

# Vanguard

For an Independent Australia and Socialism

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

## Working people will not be intimidated

by *Bill F*

The brutal police assault on the 'Occupy Melbourne' demonstrators last month revealed the true nature of class dictatorship in Australia. Generous pay increases for police were announced a few days later.

Police were directed to use aggressive and forceful methods to disperse an assembly of several hundred mainly young protesters who had been peacefully camped in the City Square since the previous week, as part of the global 'Occupy Wall Street' movement.

There was no negotiation, just an ultimatum to pack up and leave within two hours.

This was backed up by the mobilisation of 400 police, including the riot squad, the dog squad, undercover and Special Branch spies and mounted police. Large brawler vans and several ambulances were on standby.

Not intimidated by this show of force, the protesters opted to stay put, saying they had a right to express their disgust at the inequalities and injustices in society.

Many were deeply shocked by the violence of the police that quickly followed.

Protesters, and even bystanders, were pepper-sprayed, punched, kicked, eye-gouged, dragged by the hair, had 'pressure point' holds applied to inflict maximum pain, and were generally treated with contempt.

Dozens were arrested and thrown into paddy vans. Any resistance was met with brutal violence, and many injuries were inflicted.

Under constant provocation and harassment by the police, the demonstrators regrouped and marched to the sanctuary of Trades Hall, giving BHP-Billiton a rev on the way.

Legal claims against the police are certain to follow.

### Why the change?

After years of generally peaceful



demonstrations in Melbourne, this change of attitude by the local authorities needs to be examined closely.

The election of the conservative Liberal government in Victoria last year put the police under the control of Premier Ted Baillieu. Former Liberal Party leader, Robert Doyle, had earlier been elected Lord Mayor of Melbourne.

Why, all of a sudden, did they get the urge to smash a relatively small protest with such a massive show of strength?

### Focus on corporate power

Certainly, as servants of the monopoly capitalist ruling class and apologists for imperialism, they would not have welcomed the focus of the protest directed at the power, wealth and corruption of the big banks and corporate monopolies.

Perhaps they just wanted to copy the example of Mayor Bloomberg in New York, who sent in the cops to evict demonstrators from Zuccotti Park.

Other factors in play might have been the forthcoming visit of US President Obama, which is certain to attract much wider public opposition, and possibly the visit of the English Queen.

A more compelling reason is the recent announcement that the Victorian government intends to pass

its own legislation aimed specifically at building and construction workers and their union, increasing the range of attacks and legal restrictions already enforced by the Australian Building and Construction Commission (ABCC).

### Crisis compels class struggle

The ruling class is compelled to attack the most militant section of the working class, hoping to isolate it before the global economic crisis bites harder in Australia and sweeps broader sections of the working class and working people into action.

Similarly, circumstances compel the working people to resist and struggle against the bosses' attacks.

The ruling class knows very well that this legislation will generate a wave of anger and resistance by construction workers and their allies in the working class.

Large militant protests are likely. As defenders of the system, the police have to be trained and ready.

In this context, the attack on the peaceful demonstration could be seen as a rehearsal, testing tactics and discipline before taking on the organised working class, and sending a message to all unions.

Class rule in Australia relies mainly on the deception of parliamentary elections and unspecified 'democratic rights' to divert the struggles of the people into dead ends.

Occasionally, the ruling class has to resort to force and violence when the deception fails. Their show of force is also a sign of weakness.

The working class movement will not be intimidated, and will continue to struggle for a future free from the greed and exploitation of the corporate monopolies, and the hypocrisy and violence of the system that supports them.

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# 'Housing stress' hits buyers and renters

by **Bill F**

**Whether paying off a mortgage, or paying rent to a landlord, working families who spend more than 30% of their income on housing are considered to be in 'housing stress'.**

They find it difficult to meet other essentials, such as food, utility bills, medical expenses and education costs let alone enjoy regular recreation activities, such as films or sport.

Campaign Manager for Australians for Affordable Housing, Sarah Toohey, said people were struggling to build a life after they had paid their housing costs. "People feel the impact of food and utility price increases so keenly because housing costs take up so much of their income," she said.

The group commissioned the National Centre for Social and

Economic Modelling (University of Canberra) to produce a study titled, *Housing Costs Through the Roof*.

It revealed that 300,000 buyers and renters in New South Wales were struggling to make ends meet, after paying their housing costs. Of these, 180,000 households were paying rent, with 107,000 in Sydney alone.

Australian Bureau of Statistics figures show 30% of Australian households are renters, while 70% are paying off their homes or own them outright.

## Less give, more take

National Australia Bank (NAB) likes to think it is different to the other main banks. It projects an image of friendly and caring service to the people.

That may be the case if you're about

to go into debt with them on a housing loan. But if you are paying rent to a landlord who defaults on their NAB loan, you could end up being tossed out on the street with no warning!

NAB has applied to the Victorian Supreme Court to force the Sheriff to evict tenants of defaulting landlords, without it needing to comply with the Residential Tenancies Act, which requires renters be given 28 days' notice. This would allow the bank to cut their losses and get the property on the market more quickly.

Tenants' Union of Victoria spokesman Toby Archer said if NAB

won the case, financial institutions would not have to give notice to tenants when their landlord defaulted.

"There will be tenants who face the nightmare scenario of continuing to pay their rent while their landlord's defaulted on the mortgage and the first they'll know of it is when the Sheriff comes to evict them. It is just incredible that an institution the size of NAB could act in such a ruthless and cold-hearted fashion."

As we go to press, NAB announced that it has pulled out of the case. Too late to stifle the stench of greed and shame!

## Coles' causes problems in meat industry

by **Duncan B**

**Coles recently announced hefty reductions in the price of meat on sale at their supermarkets. While this may be good news for consumers, farmer organisations are not so sure.**

The president of the Cattle Council of Australia questioned whether the cuts are sustainable; while the WA Farmers' Federation president pointed out that Coles' dairy price cuts removed \$25.2 million dollars from the WA dairy supply chain. He asked "can we expect to see this sort of result in the light of cuts to meat prices?"

