

Nobody to vote for ... continued from page 1

Finally (the assorted right-wing nutters are not even worthy of consideration), in some electorates a socialist might be found on the ballot paper. They rightly name capitalism as the problem and a (vaguely defined) socialism as the solution. They pose, however, no credible strategy for getting there. Only the working class can solve the burning issues of our time, and we can only do it through organisation in the workplace and the community. We will build a society of liberty, equality and solidarity, but we will do it without Parliaments and other top-down bodies. We will do it through a world-wide workers' revolution.

At this election, therefore, there is no shortage of people to vote against. But there is definitely nobody to vote FOR.

The presence of clinic defenders keeps the anti-abortionists away from the clinic, so that staff and clients can enter and leave, and people can walk the street, free from their harassment. Defending the clinic is still an important part of the battle to decriminalise abortion and make it freely accessible, on demand, to all women.

Organised by Campaign for Women's Reproductive Rights. For more information, or to get involved in CWRR, contact Radical Women on 03 9388 0062.

DEFEND THE FERTILITY CONTROL CLINIC

Fourth Saturday every month
10.00 - 11.30am
118 Wellington Parade, East Melbourne

What is Anarchism?

Anarchism is a social philosophy based upon the principles of liberty, equality and solidarity. It is the political dimension of a free society.

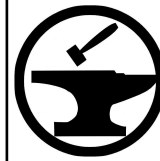
What is Communism?

Communism is the principle of "from each according to their ability, to each according to their need". It is the economic dimension of a free society.

What is the Melbourne Anarchist Communist Group?

The MACG is an organisation of class struggle revolutionary anarchists who share political positions, articulated in theory, strategy and tactics.

We aim to encourage struggle by the working class for its own interests and, within that struggle, we aim to advance Anarchist ideas as its necessary philosophical basis.



THE ANVIL



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NEWSLETTER OF THE MELBOURNE ANARCHIST COMMUNIST GROUP

Vol 2, No 6

July/Aug 2010

Free

NOBODY TO VOTE FOR ...

On 21 August, a general election is being held in Australia. The Labor Government is being challenged by the Liberals, but neither party is interested in solving severe problems of inequality, social alienation and environmental destruction. In fact, they will make them worse,

To start with, the Liberals are the party of big business, the party of capital, and are sworn enemies of the working class. Under the leadership of Tony Abbott, they have openly embraced social reaction, stirring up every backward prejudice they can get away with. Everybody knows they are champing at the bit to bring back Work Choices and if they hesitate to say so openly, it is only because they fear the vehemence of the working class response.

The Labor Party, historically the electoral representative of the working class, is little better than the Liberals. Caught between its own servitude to capital and its craven capitulation to the bosses' media, it has time and again reneged on even its timid progressive reforms. In the name of "managing Australia's borders", refugees are to be denied entry. In the name of "creating a consensus on climate change", they will permit the greenhouse denial industry to veto any action. And in the name of nothing but naked fear, private schools will continue to be given preferential funding over private schools.

but plenty to vote against

Even on industrial relations, Labor is a disgrace. Its Fair Work Act made relatively minor reforms to Work Choices and Labor has continued to fund the Australian Building and Construction Commission, a secret industrial police force which treats solidarity as a more dangerous crime than murder. The Liberals want to kill the unions. Labor's alternative is to keep them chained and malnourished, unable to resist any determined employer.

Are the Greens a progressive alternative? Certainly their rhetoric is a refreshing change from the Libs and the "me-too" ALP. Their fatal flaw is exposed, however, by their commitment to capitalism. This is clearest to see in the most important issue for them, climate change. They understand the threat of global warming and want to tackle it, but their proposals would put the cost of doing so largely on the working class. This would drive workers into the arms of the greenhouse denial industry and destroy any hope of effective action on climate change. The Greens, therefore, have no answers.

