

# TROTSKYIST PLATFORM

ISSUE 18 FEBRUARY 2016 ISSN 2201-358X

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AS NEO-NAZI THUGS ARE EMBOLDENED  
AND THE BRUTAL JAILERS OF THE NAURU,  
**CRUSH ALL THE VIOLENT**  
**THROUGH UNITED MASS**  
**MOVEMENT, ABORIGINAL PEOPLE,**

*Below: A contingent from the Nurses and Midwives Association were an enthusiastic part of the 11 October 2015 refugee rights rally in Sydney. The most conscious sections of the workers movement understand that opposing racism is a core task for the trade unions. Racism is poison to workers' unity and without workers' unity the entire struggle for workers' rights is doomed to failure.*

BY THE RACIST VIOLENCE OF POLICE  
CHRISTMAS & MANUS ISLAND HELL HOLES  
**FAR RIGHT RACISTS**  
**ACTION BY THE WORKERS**  
**COLOURED PEOPLE & THE LEFT**

*Earlier, over the July 18/19 weekend, some of the most conscious vanguard of the working class had joined thousands of other anti-racists and taken to the streets to hold counter-demonstrations against racist "Reclaim Australia" rallies. The "Reclaim Australia" movement aims to stir up hatred against Muslims. This extreme right wing movement is dominated by neo-Nazis and other white supremacists who seek to fan ignorant racist fears of Muslims and asylum seekers as a way of igniting a wider firestorm of hatred against all people of colour - whether it be people of Middle Eastern origin, South Asians, East Asians, Aboriginal people or Africans.*





22 September 2015 – With the exception of Queensland, in every city on July 18/19 where anti-racist counter-demonstrations were held they outnumbered the far-right rallies. The most effective counter-demonstration was the July 18 action in Melbourne where over 1,000 anti-racists dwarfed the 150 or so fascists who made it to successive “Reclaim Australia” and United Patriots Front (an even more extreme splinter from Reclaim) rallies. Most importantly, pickets established by the anti-racists in Melbourne managed to stop several dozen of the far-right thugs from even reaching their rally point. However, a massive mobilisation by the police, who were clearly siding with the fascists, ensured that the white supremacists were still able to hold their racist violence-manufacturing mobilisation. Police indiscriminately unleashed pepper spray on anti-racist protesters with around 100 anti-racists affected. One anti-racist protester had a seizure as a result, two had to be hospitalised and medics sent several activists home after they were suffering the after effects of the pepper spray. As a medic explained, these effects included, “hypothermia-like symptoms of shaking and an inability to normalise body temperature.” Meanwhile, police formed a three-deep line to give the fascists a safe escort out of the area following their mobilisation.

In Sydney, 300 anti-racists took part in a counter-demonstration double the size of the July 19 Reclaim rally. However NSW police went out of their way to facilitate the fascist rally. They provided escorts to the racist Party for Freedom to and from the Reclaim rally and kept the anti-racist counter-demonstration a large distance down the street from the Reclaim provocation. When a group that arrived early to the anti-fascist counter-demonstration attempted to establish their rally site – which was to be at the same place where the white supremacist filth were going to hold their rally – police aggressively pushed the anti-racists back down Martin Place two blocks away from where the extreme racists were going to rally. The police outrageously arrested several anti-racists – at least two

of whom were charged including a 57 year-old Aboriginal man. All anti-racists and the workers movement must stand in solidarity with the arrested anti-fascists and demand the dropping of all charges.

