the move of Macron which pushed the Anglo/US imperial establishment over the edge was his attempt to obtain an invitation to the upcoming BRICS summit in South Africa. BRICS is the political and economic alliance of Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa which now accounts for over 40% of global GDP (gross domestic product) and more

¹²⁵ www.raigroup.org/prophetic-speeches-dominique-de-villepin-at-the-un-security-council-in-february-2003 (12-07-2023)

¹²⁶ www.reuters.com/article/uk-nato-france-ukraine-idUKL0115117020080401 (12-07-2023)

¹²⁷ www.politico.eu/article/europe-brain-death-of-nato-emmanuel-macron-says/ (12-07-2023)

¹²⁸

www.english.alarabiya.net/News/world/2022/12/05/French-president-Macron-criticized-for-suggesting-security-guarantees-for-Russia- (12-07-2023)

¹²⁹ www.npr.org/2021/09/17/1038395237/france-recalls-ambassadors-us-australia-nuclear-submarine-deal (12-07-2023)

than half of the world's population.¹³⁰ When the BRICS was first formed 20 years ago it was a concern for the West, but since that time the unstoppable growth of the PRC's socialistic economy has boosted it into a bloc which leaves the West and its floundering G7 club of "rich" countries (France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the US, the UK and Canada)¹³¹ drifting into irrelevance. In seeking a seat at the table of BRICS, Macron was simply recognising the new political and economic realities of the rise of the Eurasia and the decline of the West. Yet Washington and London viewed this move of Macron's as a desertion from the imperialist camp to the side of the non-imperialist arch-rivals.

This was too much, and arguably in response, the deep states of the US and UK pulled the trigger on "colour riots" (as opposed to a colour revolution) in the hexagon. A government or national political leader does not at all need to be an adversary of Washington to be subjected to a regime change attempt. For example, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was the target of a US state backed colour revolution from the start of this year for several reasons, but particularly for not backing NATO's proxy war in Ukraine against Russia.¹³² There could scarcely be anyone less in favour of the US Empire than the leader of Washington's patron Israeli state, but the US ruling class demands total, not partial, subservience. Netanyahu saw a practical need to maintain some cordial political relations with Russia and even with Red China, so Washington used its enormous resources to fuel ongoing protests throughout Israel, effectively calling for the end of the administration of "Bibi".

None of this excuses Macron in any political sense, as Macron has been a bitter enemy of the French working-class ever since taking office. Prior to the

June/July riots, there were three major revolts against Macron's draconian rule from Paris. In 2018 and 2019, the Yellow Vest rebellion shook France to its core, and only really abated with the onset of the repression which began with the fraudulent Covid narrative. Due to the fact that the Unions were not involved, some characterised the Yellow Vests as "right-wing", but in fact the demands of the Yellow Vests were largely progressive, anti-Macron and even anti-capitalist, even if not articulated in such forms.¹³³ During 2020 to 2022, millions in France marched and demonstrated against Macron's unjustifiable vaccine mandates and his freedom crushing Covid passports,¹³⁴ for which there was not a shred of scientific validity.

For a real path forward

For months at the start of this year, millions of workers in France again demonstrated relentlessly against the direct attack on aged pensions. French workers correctly saw that Macron's raising of the pension age from 62 to 64 was yet another brick in the wall of assaults against basic living standards. For four months, demonstrators marched with stern determination, creating enormous political pressure on the government. During the massive May Day 2023 mobilisation in Paris, the Workers League intervened in Paris by raising some key economic demands: for full pensions from age 60 and a six-hour workday. These were linked with the political demand to oppose US/EU/NATO wars on Russia and China via the blocking of weapons shipments to Ukraine.¹³⁵ If achieved this could point the way towards the establishment of a workers' republic in France, which would begin the process of expropriating the major means of production. If not for the deliberate lack of enthusiasm on behalf of most trade union officials, the movement could have forced the government to back down. As it

¹³⁰ www.the-star.co.ke/news/world/2023-07-04-macrons-bid-to-join-brics-summit-signals-rift-with-g7-expert/ (12-07-2023)

¹³¹ www.investopedia.com/terms/g/g7.asp (12-07-2023)

¹³² www.redfireonline.com/2023/04/07/israel-democracy-movement-or-colour-revolution/ (12-07-2023)

¹³³ www.redfireonline.com/2018/12/24/yellow-vest-rebellion-shakes-neo-con-rule/ (12-07-2023)

¹³⁴ www.sott.net/article/455984-France-Macron-calls-for-unity-after-COVID-protests (12-07-2023)

¹³⁵ www.redfireonline.com/2023/04/23/for-a-french-workers-republic/ (12-07-2023)

was, Macron and his government used article 49.3 to essentially force the pension attacks through the parliament without a vote,¹³⁶ obliterating even the formalities of bourgeois democracy. Despite this, the struggle against the pension attacks had a clear majority of support from the French workers.