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THE NO STATE SOLUTION

Since its inception, Israel has oppressed and maltreated the Palestinian people. From the initial War of Independence in 1947-48, through the 6 Day War of 1967, and to the Gaza War of 2009, Israel has treated the Palestinians as inferior or even non-existent, expanded its territorial borders and used extreme brutality to suppress resistance. The violence against the Gaza Freedom Flotilla earlier this year was different only in that Israel was seen to be giving people from other countries a taste of what it has been dishing out to the Palestinians on a regular basis.

Why is this so?

The fundamental cause of the Palestinians' plight was the decision, in the wake of World War II, of the Zionist (i.e. Jewish nationalist) movement to establish a "Jewish State" in the British territory of Palestine. All else has flowed from this. Without the Jewish State, there would have been no need for ethnic cleansing, no drive for territorial expansion and no point to the discriminatory treatment of the Palestinians. There would have been other problems, but not these ones.

A "Jewish State" is a problem because it defines Israel as a state of the Jewish people, rather than a state of its citizens. It is the moral and political equivalent of a White Australia or an Islamic Republic. Israel systematically discriminates against the Palestinian people, treating its Palestinian citizens as inconveniences at best and, at worst, as an enemy within. Furthermore, Zionist ideology carries a particular idea of the extent of Israeli territory (though different Zionist perspectives define the boundaries differently), so there has been a constant drive to expand the State and enclose the desired territory. This has led to the Israeli settlements on the West Bank and the Apartheid Wall.

What is to be done?

Israel's defenders point to the Nazi Genocide as a justification for a Jewish State, but two wrongs don't make a right, even if the initial wrong is as uniquely evil as the Holocaust. Further, neither the appalling regimes of the Arab States nor the crimes of the Palestinian political leadership invalidate the rights of the Palestinian people, whether in Israel, the Occupied Territories or the Diaspora. What is required is a solution which provides justice for all, including for the Jewish Israelis who, despite everything, have rights as well. Though the Zionists have, like Australia, built a nation on stolen land, a nation has been built.

The essential starting point is that there can be no just solution to the Palestine Question within the confines of capitalism. Where there are interpenetrated peoples, as there are in Israel/Palestine, the vindication of the national rights of one people can only occur through the denial of the national rights of the other. Thus, any Two State solution would result in two or more pitiful Palestinian bantustans, leave the Palestinians within Israel as second class citizens, and abandon the Diaspora altogether. On the other hand, a One State solution would put the boot on the other foot, with Jews within a unitary Palestine being denied the self-determination they so strenuously claim.

The no state solution

The only way out of the dilemma on the Palestine Question is to reject the nation state. National oppression in Israel/Palestine can only be abolished if there are no national institutions to fight over and no State to suppress one nation on behalf of another. This also necessarily entails rejecting the capitalist system of which the nation State is an integral part, and which cannot exist without it.

The liberation of the Palestinian people, without merely reversing the terms of oppression, can only occur through a workers' revolution to abolish capitalism. The land and all social resources can then be the common property of all, and inequality and all forms of oppression abolished. Given the current situation, this is not on the immediate agenda, but there is no other solution. In practice, the initiative will likely come from outside, through workers' revolution in the surrounding Arab countries, most importantly Egypt, with its large working class. It is essential for those workers' revolutions to transcend the nationalism of the countries in which they occur, since only internationalism will allow the Arab workers to defeat their own capitalist class; and only internationalism can break the Israeli working class from its Zionist rulers.



Libertarian communism

The task before the workers of Palestine and Israel is thus no different from the task for workers here. It is only posed in more difficult circumstances. We must build a working class movement, based on liberty, equality and solidarity, and fight for a revolution which will re-make society on the same principles. We must abolish capitalism and its State, and we must recognise the folly of building another State in its wake. We must build Libertarian Communism.



Workers Solidarity Network

Workers Solidarity Network

Grassroots picket line supporters

Meets third Tuesday of every month

Meeting Room 1

Victorian Trades Hall

54 Victoria St Carlton

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