No doubt buoyed by the police support that they received, several of the extreme racists attempted to provoke the Sydney anti-racist rally. However, when one of the violent racists tried to infiltrate into the anti-racist demonstration he was suitably dealt with by staunch anti-fascists. A more serious threat emerged when later a group of thugs from the openly neo-Nazi group Squadron 88, wearing their paramilitary uniform, approached the anti-racist protest from the rear. In Nazi-speak, the “88” in Squadron 88 stands for “Heil Hitler” with the 8 representing the letter “H” the eighth letter of the alphabet. However, it is far from simply their name that makes Squadron 88 a menace. This group of violent racists are known to have gatherings from where they pledge to go out and violently beat a random, vulnerable person from a designated non-white race. Thus, one time they will have an “Asian-bash” day, another time an “Indian-bash” then a “N\_ger bash” day etc. However, thanks to the meticulous prior research and quick *on the spot* thinking of a committed anti-fascist who spotted the Squadron 88 thugs as soon as they approached, some of the people in the anti-racist rally were quickly alerted to the threat. A few dozen staunch anti-fascists amongst the anti-racist rally then moved forward as a group towards the Squadron 88 members and eventually chased them away down Martin Place and around the corner into Pitt Street. Furthermore, one of the violent and racist Squadron 88 thugs was taught a painful lesson. That the anti-fascist delivering the lesson was a coloured person made this all the more satisfying a blow against “white supremacy” and the idiotic Nazi notions of a “white master race.”

Yet by and large, with support from the police, the extreme right-wing forces were able to hold their racist violence-inciting



*Trotskyist Platform banner, placards and leaflets at the 19 July 2015, anti-racist rally in Sydney promoted the strategy of trade union contingents uniting with coloured people and anti-racists to crush the fascist scum.*

demonstration in Sydney unhindered. The same was the case throughout Australia – and partially the case even in Melbourne. Thus, while it was certainly a good thing and good for the morale of anti-racists to see that their rallies outnumbered those of the far-right, the fact is that the rabid racists will be encouraged by having gotten away with holding their racist provocations largely unhindered. Meanwhile, garden-variety bigots watching on their TV screens at home will have been radicalised by seeing the far-right racists able to openly promote extreme racism on the streets.

It is little surprise then that violent racist attacks and abuse against coloured people have continued in large numbers since the July 18/19 Reclaim rallies and anti-racist counter-demonstrations. Early this morning, the Arabella Restaurant and Bar in King Streets in the Inner West Sydney suburb of Newtown was vandalised in a racist attack. Three days earlier, the message “F--- Arabs” had been etched into one of the restaurant’s

window panes. The same message had been scrawled onto the restaurant’s back door weeks earlier (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 22 September 2015). Last week owner and chef, Mohamed Zouhour had also received racist threatening phone calls abusing him as “bloody Lebanese” and demanding: “Move out of the area, you can’t be in Newtown, get out.” That abusive call was part of six months of racist phone calls and racist graffiti against the restaurant. In this morning’s attack, the restaurant front windows were repeatedly bashed with a hammer. Nothing was stolen – the motivation was pure racist hostility. It was the third such physical attack on the restaurant in the last year and a half. Zouhour commented:

“I loved it here, and the locals are great, but this is too much. It’s scary, I’m scared. “... I find myself thinking I should take my family and go. I don’t feel protected in this country.”

*The Sydney Morning Herald*, 22 Sep 2015



Every anti-racist should make a stand with restaurant owner Zouhour and the workers at the Arabella Restaurant against the racist attacks that they are facing. The disgusting and terrifying attacks on the Arabella Restaurant are, however, just the tip of the iceberg. As a capitalist business owner, Zouhour has the chance of getting relatively more

mainstream media and police assistance. Yet, every day working class Aboriginal, Middle Eastern, Asian and African people are getting attacked or abused on the streets, in public transport, in the school playgrounds and at nightspots with little or no official redress... and that's when racist cops are *not* the actual perpetrators themselves!



*Sydney, December 2005: Racist white mobs bash any coloured person they can find on Cronulla Beach. Since then coloured people have been fearful to go to Cronulla Beach, which had been (due to its location near a train station) up until the riots Sydney's most multi-racial beach. That this defacto state of apartheid on Cronulla Beach remains in place and the effects of the riots have not been overturned is a source of inspiration for violent racists throughout Australia. There needs to be a huge anti-racist convoy of trade unionists, 'ethnic' youth and anti-racists that will travel from the multiracial, working class southwest of Sydney to Cronulla to finally ensure that Cronulla Beach can be safely accessed by coloured peoples.*

## **TOWARD A MASS MOBILISATION OF TRADE UNIONISTS AND COLOURED PEOPLE ON THE TENTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CRONULLA RIOTS TO FINALLY MAKE CRONULLA BEACH SAFE FOR PEOPLE OF ALL COLOURS**