Coles has 20% of the fresh meat market, compared with butchers at 25% and Woolworths at 32%. Any increase in Coles' market share of meat is likely to be at the expense of the independent butchers who would find it difficult to match Coles' prices for meat. What will happen to the price of meat when they are wiped out?

Livestock farmers, independent

butchers, and in the long term, consumers themselves will be the losers.

Coles has also carried out its threat to cease dealing with the Colac (Victoria) meatworks that was the centre of a take-over battle earlier in the year. Coles had told Colac lamb processor CRF that it would no longer buy meat from CRF if it was sold to a rival consortium. The rival consortium withdrew its bid, but another buyer trumped Coles' offer at the last minute.

Coles accounted for 90% of CRF's business, but has switched to multinational JBS Swift for its lamb requirements.

CRF is Colac's biggest employer, employing about 400 people, many of whom are migrants and processed refugees. CRF is hopeful of retaining these workers and filling the gap left by Coles with contracts to other companies.

If they are not successful, the effects on Colac will be devastating.

## Mining threatens Victorian farmers

by **Duncan B**

**Victorian farmers are being threatened by mining on two fronts. Farmers near Bacchus Marsh are rallying to fight Mantle Mining, which has been drilling test holes for brown coal around Bacchus Marsh.**

Mantle believes that there are one to two billion tonnes of exportable brown coal in the area. The company will apply for a mining licence if it decides that mining is viable. They can expect fierce local resistance to any moves to start mining operations.

A spokesman for the Baillieu Liberal state government not surprisingly said that it was sympathetic to landowners who did not want to give up their properties for mining operations, but not at the expense of the state's economic interests. The state government wants to

encourage mining in Victoria he said.

Meanwhile huge areas of Victoria's irrigation districts are under threat of mining for coal-seam gas. The Werribee irrigation district and the Macalister irrigation district in Gippsland are under CSG exploration licences. These areas are enormously productive agricultural areas, adding over \$600 million to the state's economy.

Farmer organisations are worried about contamination and depletion of aquifers, as has happened in Queensland.

Given the Victorian government's attitude towards mining, opponents of brown coal and coal seam gas mining are going to have to rely on their own efforts to fight against the destruction of prime Victorian farm land. Uniting all who can be united in this fight will be essential.

## Vanguard

**Vanguard is a national monthly newspaper which expresses the viewpoint of the Communist Party of Australia (Marxist - Leninist), the CPA (M-L).** Readers are encouraged to comment on, criticise or contribute material to *Vanguard*. Articles, digital graphics, cartoons, clippings, comments or a few lines are all very welcome. All material should be sent to:

**Vanguard Editorial Staff  
PO Box 196, Fitzroy, Vic. 3065**

*Vanguard* strives to provide a Marxist analysis of Australian society, economy and politics. An important aspect of developing this analysis is an intimate knowledge of and close involvement in all aspects of Australian struggle.

The cost of producing a national newspaper is considerable. Readers are encouraged to contribute whatever they can by sending donations to the above address.

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# Ideas become a material force when they grip the masses

by Ned K

**The Festival of Ideas took place in Adelaide during October. There were many concepts presented by speakers on a wide range of topic and issues.**

I went to the Festival thinking of Mao Zedong's great statement, "... Once the correct ideas characteristic of the advanced class are grasped by the masses, these ideas turn into a material force which changes society and changes the world" (*Where do correct ideas come from?*).

I wondered, would any of the ideas presented at the Festival live up to this test? The ideas expressed in one session did.

Mona Eltahawy, an Egyptian born journalist now living in New York, gave a passionate and informative account of the recent political events in Egypt.

She spoke as an Egyptian who was very proud of her people for continuing to organise at the grass roots level for years before the actual demise of Mubarak on February 11, 2011.

She said that the role of workers organised in their unions, despite repression, was critical to the success of the popular uprising to get rid of Mubarak.

She explained that a critical moment in people's struggle actually occurred three years earlier, in 2008, when workers united with community and student groups to support each other, as they realised they had a common interest – overthrowing the government. Since 2008, this movement grew stronger 'under the radar' of western media attention, culminating in the incredible uprising earlier this year.

What were the ideas that "gripped the masses" in Egypt?

According to Mona Eltahawy, they were simple demands, widely and deeply felt by millions of Egyptians, expressed as "bread, liberty and social justice",

very similar to the Russian Revolution cry for "land, peace, bread".

She added that since the departure of Mubarak, the workers in Egypt had escalated their strike actions to achieve their demands, as the country continued to be ruled in a dictatorial fashion by the USA, backed by 19 military generals who took over from Mubarak under the guise of "guardians of the revolution".

While her enthusiasm for the uprising in Egypt was contagious, it was not confined to events in that country.

She talked about her country's events as part of a broader uprising in the north Africa and the Middle East area.

She was particularly scathing of the USA's arms sales to the Saudi Arabian regime, to maintain it as a buffer state against Iran, and to invade Bahrain which houses the US Navy's 5<sup>th</sup> fleet.

## Hypocrisy rhymes with democracy

"Hypocrisy rhymes with democracy" was the title of her talk. She ended it by asking the audience to ask themselves, "What are we doing about our democracy? Does our government (i.e., Australia's) represent us or not, as we support weapons used against the people of the Middle East and north Africa? What are we doing about our country?"

For the people of her newly adopted country, the USA, she spoke enthusiastically in support of the mobilisation by the 'Occupy Wall Street' movement, and saw a connection between the uprisings in the Middle East and northern Africa, and the growing mass unrest in the USA and western Europe.

Her presentation was very much about the idea of taking mass action against the greed of corporations and their political allies, and becoming a "material force which changes society and changes the world".

## Editorial

### Unions prepare for struggle

**Imperialism and capitalism are in economic and political crisis. It is a crisis of overproduction and decay.**

The enormous wealth created by the millions of working people of the world is concentrated in the hands of a tiny handful of parasitic corporations, while more than 80% of the world's population live in poverty or eke out a miserable existence.