The Yellow Vest rebellion, the movement against Covid repression and the vast protests against pension attacks were progressive uprisings which challenged the deterioration of capitalism in France and its consequent retribution against the masses. In contrast, the riots of late June and early July expressed no political demands – aside from “justice for Nahel” – yet used extreme violence on an enormous scale in a seeming display of nihilism. The burning of schools, libraries and public buildings cannot be an act of protest, however misguided. The attacks on police stations and even politicians themselves are a sign of something else altogether. It is likely that this was a regime change attempt triggered by the Anglo-American establishment in order to maintain total domination for imperialism. The government of Emmanuel Macron was under attack,¹³⁷ and there may well be further onslaughts unleashed.

Many have drawn comparisons between the Black Lives Matter riots in the US in 2020 in the wake of the death of George Floyd at the hands of police, and the recent riots in France. There are similarities, and both events involved the use of violence in order to topple a sitting President; Donald Trump in 2020, Emmanuel Macron in 2023. Both events aimed at removing a leader who dared to stray – only slightly - from the overbearing political necessity to impose US imperialist dictates. Trump disagreed with the deep state on the need to confront and go to war against Russia and was eventually removed. Macron does not outright

oppose confrontation and war against Russia but is far from enthusiastic about it. Washington and London need him gone, even if through dangerous riots. There is video footage of some rioters firing military grade weapons in Paris and Lyon,¹³⁸ something to which regular protestors would scarcely have access.

Imperialism means war abroad and war at home. Poverty for millions, cost of living pressures for workers who have employment, political repression, contrived riots and uprisings, corruption, censorship and more are the current *modus operandi* of global capitalism. It must be overthrown and be replaced with a socialist order. Neither the woke left nor the conservative right have any answers for the working class, regardless of their rhetoric. Only vanguard parties based on authentic Leninism have the potential to lead the working masses towards the establishment of their own governments and their own states, as the first step towards an egalitarian and harmonious society.



Above: The Yellow Vest rebellion in France preceded the repression of Covid lockdowns and vaccine mandates, and was subject to heavy police repression, despite not engaging in mass violence. www.abcnews.go.com

¹³⁶ www.connexionfrance.com/article/Practical/Everyday-Life/Explainer-what-is-France-s-article-49.3-and-why-is-it-in-the-news (12-07-2023)

¹³⁷ www.alexkrainer.substack.com/p/france-under-attack (12-07-2023)

¹³⁸

www.tasnimnews.com/en/news/2023/07/02/2919492/military-grade-weapons-used-as-france-plunges-into-mass-protests-video (12-07-2023)

DRIVE DOWN THE COST OF LIVING!

(Leaflet issued by Real Left Australia)

26-06-2023: No one needs to be told that the cost of living throughout Australia is out of control. Relative to purchasing power, it has probably never been higher. Working people are being sluggish with price hikes from all sides, and there appears to be no end in sight. Constantly high inflation is eating away at the purchasing power of wages and salaries. Official inflation levels hover around 7%,¹³⁹ but this is likely an understatement. Inflation is running at its highest rate for the last 20 years, and vast numbers of people are struggling to make ends meet. While official unemployment numbers are low, many are finding that jobs that previously provided enough remuneration to pay the bills no longer do so. This spurs some to seek second and third jobs to keep their heads above water.

Basic costs creep higher

A full-scale recession could be on the cards, with the Reserve Bank hitting the public with 12 consecutive interest rate rises over the previous 14 months.¹⁴⁰ This ramps up mortgage repayments for homeowners already dealing with other costs. The Reserve Bank's rationale is that this will "fight inflation", but it may be more likely to contribute to driving the economy into recession. This is in the middle of a housing crisis which may also be the worst ever. Some people with full-time permanent employment are getting knocked back when

applying for a house or unit to rent. Throughout the country, the median house rent is \$550 per week, while the median unit is \$495 per week.¹⁴¹ This makes renting nigh on unaffordable for those on lower incomes, let alone those on income support. As of February this year, more than 640 000 Australian households are under housing stress or homeless.¹⁴² State and Federal governments make token announcements to build more "social" housing, which is barely a fraction of what is needed to start making inroads into the problem.