With the different far-right components of Reclaim undergoing bitter factional struggle it is unclear whether the Reclaim racist rallies will continue in their current form. However, it is certain that the extreme right forces in Sydney have not been deterred by the outcome of the contest between the racist Reclaim rallies and the anti-racist counter-demonstrations. Thus, at least two fascist groups – the Party for Freedom and the United Patriots Front – are planning racist actions in Cronulla to celebrate the mid-December tenth anniversary of the horrific white supremacist riot on Cronulla Beach. To their credit some anti-racists are trying to organise a counter-action. Such a counter-action is, indeed, badly needed. Even without fascist groups planning provocations to mark the riot anniversary, the chilling effect of the 2005 racist white riot and the, as yet, lack of a counter-mobilisation powerful enough to make the beach safe for people of all colours has meant that dark-skinned people have largely stayed away from that beach. The racist filth have, in effect, succeeded in ethnically cleansing one of Sydney's prettiest beach spots

– a large beach that, with Cronulla's rail link, is relatively easy to get to for the burgeoning multiracial population of Western Sydney. In fact, of those visiting Cronulla Beach today, over 95% are white. That is, a defacto system of apartheid exists on Cronulla Beach. This must be overturned! However, given the growing strength of the fascists, the depth of racist attitudes amongst some Cronulla residents and the overall racist climate, any counter-mobilisation must be large enough to be safe, let alone effective. In particular, a mobilisation needs to have the powerful clout of at least some sections of the organised workers' movement behind it – especially given that in a standoff with extreme racists, the police's strong tendency is to side with the racists.

Given how emboldened racist forces in Cronulla feel in the current political climate, many coloured people may not feel safe meeting up at a rally starting point in Cronulla on the day of the riot anniversary. A possible tactic, then, would be to gather at a multi-racial working class suburb in Sydney's southwest and then move as a convoy to Cronulla. As we stated in a leaflet that we issued just days after the 2005 riot itself:

**The question of access to Cronulla Beach is not just a question of the right to use a beach. It is about whether non-white people, especially from Sydney's poorer Western suburbs, can live in any sort of dignity and security in this country. There must be a mass mobilisation of trade unionists of all colours, alongside immigrant-derived youth, Aboriginal people and leftists, to occupy Cronulla Beach and guarantee safe access to it for people of all races. The white supremacist groups that helped instigate Sunday's atrocity**

**need to be given the same treatment that union militants have long reserved for filthy scabs who try to cross strikers' picket lines. Drive them out of stolen Aboriginal land!** Such firm action against hard-core violent rednecks would intimidate the more garden-variety racists into pulling their heads in.

Given the white racist forces seen on Sunday [i.e. on 11 December 2005], a union/immigrant mobilisation would not take place *at Cronulla Beach* until the forces for such an action had been adequately built up. But these forces need to be urgently strengthened right now through one, or a series of, preparatory demonstrations in the heartlands of Sydney's multiracial working class – suburbs like Bankstown or Auburn. When our side is sufficiently strong, the decisive union-centred action at Cronulla Beach can be launched possibly via a huge cavalcade from a rallying point in Sydney's West.

*Sydney, 19 July 2015: A large police mobilisation prevents an anti-racist demonstration from being able to effectively counter a rally by the fascist "Reclaim Australia" movement. It was notable how the police and police horses faced in the direction of the anti-fascists – confirming that the police were siding with the far-right racists against the anti-racists.*





## LESSONS FROM THE JULY 19 ANTI-RACIST RALLY IN SYDNEY

In order to effectively organise the upcoming anti-fascist struggles that are needed, anti-racist activists need to seriously examine the lessons of the July 19 anti-Reclaim counter-demonstration in Sydney. Many activists worked tirelessly to promote the action. Yet despite these sincere efforts and despite the current reality that the far-right racists are hated by a large section of the population, the counter-action did not stop the Reclaim provocation. Understandably frustrated by this, some staunch anti-fascists have tended to blame the Socialist Alternative (SAIt) group for having gathered before other anti-racists on the day, saying that this gave the cops the chance to push back the anti-racist demonstration before its full strength had been reached. However, this criticism of SAIt is on this occasion incorrect as well as a bit unfair. The fact is that regardless of whatever tactical methods that could have been employed on the day, there did not exist sufficient enough forces at the July 19 anti-racist demonstration to stop the Reclaim rally in the face of the large police presence defending the fascists.