The huge number of goods created by the labour of workers gluts the market and can no longer be bought by the same low paid workers and working people. Markets shrink, the rate of profit slows down, and the big corporations and financial institutions act to rescue their profits and the capitalist system.

Workers are sacked, wages and conditions are pushed down and cheaper casual labour is brought in. More public funds are syphoned off to rescue big corporations. The people pay through cuts to public spending, cuts to public sector jobs and wages, and public services. Monopoly corporations and finance capital demand cuts in company taxes and increased taxes on the people.

Monopoly capital knows that the working class, organised in fighting unions, will resist their plans to push the capitalist economic crisis onto the people. It makes preparations to crush workers' fighting unions. More instruments of the state are rolled out to suppress the growing mass resistance to making the people pay.

In Australia, the imperialist ruling class of monopoly corporations and big banks - BHP-Billiton, Rio-Tinto, Toyota, foreign monopoly retailers, National Australia Bank, Chase Manhattan Bank - is cranking up an assault on the working class and the people. Thousands of jobs have disappeared already, and casual and part-time employment is spreading.

Attacks on unions are cranked up. The more reactionary sections of the ruling class, with Abbott as their mouthpiece, are now openly demanding even greater suppression of workers' rights to organise in unions and take industrial action.

Recently elected State Liberal governments in NSW and Victoria are pushing through more draconian laws to suppress workers' struggle and the more militant unions. All this from the most openly reactionary section of the ruling class, and not a peep from the Federal Labor Government.

The working class will not be easily put down. The unity and determination of Qantas workers has inspired many workers and unions. Qantas bosses' threats and intimidation have only strengthened workers' resolve to fight for decent wages and conditions. They have won much public support, while the Qantas bosses have been isolated and exposed.

In Victoria, the battle for wage increases by nurses, teachers and public servants is brewing, with the State Liberal government declaring it will pay no more than 2.5% wage increases. At the same time, in the midst of police violence against Occupy Melbourne protestors, the state government committed nearly 5% yearly wage increases over next three years to police. This was above the Police Association's claim of 4.5%. Undoubtedly, a bribe to facilitate use of police against nurses, public servants and other sections of workers and unions taking action.

## Qantas workers hit back hard at threats to job security

by Bill F

**All key sections of the Qantas workforce have run out of patience with Qantas Chief Executive Officer, Alan Joyce.**

He has repeatedly stalled negotiations on Enterprise Bargaining Agreements, and has refused to shift from the company agenda to outsource work to other low wage, non-union companies, and to transfer jobs to low wage employers overseas.

Industrial action in the form of



strikes and bans is spreading around the country, involving baggage handlers from the Transport Workers' Union, aircraft maintenance technicians from the Australian Licensed Aircraft

Engineers' Association, and pilots from the Australian and International Pilots' Association.

In addition, airport cleaners and caterers from United Voice have also

been in dispute with the company.

Unlike many other 'national carriers', Qantas is not financially backed by its national government.

Privatisation was supposed to deliver a more prosperous and efficient service. This has not been the case, and in recent times, Qantas cost-cutting has led to a decline in the standards that once made the company the best airline in the world.

Joyce and Qantas bosses may want to continue on this slippery path, but their workers won't cop it any more.

# Meeting held to commemorate the defeat of the 1951 referendum to ban the Communist Party

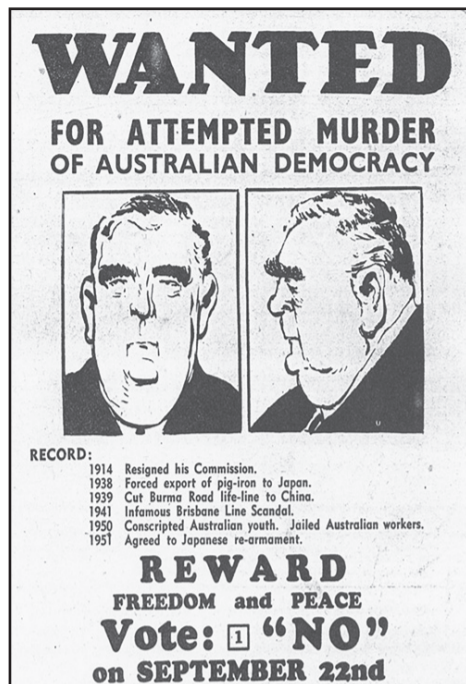
by Alice M

On 23 October, about 60 people gathered at the Democritos Club in Melbourne to celebrate the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the defeat of the referendum to ban the Communist Party.

The meeting was jointly organised by the Communist Party of Australia (Marxist-Leninist) and the Communist Party of Australia.

The event recognised the fact that there was a common history, and that comrades from both parties had contributed to the magnificent campaign in 1951.

Several veterans of that campaign were present and spoke of their experiences and the difficulties they faced in alerting the Australian people to the attack on the organised working class. They spoke also of the friendships and support they won across wide sections of the community, as the message went out and the facts became clear. It was evident that passion and



commitment has not faded over the years, and they were listened to with great respect.

Guest speaker was historian and activist Humphrey McQueen, who recounted the background and history



to the referendum campaign, and the reasons for the wave of anti-communism launched across the world at that time.

Humphrey paid tribute to the tireless mass work that Communists and others carried out to win over the majority.

Representatives of both parties spoke of the significance of the campaign and the lessons that can be applied in today's situation. Below is the speech made by a spokesperson for the Communist Party of Australia (Marxist-Leninist).

Address by CPA (M-L) spokesperson

**Welcome to this celebration and commemoration of one of the most significant working class struggles in Australia.**

The success of the campaign that defeated the 1951 referendum to ban the Communist Party is a tribute to the tireless and dedicated work of the Communist Party of Australia at that time, countless trade unionists, democratic rights activists, Doc Evatt, the ALP Leader of the Opposition at that time, and Ted Hill, the founding Chairman of the CPA (M-L) and many others.

