

A MORATORIUM FOR BLACK RIGHTS

NATIONAL ABORIGINES DAY (July 17) is celebrated throughout Australia to draw attention to the position of Aborigines in our community.

In the past, it has been used as a day on which the State and Federal Governments have put a gloss on their criminal neglect and oppression of Aborigines.

Former Prime Minister Gorton, for example, last National Aborigines Day presented Aboriginal debutantes at a ball held on the occasion in Sydney.

Yet a few miles away, in the Black ghettos of Redfern and Newtown, Aborigines live in shockingly overcrowded slums, are denied educational opportunities, suffer continual police persecution, have an extremely high rate of unemployment and live as second-class citizens.

Elsewhere the Aboriginal infant mortality rate doubles (as in Central Australia), is six times the white infant mortality rate, and is one of the highest in the world.

Aborigines are denied land rights to those few pieces of land they still occupy as reserves, while multi-million dollar corporations are given an virtually free hand, no matter the result to the Aborigines in the area they exploit.

Tens of thousands of people in Sydney marched in the Vietnam Moratoriums against the genocidal war in Indochina; tens of thousands more protested the South African racist Rugby tour and forced the cancellation of the South African cricket tour.

Now the time has come for tens of thousands to stop work and march on the streets of Sydney on National Aborigines Day, Monday July 17, to support the struggles of Aborigines against racism and oppression.

Aborigines have been fighting for years for their rights. Now these Black struggles have reached a new peak with the land rights struggles of the Gurinkji, Yirrkala and other tribes in the Northern Territory; the struggles of Aborigines in NSW on the Purfleet (Taree), Wallaga Lakes (near Bateman's Bay) and Woodenbong (near Casino) reserves and on other reserves for land rights, decent housing and jobs.

In Sydney the Redfern Aboriginal community has organised a legal service to right police persecution and a medical service to provide some medical aid to the Black ghetto. In Brisbane, the Black Panther Party has got off the ground, as have other Black Power groups throughout the country. In Canberra, an Aboriginal Embassy has been established on the lawns of Parliament House and will not move until land rights are won.

Now it is time for White supporters of these Black struggles to STOP WORK and MARCH on July 17, in this election year, to force real action for Black self-determination and rights.

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