By lack of forces here is meant not only a question of insufficient numbers – although that is certainly important. To give anti-fascist forces serious clout requires the power of the organised working class movement. Since the trade union movement has social power and with it the ability to wage industrial action that hurts the profits of the big business bosses whom the police ultimately serve, the police are more reluctant to attack a progressive rally with a sizeable union contingent than they would otherwise be. There is, thus, **the potential for an anti-fascist mobilisation with a significant workers contingent to simply compel the police to stand aside – for fear of the social and industrial relations consequences of attacking trade union contingents – while the anti-fascist demonstration marches through and routs the extreme racists.** This was the case on May 2 in Brisbane last year when about 100 trade union construction workers were at the core of an anti-fascist rally that defeated a planned rally by the white supremacist Australia First Party (see “Provocation by Violent Racists Crushed in Brisbane” in *Trotskyist Platform* Issue 17.<sup>1</sup>) Unfortunately, on July 19 in Sydney there appeared to be no organised union presence although some proud trade unionists were certainly there as individuals amongst the crowd.

The other factor that is important is not only the size and composition of an anti-fascist

rally but the commitment of participants to not only protest against the white supremacist trash but to actually sweep these extreme racists off the streets. Now the July 19 anti-racist rally was largely full of decent, well-meaning people who quite rightly hate racism. Yet it is possible that over half the participants did not understand the need to actually physically stop the fascists from holding their racist, violence-manufacturing demonstration.

Thus, the question that we need to consider in reviewing the lessons of July 19 is not whether SAIt or other groups adopted bad tactics on the day but whether the very strategy that the anti-racist counter-rally was mobilised on actually advanced the cause of building working class-based actions dedicated to sweeping the extreme white supremacists off the streets. It is clear that the official call for the July 19 anti-racist counter-action did not encourage an action that would seek to actually stop the Reclaim rally. The call posed the event as simply a “peaceful” protest against the ideas of the Reclaim movement rather than an action that sought to shut the racist, violence-inciting rally down. This had the effect of guiding those planning on attending onto a certainly well-meaning but, ultimately, counter-productive pacifist path. Of course, such a call would not have affected those anti-fascists who already understand that when the fascists get away with openly rallying it simply spells more racist violence



18 July 2015: Over a thousand anti-racists participated in this counter-demonstration to the extreme racist “Reclaim Australia” rally in Melbourne.

on the streets. However, it would have misled the many decent anti-racists – some attending their very first anti-fascist demonstration – who were unsure whether a pacifist approach or one based on actually stopping the violent racists is most effective. That, in the end, there didn’t in any case exist the forces to shutdown the Reclaim rally on the day does not make this misdirecting of participants any less a problem. The fact is that many passionately anti-racist youth are being led on to an ineffective, pacifist path and this weakens future anti-fascist struggles. It is SAIt’s partial responsibility for pushing this pacifist rally call – even while sometimes stating adherence to a more staunch perspective and even while some of their members on the day showed a sincere and gutsy determination to rout the far-right racists. Yet it was far from just SAIt that was responsible for the pacifist call out. The majority of those leading the organising of the anti-racist action supported such a call out. The Solidarity group and

Socialist Alliance pushed such a perspective even more unambiguously than SAIt and even a minority of the anarchist-minded anti-fascists acquiesced to it (though, to their credit, many of the other anarchists involved tried to argue against it in the lead up to the rally).