## A common history of struggle

Both the Communist Party of Australia (Marxist-Leninist) and the Communist Party of Australia have a common history in the great struggles of 1951 that defeated the moves by the reactionary Menzies government, on behalf of the US and British imperialist ruling class, to ban the Communist Party.

The main target of the attack on the Communist Party was the strong working class leadership, the militant fighting capacity of unions and the democratic and progressive movements in Australia.

## Veterans of struggle

We want to take this opportunity to

pay homage to the tens of thousands of Communist Party members, unionists, the Labor Party members and all democratically minded people who worked tirelessly among all sectors of the people to defeat this march to fascism in Australia and lay another foundation stone of democratic rights. Some of them are amongst us here today.

## Anti-communist campaign

This was a period of intense and ruthless anti-communist campaigns and propaganda waged by the ruling class of US and British imperialism.

Communists, trade unionists, progressive and democratic minded people were demonised, vilified and terrorised by Australia's puppets of imperialism—the reactionary politicians, media and hierarchies of the church.

Some lost jobs and were evicted from their homes. Children of known communists, trade unionists, peace activists were ostracised, bullied and physically set upon at school.

## Against the odds

Twelve months before the referendum it seemed the overwhelming majority of the population would support the ban.

And yet, against all these odds, 12 months later the majority of Australian people voted against banning the Communist Party and pushed back

attacks on the democratic rights.

## Build on the lessons

The best way we can pay tribute to this proud heritage is by learning lessons from that successful mass campaign for the struggles today. Lessons of the 1951 referendum campaign should be used to assist the working class and the people in building a powerful and clear sighted democratic mass movement that advances the interests of the people.

This is an urgent task in a world entering the most severe and deepest capitalist economic crisis since the 1930s.

## Capitalist crisis of overproduction

The world today is in enormous upheaval and turmoil. US and European monopoly capitalism and imperialism are in a major crisis of capitalist overproduction and the falling rate of profit. It is in economic, political and social decay.

Crisis in the capitalist relations of production is at breaking point and is the root of the present decay.

The immense wealth swishing around the world and created by the labour of workers – the 99% - is taken away from the makers of this wealth.

This wealth is stolen and kept by the parasitic class of 1% who produce nothing of value, but cause all the economic and social suffering and hardship for the majority.

## Hardship for the masses of people

Billions of people are suffering deprivation, falling wages and conditions, unemployment and insecure employment, economic hardships and insecurity, homelessness, poverty, and loss of democratic rights.

And as the people's buying power is reduced, many more are thrown into poverty and economic hardship and there is even less spending capacity in the system. The capitalist crisis of overproduction deepens and spreads.

The inevitable bust and the crisis of overproduction is concealed and delayed by the creation of unproductive fictitious and speculative capital. The delay has only worsened and deepened the crisis and escalated the falling rate of profit.

## Attacks on the people

In these conditions of major economic crisis, social democracy (the "softer" face of capitalism) has less room to manoeuvre to make a few small reforms that help ensure the capitalist system of class exploitation and oppression is kept intact.

It attacks the working class and the people to protect and squeeze more profits.

When the people rebel and resist, there is more open use of force by the state against workers and the people, politically, legally, and through the

armed forces of police and army – a good example of this is in Greece, with vicious attacks against workers on strike, etc.

### **Class struggle intensifying**

Police actions at the Occupy Melbourne event on Friday are only a dress rehearsal and a sign of things still to come in Australia yet. It is largely directed at the working class and militant unions.

We want to make use of the lessons of 1951 to assist the Australian working class and people in the urgent task of building and expanding the peoples' movement in the struggles against the escalating attacks by imperialism and monopoly capitalism.

### **Australia not immune**

The economic crisis of capitalism is not as intense in Australia yet as in the rest of the world, particularly the US and Europe, the core of international finance capital, monopoly capitalism and imperialism.

However, Australia is not immune and cannot escape the crisis engulfing the capitalist world.

Our economy, the financial sector, is heavily dependent on, and enmeshed in the web of US and European imperialism. Our disappearing manufacturing industrial base and a heavy dependence on minerals makes us more vulnerable.

The Australian people are facing the same problems of international capital shifting its crisis of overproduction onto the people. As yet it is not as fast and intense as in the bellies of the two main beasts, US and Europe, but the same austerity measures have swept across the country for some time.

Continuing cuts to spending on public health, education, public and community services, cuts to public sector jobs and destruction of the manufacturing industry, attacks on workers' wages and conditions, workers' and union rights and democratic rights, have been sped up. The legal system and political arms of the state are ramped up to more openly attack workers and suppress struggle. (Fair Work Australia).

### **The ruling class in Australia**

The deepening crisis will inevitably escalate as the crisis intensifies and deepens around the world.

The ruling class in Australia comprises some of the world's biggest foreign corporations in the mining industry and international finance capital. They are the most reactionary section of the ruling class spearheading attacks on unions and the working class.

They are the loudest section of the ruling class calling for the return of Australian Workplace Agreements (individual contracts), slashing workers wages and conditions, casualisation, and more attacks on the rights of workers and unions.

The mouthpiece of this ruling class is the Business Council of Australia.

The draconian ABCC is extended in Victoria and attacks on unions in NSW and Victoria intensify.

The monopoly ruling class is pushing for cuts to company taxes and increasing the GST and other taxes on the people.

Erosion of democratic rights continues.

And, of course, they resist a bigger mining tax and any measures that impose tax on carbon emissions to protect the environment.

### **People's movement for change**

In the face of assault by monopoly capital, a spontaneous people's movement is emerging, putting forward its own immediate demands of struggle for economic justice, real democracy, and workers' rights, and to make the rich pay for the crisis.

There is anger at the profiteering banks, demands that the wealth created from Australian natural resources should be used to benefit the people, not the profiteering multinationals, for an end to privatisation, protection of Australian manufacturing and agricultural industries, opposition to selling off the farm to foreign corporations, and protection of the environment.