Something the mainstream media will never report on is the opportunistic corporate price gouging that has occurred since the global economy contracted briefly in the first quarter of 2020.¹⁴³ Food prices in the big two grocery retailers Coles and Woolworths have risen by 9.6% in the past year.¹⁴⁴ In the first quarter of 2023, food prices increased by 8% compared with the same period in the previous year.¹⁴⁵ Adding up these rises, the price of many weekly grocery shopping trips have increased by 50%. It is becoming difficult to obtain inexpensive healthy food, especially fresh fruit and vegetables. It is no longer only struggling students who are resorting to eating instant two-minute noodles. The Foodbank Victoria charity state that it has sustained a 27% increase in distribution this year, with food inflation running higher than inflation itself a major causative factor.¹⁴⁶ On July 1st, electricity and gas bills will rise by a staggering 20 to 25%,¹⁴⁷ when they were already exorbitant to begin with. This means

¹³⁹ www.rba.gov.au/chart-pack/aus-inflation.html (21-06-2023)

¹⁴⁰ www.apnews.com/article/reserve-bank-interest-rates-41-ab265a0fcb10e3cceb51938e2971c346 (21-06-2023)

¹⁴¹ www.mozo.com.au/home-loans/articles/what-is-the-average-rent-in-australia (21-06-2023)

¹⁴² www.savvy.com.au/media-releases/rental-crisis-low-income-households-need-117-of-income-to-pay-rent (21-06-2023)

¹⁴³ www.epi.org/blog/corporate-profits-have-contributed-disproportionately-to-inflation-how-should-policymakers-respond/ (21-06-2023)

¹⁴⁴ www.abc.net.au/news/2023-05-23/supermarket-prices-increase-coles-woolworths-inflation/102380456 (21-06-2023)

¹⁴⁵ www.tradingeconomics.com/australia/food-inflation (21-06-2023)

¹⁴⁶ www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2023/jun/13/foodbank-reports-27-rise-in-food-distributed-across-victoria-as-cost-of-living-crisis-bites (21-06-2023)

¹⁴⁷ www.energyaustralia.com.au/about-us/media/news/energyaustralia-announces-electricity-and-gas-price-increases (21.06.23)

the Federal Government's budgetary "\$500 energy rebate" will have little impact over its annual spread.

Lockdowns, war, recession

Corporate media explanations for the cost-of-living crisis point the finger at the supposed "Covid pandemic" and Russia's "invasion" of Ukraine. One doesn't require much economic knowledge to join the dots between them. "Covid" – a mild cold or flu at most – did not cause the economic shutdown of entire sections of Western economies. This was the result of nonsensical lockdowns, which subsequently threw hundreds of thousands out of work via the closure of "non-essential" industries, restaurants, theatres, gyms and more. Unjustifiable state and federal border closures were implemented, restricting or blocking domestic and international travel, and movement generally. This was followed by insane vaccine mandates, which forced upon workers the bitter "choice" of taking a dangerous and potentially deadly set of injections or losing the means of your livelihood. As with every attack on the working class, the ultra-rich increased their obscene wealth during the nearly three-year pseudo-pandemic while escaping intense political repression. Not one wealthy businessperson was targeted for breaching house arrest, and no employer was subjected to a vaccine mandate.

Russia's defensive military actions against decades long NATO provocations *did not* cause the recession. At least for Europe and the US, this was one result of sanctions imposed on Russia, which boomeranged back against those governments which imposed them. The Australian government has imposed sanctions on Russian officials, but given that trade with Russia is negligible, this has had little adverse economic impact. Obviously, the same cannot be said for China – which is Australia's largest trading partner for both the export and import of goods. If the Australian government joined a US led war against China and, in response, China quite legitimately cut off all trade – Australia's

economy would plummet into a recession the likes of which can scarcely be imagined. Parts of the Australian ruling class have no qualms about a disastrous war on China, while other elements wish to escalate provocations while simultaneously continuing to profit from business with the Asian superpower.

Some Union officials are busy ramming through collective workplace agreements with pay "rises" well below inflation, which are pay cuts in real terms. This continues their role in enforcing the will of the corporate elite, whether in the form of a faux-pandemic or a real recession. The woke left are either silent on, or approve of, the ruling class agenda whether it be medical repression, imperialist war or more economic pain for working people. Capitalism is driving us into an abyss, while the synthetic left remains complicit with the politicians and the system they claim to oppose. **ENOUGH!** Real Left Australia says this must be reversed. Workers must defend the ground they currently hold, but there must be efforts to vastly expand public ownership, to ensure the well-being of the overwhelming majority. The billionaires' political system has run aground long ago and must be removed.

For wage increases of 10%! Cancel Student Debt!

Nationalise Coles and Woolworths!

For free public transport!

Nationalise electricity, gas and water!

Abolish road tolls!

For a vast program of public housing!

No wars on Russia and China!

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