So a major lesson has to be learnt on this question. However, an even bigger correction needs to be made to ensure that anti-racist actions are in the future based upon a strategy that puts the mobilisation of the workers movement at its core. It is true that those organising the July 19 anti-Reclaim demonstration did make some sincere efforts to “outreach” to trade unions. However, the various reformist socialist groups largely organising the rally did not make an appeal to *workers’ class interests* part of the actual rally call. There was nothing in the official rally call enunciating the all-important idea that stopping the extreme racists is a key part of building the unity that the working class





Sydney, 11 October 2015: Proud members of the Nurses and Midwives Association pose for a photo in Hyde Park on the day of the rally in Sydney protesting against the racist Turnbull government's attacks on refugees.

so badly needs to fight for its own rights. Making such an appeal is *essential* in order to enhance the possibility of winning class-conscious workers to joining the anti-racist struggle.

The failure to make a direct appeal to workers' class interests in the call out for the anti-Reclaim demonstration was not simply an oversight. It was a choice. The appeal was not made because the various reformist socialist groups (and indeed many of the "non-aligned" activists involved as well) who were leading the organising of the rally feared that such an appeal would scare off other potential supporters of the anti-racist demonstration – people such as middle class intellectuals, anti-union small businessmen and establishment-oriented ethnic community groups. Indeed, an open appeal

to workers' class interests would scare off some of these people. But a choice has to be made – either one seeks to build a movement based on the working class or one builds a movement attractive to liberal elements of the capitalist class and pro-establishment middle class.

For those really serious about fighting racist violence the choice to be made is clear cut. It is the working class that has the consistent interest to fight fascism and, as events on July 19 showed, without the social power of the working class it is impossible to defeat extreme racist mobilisations when they have significant police protection and that, unfortunately, is most of the time!

Ensuring that call outs for anti-fascist mobilisations openly appeal to workers' class interests does not, of course, guarantee that

the anti-fascist action will end up attracting powerful trade union contingents. There also needs to be a struggle within the workers movement itself against the nationalism and illusions in the state – ideologies promoted by the ALP current *misleaders* of the workers movement – that impede a workers' mobilisation against extreme racists. However, an open appeal to workers' class interests helps the most politically enlightened trade union activists – who already understand the need to stop the right-wing racists – to be able to convince other workers in their own workplace and/or union into joining the anti-fascist movement. Thus, while it may not always bring instant results, an

anti-fascist strategy based on open appeals to the working class helps pave the way for trade union contingents to confidently march into the ranks of the anti-fascist movement. This is what is so badly needed. Therefore, if there is just one lesson that staunch anti-racists should take away from the July 19 events it is this: that **the struggle against fascism demands the mobilisation of the working class and such a perspective is only real if one is prepared to make the choice of openly appealing to workers' class interests at the "cost" of alienating liberal, pro-capitalist establishment forces.**

### LET'S NOT HAVE A "ONE RALLY WONDER" PERSPECTIVE IDEOLOGICAL PREPARATION OF THE ANTI-FASCIST MOVEMENT IS A KEY PART OF THE FIGHT TO CRUSH THE EXTREME RACISTS

Given that the forces did not exist on July 19 to shut down the Reclaim racist rally what should determined anti-fascists have been doing on that day. There did need to be work done to repulse isolated physical provocations by fascists – most seriously from the Squadron 88 group that approached from the rear. Yet dealing with these threats only took up a minority of the rally time. What about the rest of the time? Many staunch anti-fascists felt understandably frustrated at the situation and tried to think of tactics that could get the job done and compel the police to stand aside. And, afterwards, some sincere anti-fascists discussed tactics that – in hindsight – they felt could have enabled some defeats to be laid upon the Reclaim mobilisation.

Yet the long and the short of the situation was that our side simply did not have the forces to shut down the Reclaim provocation: both in numbers and composition as well as in psychological preparedness. That, however, does not mean that what one did at the anti-racist rally was of no consequence. Far from it! It is the absolute **duty** of those anti-fascists who understand the need to physically defeat the threat from the violent racists and who understand the need for an anti-fascist movement that openly appeals to workers' class interests to bring that understanding to the many other decent people involved in the anti-racist campaigns. Using whatever time was available at the July 19 anti-racist rally to try and promote these perspectives was a key task for anti-fascists on the day – and doubly so

given that the forces did not exist to rout the extreme racists then and there.