Big corporations and multinationals are targeted. Workers and unions organise to resist attacks by capital and push forward the interests of the working people.

A genuine and united people's movement will grow and strengthen through these day to day battles.

### **Dominated by imperialism**

It is the view of the CPA (M-L) that Australia is dominated by imperialism, mainly US imperialism, economically, militarily and politically.

It is our view that the demand and struggle for an anti-imperialist independent and democratic Australia is an integral part in the struggle for socialism in Australia. It is based on Australia's concrete conditions. It unites the great majority of the people in struggle.

### **Background to 1951 referendum**

So, what are the main lessons we can take from the colossal struggle of 1951 to defeat the anti-communist referendum?

Conditions in today's Australia and

the world are different from 1951. This was a period of more than 30 years of intense struggles by the working class in which Communists and the Communist Party played a major role in uniting, educating and mobilising the working class in struggle.

From the struggles of the First World War through the depression in the 30s, the fight against fascism and World War 2, through to the immense working class struggles throughout the late 1940s, Communists were deeply active in the day to day battles of working people and amongst all sectors of the people.

Working class Communists and the Communist Party organisation were steeled in the many years of long and difficult battles.

Internationally, it was a period of national liberation struggles and uprisings breaking out in many colonial countries of Asia, Africa and the Middle East.

The socialist Soviet Union was a beacon for all the oppressed, progressive and peace loving people.

The millions of oppressed people of China, under the leadership of the Communist Party of China and Mao Zedong rose up and overthrew the imperialist occupiers, and opened the way to building socialist China.

Working class socialist consciousness around the world was deep and spreading.

The Communist Party in Australia embodied the most advanced working class consciousness in the working class movement.

More than 50% of workers were organised in unions, many led by communists.

Destroying the Communist Party was central to the imperialist ruling class agenda to crush the working class and reverse the world wide movement towards socialism.

Two important lessons from the struggle to defeat the referendum are: the Communist Party's method of political work – called the mass line and mass work; and exposing the class nature of the bourgeois state.

The Communist Party explained to the people that the ban on the Communist Party was an attack on the democratic rights of the people, and worked to bring together many sections of the people around this central demand.

The Communist Party did not make socialism or support for the Communist Party a condition of unity in the united front struggles.

It did not impose acceptance of socialism and communism on the mass movement.

It pointed out the truth that the attack on the Communist Party was really directed at militant working class struggle, and the democratic rights of

the people. In this way it was able to unite and bring into the campaign many people from different walks of life; sections of the Labor Party, churches, civil libertarians, etc.

### **Mass connections, mass work**

The Communist Party had deep and wide connections in people's mass organisations and unions.

Communists clearly understood and respected the different levels of consciousness of the majority.

They worked side by side with the people in the day to day organisation of struggles in workplaces and communities, learning with the people the lessons of struggle and pointing out that the root cause of their problems lies in the class relations of the capitalist system.

From their mass work in class struggle, listening and learning from the people, the Communists were able to develop a clear programme of struggle that connected the immediate needs and spontaneous demands of the people to the longer vision and path to socialism.

Secondly, the Communist Party explained the class nature of the capitalist state, and the bourgeois legal and parliamentary system was exposed as part of the oppressive capitalist state machine.

### **Struggle for theory and practice**

Marxism shows the dialectical relationship between the objective and subjective world. The two act on each other and affect change on each other.

Communist parties don't just pop up from wishful thinking. They are the product of both the objective and subjective; struggle, study, social investigation, working class consciousness, and most importantly, deep involvement in the day to day lives and battles of the people, especially the working class.

There is constant struggle and striving by the working class to build its own political party that exclusively serves the interests of the oppressed and exploited – a party that charts the path to socialism.

Revolutionary theory can only become a material force when it moves out of the realm of ideas and becomes a real force in class struggle that takes the working class to socialism, and ultimately to the classless society of communism.

We hope that this event, jointly organised by the Communist Party of Australia (Marxist-Leninist) and Communist Party of Australia, is a step that assists in building and strengthening a genuine united front mass movement of the people for truly fundamental change, led by the working class.

# Olympic Dam Expansion – opportunity to strengthen working class organisation

by Ned K

In October this year, out-going SA Premier Mike Rann signed off with BHP-Billiton for the expansion of a massive open cut uranium/copper / gold mine at Olympic Dam in South Australia's north.

The expansion is being opposed by environmental groups for a variety of reasons, and lauded by the most influential sections of SA business and government as the economic saviour for the people of South Australia.

## Environmental concerns sacrificed for profits

The main reason for the multitude of environmental issues associated with the Olympic Dam expansion is that the mine is controlled by the multinational corporations, legitimised by their state apparatus, and developed in a way that serves the pursuit of maximum profits.

Even minority BHP-Billiton shareholders are concerned about the impact on the environment.

One shareholder, Richard Quilty, has set up a web site, [www.savethebasin.com](http://www.savethebasin.com), to alert people to the environmental consequences of BHP-Billiton's intention to continue to extract massive amounts of water from the Great Artesian Basin for the next 130 years!

42 million litres of water a day will be used from the Basin in the mining process, and the company will pay only 3 cents per kilolitre, which amounts to about \$12,000 per year. If a household in Adelaide used this much water it would cost them \$60,000 a year!

Other environmental concerns are being voiced from anti-uranium mining groups and upper Spencer Gulf communities who are concerned about the impact of the company's desalination plant at Point Lowly on the fishing industry and giant cuttlefish breeding grounds in the Gulf.

A broader environmental concern is that the whole expansion is a missed opportunity, and that governments, both state and federal, should be developing the north of the state as an alternative energy source and 'leave uranium in the ground'.

## Indigenous concerns ignored

Indigenous representatives have accused the company of disrespecting and damaging Aboriginal people and their traditional land.