Any serious anti-fascist activist knows that the struggle against fascism will not end with the July 19 action. Those who only plan to be involved in anti-racist activism for a short but frenzied period (during a certain transitional stage of their lives) would naturally think that it is unimportant what particular strategies are being promoted by placards, banners, speeches, leaflets, newspapers and chants on the day. However, those in it for the long haul should be **extremely interested** in all these things because they determine whether anti-racist activists are guided towards an effective or an ineffective strategy for the future.



As part of attempting to shape the anti-fascist movement in the direction which we believe gives it the greatest chance of victory, Trotskyist Platform carried a banner at the July 19 Sydney demonstration that read, "A United, Multiracial & Strong Working Class Can Drive the Racists Off Our Streets." Additionally, as well as helping to defend the anti-racist rally against fascist provocations, our comrades were busy distributing a leaflet that motivated a strategy of united mass action by the workers movement, coloured people and leftists to crush the violent far-right racists. We reprint this leaflet below.

**SHUT DOWN the JULY 19 RACE-HATE RALLY!**

**For a UNITED MASS ACTION**

**by the WORKERS MOVEMENT,**

**COLOURED PEOPLE & LEFTISTS to**

**CRUSH the VIOLENT FAR RIGHT RACISTS**



**12 July 2015 – Four weeks ago in the U.S.A, a young white supremacist murdered nine black people when he opened fire on worshippers at the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, South Carolina. Reloading his gun five times as he murdered the black church goers, the white supremacist chillingly yelled out, "you're taking over our country. And you have to go." This racist terrorist had been emboldened by the activities of eighteen known fascist groups operating in South Carolina, including two chapters of the Ku Klux Klan and several openly neo-Nazi groups.**

Unofficial attack dogs of official racism and xenophobia, such violent racist groups are active here in Australia too. Over the last year, these neo-Nazi forces have grown, egged on by the bi-partisan fear campaign being whipped up against Muslims, the thinly veiled racism of a new set of draconian "anti-terror" laws and, perhaps most tellingly of all, the recent formation of the paramilitary-style Australian Border Force: a new set of black shirted jackboots whose job, as we can surmise from its website, is to patrol and enforce the *continuum* of the Australian border, both external and *internal*, in order to produce a "*cohesive* society" where, presumably, elements that don't fit into their skewed, racially-charged vision (like asylum seekers and persecuted young Muslim Australians that end up angrily incoherent) are summarily shipped out.

Not surprisingly then, the growth of fascist sentiments has been accompanied by a rising tide of violent, racist assaults. In one of several reported attacks last month – each of which represents hundreds that go unreported – a 21 year-old Middle Eastern refugee was left with serious facial injuries after being attacked outside a youth centre in Wollongong on June 4. After first being racially abused, he was then bashed by two youths who pushed him onto a motorbike. The owner of the motorbike then arrived and joined in the heinous racist assault – punching and kicking the victim. Just four days later on June 8, a 15 year old girl of Asian origin was racially abused and then bashed by an adult while on a train approaching Lidcombe station. The white attacker punched the girl several times in the face and kneed her in the body. Meanwhile, at a park in Lidcombe, two Sudanese boys going to Under 8's soccer training were disgustingly told by an adult racist bully to get out of the park because they were not welcome there.

Capitalist rule in Australia, a brutal regime *constituted* by two acts of both explicit and implicit violence – the ongoing genocide of this continent's first peoples and the White Australia Policy exclusion of neighbouring Asia-Pacific peoples – has created such a racist society. In fact, there are countless *garden variety* racists who could on a bad day physically lash out against a person with dark or so-called *coloured* skin. Yet it is also a fact that, especially in country towns, neo-Nazi and KKK-imitating rednecks have attacked and in several cases actually murdered Aboriginal people – as in Townsville where, in 2003, a known white supremacist murdered a 15 year-old boy, Errol Wyles, by deliberately reversing his car to run over the Aboriginal youth twice. This chilling crime – and the deliberate hit and run murder of Yasman Rae Sturt eight months earlier by a white driver who dragged her with his car 100 metres – are part of a series of horrific hit and run attacks on Aboriginal people and Islanders by racist rednecks in Townsville. Meanwhile, in big cities, fascist gangs going on "Asian-bash," "Indian-bash" and "African-bash" rampages have committed many barbaric racist attacks. Just as dangerous as the threat of such direct assaults and murders by the fascists are the many more, often unreported, attacks that their violent hate speech incites. **These far-right racist extremists need to be crushed! By crushing the organised, ultra-racists we will also be sending a message to the more numerous *garden variety* bigots that acts of racist violence and abuse from them will not be tolerated!**