Eileen Winfield, a Kokatha woman said at a shareholder conference in 2009:



"... the mining company doesn't listen to people. Ruining your children's lives, anybody's life. I mean the funny thing they worry about is the money. Money's important, not the human side.

"I mean we have people dying every day ..."

"The State Government, in conjunction with BHP, has sold out the people of South Australia. We have never had a say," said Arabunna elder Kevin Buzzacott, whose lands are impacted by the current mine and the expansion, and who has opposed the mine since its inception.

At BHP Billiton's October 20 Annual General Meeting in London, the London Mining Network and others will call on BHP to acknowledge the opposition of the Arabunna and Kokatha traditional owners to the Olympic Dam expansion

## What about the workers?

From a historical perspective, the expansion of Olympic Dam is a continuation of the way capitalism has developed in South Australia since the invasion by British colonialism in the 1830s.

The British colony's development was based on rural industries and mining from the very beginning.

There was conflict between the competing interests of wealthy farmers wanting to expand production of grain and wool for export, and mining interests in the Adelaide Hills, Kapunda and Burra copper mining and the largest mining development in the 1850s on York Peninsula. The latter centred on mining companies in Moonta, Kadina and Wallaroo.

Both the major rural industries and the big mining ventures of the 1800s were like the Olympic Dam expansion of today, in that all served the dominant interests of big capital, predominantly owned by colonial/imperialist interests.

They had an unintended consequence for big capital; a larger and better

organised working class.

It was the mining and agricultural industries which triggered a growth in the numerical strength and level of organisation of the working class in South Australia, both directly and indirectly.

In 1864, hundreds of Moonta and Wallaroo miners went on strike after a number of workers had been sacked for taking Easter Monday off as a public holiday.

The strike demands broadened to demands for better pay and working conditions. "The strikers voted unanimously against arbitration of the dispute. Storekeepers on Yorke Peninsula gave the miners credit and supported them ... Miners' delegates addressed meetings at Adelaide and Port Adelaide." (*The Sounds of Trumpets* by Jim Moss).

The strike went for seven weeks from March 29 to 12 May. Workers won significant concessions from the mining companies. They would not have won without support from the community and workers in the capital of the colony, Adelaide.

## The industrial working class

Mining and agriculture also gave birth to an industrial working class in Adelaide.

J.S. Bagshaw (later Horwood Bagshaw) employed hundreds of workers to manufacture winnowing machines and chaff cutters and mining machinery. At Gawler and Kapunda to Adelaide's north, workers manufactured bullock drays, wooden ploughs and other machinery for the mining industry. By 1875 27,000 workers were employed in mining and transport and manufacturing industries that had developed largely as a consequence of mining. In 1875 79,000 workers were directly and indirectly employed in agricultural and pastoral industries (*The Sound of Trumpets*).

Fast forward to 1945, and the number of workers in manufacturing in SA increased from 44,100 in 1938 to 65,000 workers in 1945.

In this period, the number of large factories employing more than 100 people jumped from 41 to 85. Most of this expansion of manufacturing was not mining related, but centred on the vehicle and whitegoods industries.

However, by the mid 1970s, the plans of multinational corporations resulted in the decline of these industries and weakening of the industrial working class in South Australia, as the big manufacturers moved off-shore to cheaper labour sources to make more profit.

Today the vehicle manufacturing industry in SA is hanging by a thread in the northern suburbs of Adelaide, where General Motors has an assembly plant.

However, the non-agricultural and non-mining related manufacturing in SA has only been a strong sector of the economy for a relatively short period of the state's history. (How long the recent expansion of defence related manufacturing remains in SA remains to be seen as once again it is dominated by foreign capital needs and decision making)

It was the mining industry and related manufacturing industry in SA that developed the strength of the industrial working class. The enormous expansion of Olympic Dam will give rise to thousands of mining and mining related jobs, both in the construction and post-construction stage.

## Challenge for the working class

Given South Australia's history, there should be an air of optimism about the inevitable coming struggles of those workers against the profit seeking of mining and mining related companies.

The big challenge is for working class organisation, awareness and purpose to be central to the mine's inevitable expansion.

Rather than limiting workers to narrow economist perspectives, unions will have to appropriately combine representation around wages and conditions with agreements with Aboriginal communities that respect both heritage and custodianship.

They will have to show leadership on environmental protection.

Progressive trade unions, perhaps of a form not yet seen at Olympic Dam or other current large scale mining ventures, have the opportunity to emerge during this stage of the State's development.

# A Red salute to Gregorio 'Ka Roger' Rosal, 1947-2011

*Extracts from a statement by the Communist Party of the Philippines*

The leadership and entire membership of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), all Red fighters and commanders of the New People's Army (NPA) and all revolutionary forces salute Gregorio 'Ka Roger' Rosal. Ka Roger passed away on June 22, 2011 at the age of 64 after suffering a heart attack in a guerrilla front in Luzon.

For more than a decade as the Party's spokesperson, and prior to this, as spokesperson of the New People's Army in Southern Tagalog (Melito Glor Command), Ka Roger was the face and voice of the revolutionary movement of the Filipino people. He symbolized the struggle of ordinary folk – the peasant masses, workers, the urban poor, employees and small professionals – who had lofty aspirations of liberation from the ruling system that oppressed and exploited them.

At a young age, Ka Roger was witness to poverty under an oppressive and exploitative system. He worked hard even as a child in order to help his family. From grade school to his second year in high school, he was for eight years a servant at their landlord's household. He became an avid radio listener and read comic books as a pastime. Poverty forced him to stop his schooling for several years.

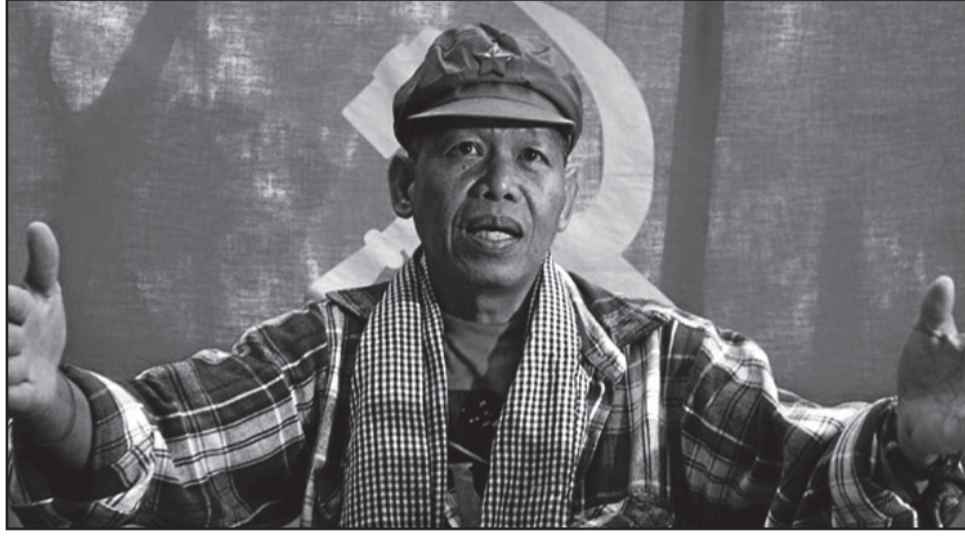
To continue his formal education, he peddled mosquito nets and other goods that he bought on credit from loan sharks. He traveled far and wide to different provinces. Wherever he went, it was the same face of poverty and oppression that he saw.

As he went around selling his wares, Ka Roger occasionally encountered rallies and listened to the speakers. He began joining street protests and seriously studied history and current social conditions. Ka Roger became a member of the Kabataang Gabay ng Bayan, a Batangueño activist group. He later joined the Kabataang Makabayan.

Through his study of society and integration with the masses, he was able to deepen his grasp of the roots of the poverty and oppression suffered by the people. Gradually, he steeled his determination to become part of the historic movement that would change the face of society and open a new chapter in the people's lives.

When martial law was imposed in 1972, Ka Roger decided to continue his revolutionary involvement. He became part of a team that was tasked to organize workers at the Batangas Sugar Central in Balayan, Batangas.

In July 1973, he was captured by the enemy and detained at a military camp



'Ka Roger' - servant of the people

in Kuomintang, Batangas City. He was later transferred to Camp Vicente Lim in Canlubang, Calamba, Laguna.

Determined to continue working for the revolution, he bolted prison along with nine other leading Party cadres in the region in November 1973 in what became known as The Great Escape

After their escape from prison, Ka Roger and his other comrades took the path of armed revolution in the countryside. He became part of the guerrilla front established in the Laguna-Quezon border along the Sierra Madre mountains – the so-called Larangan ng Kagitingan or Front of Heroism.

In succeeding years, Ka Roger became part of the history of revolutionary expansion and advance in the whole of Southern Luzon, especially in the Southern Tagalog region. Under his leadership, armed struggle and mass struggles advanced in these areas.

The Quezon-Bicol Zone, South Quezon and the Bondoc Peninsula played crucial roles in expanding and consolidating the revolution in other parts of the Bicol region and Southern Tagalog. Mass struggle and mass actions launched in these areas played major roles in invigorating protest actions

nationwide at the start of the 1980s.

As a leader of the Party, he knew full well the importance of propaganda work in advancing people's struggles. Ka Roger pioneered active propaganda work on radio and other mass media.

In 1986, he first became known as Ka Roger when he oversaw the release of prisoners of war in Quezon.

In 1987, he served as the spokesperson of the National Democratic Front (NDF) in Southern Tagalog in peace negotiations with the Government of the Philippines.

For more than a decade, he served as Party spokesperson and headed the CPP Information Bureau. From VHF radios to modern cellphones, he used all methods of connecting with the mass media to transmit nationwide news from the guerrilla fronts.

Ka Roger's voice and his straightforward explanations of complex issues were eagerly awaited daily by Red fighters and ordinary folk throughout the country.

He invited reporters, broadcasters and writers from the media to the guerrilla zones so that they could see for themselves the reality of the revolutionary movement and how this

was being advanced by the Filipino people.

Inside the guerrilla zones, they came to know Ka Roger as a simple man. They listened to him as intently as he listened to them convey their problems and grievances. Ka Roger gained their respect, if not their admiration.

The ability and patience, the sharpness and intelligence, the patriotism and love of country demonstrated by Ka Roger further raised the prestige of the Party and the revolutionary movement.

As the CPP's spokesperson, Ka Roger was indefatigable in bringing news of the Philippine revolution. He would hike for days, cross rivers and seas and go on long road trips to get to wherever he was needed. He granted almost all requests for interviews, any day and at any hour. Because of this, he gained many friends in the media.

Until he breathed his last, Ka Roger devoted every moment of life to the hungry and deprived and their revolutionary struggle for social justice and national liberation.

The entire membership of the Communist Party of the Philippines, Red fighters of the New People's Army and the Filipino people are one with his family and friends in mourning his death.

With clenched fists raised and rifles held in salute, they hail Ka Roger, outstanding communist, courageous Red fighter, militant defender of the people, respected comrade and good friend.

Ka Roger leaves behind a legacy of triumphs and memories that are permanently etched in the revolutionary annals of the Filipino people. His name, which now joins that of other heroes of the Philippine revolution, will forever inspire the Filipino people in their struggle for national and social liberation.



The people pay tribute to their hero

# The style of one Union Leader

- Contributed -

**A struggle between rival union leaders has put a spotlight on some features surrounding the wealth of some union leaders in Australia.**

The media has carried a stream of allegations about a few leaders in some branches of the Health Services Union (HSU) in NSW, Victoria and the national office, of money being paid by a contractor to union leaders, corrupt business dealings, and union money used to procure prostitutes.

*Vanguard* cannot provide particular insight about the stream of allegations other than to note such allegations are commonly floated in clashes among rivals over top union positions, let alone in parliamentary battles over government office. The media reports of allegations can't be taken at face value.

However, characteristics of the situation of some leaders of the HSU are on the public record and provide some insight, and raise general questions about the actions and ideas of some union leaders in Australia.

They flag some trends in the working class movement during a difficult period for the workers.

Health workers are in the gun sights of coalition governments in NSW and Victoria, facing vicious job cuts and wage cuts in the public sector.

Weakening union organisation is important to capitalist government and business. Strong organisation is vital to these workers.

The financial reports of HSUEast confirm that the General-Secretary is a trustee of a government employee superannuation fund, director of a government agency "Sydney Water" and of a mutual employee credit union "State Government Employees CU". These provide a substantial income.

In addition, his HSU National President's position has an honorarium of \$20,000 a year.

The HSUEast General Secretary has also acknowledged in the union's financial reports that he is a director of a couple of private companies, one of which allegedly has a million dollar a year contract with the union.

Until recently he was the National President of the Labor Party, member of the ALP Industrial Committee, and Vice-President of ALP NSW Branch.

He is a Vice President of Unions NSW and an executive member of the ACTU.

The various board positions and honorariums provide an income of \$170,000 plus some bonuses that have been reported, but not confirmed.

The Secretary's wage is not public.

It is not reported to members. Media reported it to be around \$350,000 a year. That may or may not be true. It is highly likely the wage is above that of a manager of a hospital service at \$170,000 a year. That would put this union leader's income at more than \$340,000 a year plus car, phone and access to funds for entertainment, accommodation, etc.

An income of \$300,000 or so a year is in the top one or two percent of full-time employee incomes. Such an extraordinary income puts the beneficiary in an extraordinary social position; free of financial pressures, houses in the country or up the coast, sending kids to top private schools, hob-knobbing with the captains of industry and commerce, living in the best suburbs.

And this all comes from union leadership in an industry which has some of the lowest paid workers in the country.

Before becoming a union official, the General Secretary was an employer's Human Resources officer in the Department of Health.

The majority of HSU members in NSW are government employees.

In the HSU the rules and practices of the union leadership have meant that none of the 50 plus HSU NSW branch

elected positions has been contested in an election for more than a decade!

In NSW all decisions are centralised in an 'elected' union council, elected by union council and having never faced a ballot of members!

A highly structured annual convention is the sole time delegates from across the union meet, with delegates having only a couple of hours in which discussion takes place on motions submitted months beforehand. Delegates are site-based, and are not gathered for EBA or award meetings.

Active members rarely have opportunities to discuss workers' interests across numerous sites, to organise the workers across the state, or to mobilise.

These issues in the Health Services Union are matters for the members, and they will have to resolve them.

## Independent fighting unions

For workers to control unions, rather than having union leaders helping business and government to control workers, it is vital union leaders are independent of government and business patronage, having no financial inducement to look after the interests of the government and business bosses.

The best leaders share the lifestyles of their members, the hardships and

difficulties as well as the comradeship which comes of struggles to overcome hardships workers inevitably face in capitalism.

In a society and with governments so dominated by big multinational corporations, a vital necessity for capital is to control the workers. They search out opportunities to "capture" union leaders financially with positions, and inducements, with bribes, direct and indirect, legal and illegal, to turn them into "labour-lieutenants of the capitalist class, channels of reformism and chauvinism". In the struggle between the working class and capital, traitors to the working class are created using tiny scraps from the super-profits of multinational corporations at the centre of capital in Australia. To protect those gigantic profits, leaders are bought to sell out those who follow them.

Such characteristics and suspicion of the same disgusts and has alienated many workers. The tendency contributes to weaknesses in the trade union movement and the wider workers movement.

Allegations about leaders of the HSU open a window to some issues of importance to workers in trade unions and raise the necessity for steps towards wider solution of the problem in the workers' movement generally.

## Cleaners take on Spotless and Westfield

by Ned K

**It was reported in the daily press the week before Anti-Poverty Week in October that the retail industry, which is led by Westfield, was tracking shoppers' movements through signals from their mobile phones.**

The aim of this clandestine activity is to assist the industry in their advertising and marketing, so that shoppers will spend more.

Westfield made over \$1 billion profit last financial year as the landlord for retail outlets, which range from large corporations like Myer and David Jones, to the small coffee stands dotted throughout the larger shopping malls.

While they spend millions on new ways to make shoppers spend more to boost Westfield and tenant profits, Westfield thinks that wage rates for workers in their centres are too high!

Retail workers are on about \$17 per hour if they are adults, while contract cleaners who clean the food courts, malls and large retailers in the centres are on less than \$17 per hour.

These cleaners are in insecure jobs, unstable hours, and subject to change of contract from one contractor to another



every few years. Their hours of work often decrease at change of contract, usually with an increase in workload.

However Westfield, the biggest and meanest owner, is not satisfied with this opportunity to reduce hours and labour costs only at change of contract. During the life of a commercial contract, it just dictates to its willing and servile contractors (like Spotless), and workers' hours are cut with little notice.

Cleaners have had enough of this. During Anti-Poverty Week, on October 17, cleaners employed by the biggest

contractor Spotless, notified Fair Work Australia of the need for a ballot for industrial action covering hundreds of Spotless retail cleaners in shopping centres around Australia.

Why only Spotless cleaners? As a leaflet explains from the cleaners' union, United Voice, Spotless is leading the charge against the cleaners on behalf of the likes of Westfield, by refusing to negotiate with cleaners at all.

Other contractors in the market sit on the fence, hoping that they are not next to feel the sting of cleaners' industrial action.

## Workers compelled to fight back

The pending strike action will be the first national strike of cleaners in Australia's history.

This is significant as it shows that despite the massive attack on traditional strongholds of collective action of Australian workers over the last 30 years, the working class will organise, irrespective of the industry they work in.

The system they live in compels them to do so. Through their struggles new leaders emerge, while those not up to it are left behind.