On July 19, various far-right groups calling themselves "Reclaim Australia" will be holding a rally in the heart of Sydney. The organisers, quite absurdly and with seemingly no sense of irony about the fact that they are standing on *stolen* Aboriginal land, say that they want to "Reclaim Australia" from Muslims and multi-culturalism. Their slogans will, sadly and inevitably, lead to yet more attacks on Muslims. However, these far right groups which have been busy spreading hate against Aboriginal people, Asians and Africans, see this as but a tactic to whip up violence against *all* people of colour. **Anti-racists and trade unionists are mobilising a counter demonstration to this white supremacist rally. The counter-demonstration is scheduled for 10am – half an hour before the start of the fascist provocation. We add our voice to the many others building the counter-action and urge proud working class people and all the intended targets of the racist thugs – Aboriginal people, Middle Eastern people, Asians, Africans, Muslims, Jews, gays and lesbians and other members of the LGBTI community, feminists and leftists – to join us. We say that what is needed is not simply to protest against the fascists but to shut their racist violence-manufacturing demonstration down. Proud contingents of trade union members must take the lead. Let's be there at 10am on Sunday, July 19 at Martin Place between Pitt and Castlereagh Streets to sweep the racist filth off the streets. Let's emulate the victory that was scored in Brisbane on May 2 last year when over a 100 construction workers (members of the CFMEU, ETU and other unions) were the vanguard of an anti-racist action that drove a neo-Nazi rally right off the streets of Brisbane.**

### **CRUSHING VIOLENT RACIST SCUM IS PART OF BUILDING THE WORKING CLASS UNITY THAT WE SO BADLY NEED**

Every day greedy bosses are threatening workers' hard won rights. To help them do this, corporate thugs and their lapdogs in the governments of Australia are attacking our unions. Meanwhile, Liberal and ALP federal and state regimes alike are slashing public sector jobs and undermining the services that working class people need the most like public housing and public hospitals. To defeat this many-sided offensive, we need our side to be *absolutely united across different trades, ethnicities and nations*. Indeed, it is only through such unity that any rights have ever been won at all.





Melbourne, May 2015: An activist with the fascist United Patriots Fund (UPF) proudly brandishes Nazi symbols at their rally against communism and Islam. The UPF and Reclaim Australia are avowedly anti-Islam and anti-communist. In truth they are not only bigots opposed to Muslims but are extreme white supremacists intent on stirring up racist violence against all coloured people – they are against Aboriginal people and against people from Asian, African, Middle Eastern and Pacific Islander backgrounds.

The capitalist bosses and their politician mates know this well. That's **why they have been deliberately whipping up racism to divide the ranks of the working class and divert their fire**. They have been demonising refugees and Muslims and ever more viciously vilifying and locking up Aboriginal people. Serving the exploiting class in this agenda are several extreme right-wing groups. These outfits, including open neo-Nazis, don't simply want to spread prejudice. They actually want to incite and unleash violent racist attacks.

The rabid racist groups are the most extreme enforcers of the current capitalist order. That is hardly surprising. Any real unionist knows that the most racist person in the workplace is almost always anti-union and betrays fellow workers. The cowardly racist is often seen attacking and picking on minorities to pit worker against worker and siding with the boss when workers voice concerns in the workplace. In the same way, far right groups fanatically hate not only non-white people but also leftists who they understand are the most avowed supporters of that force which ultimately stands in the way of their fascist agenda: workers' unity and the trade unions. The extreme right wingers follow in the footsteps of the Old Guard and New Guard organisations that had big numbers in the 1920s and 1930s and would go around attacking strike pickets and trade union activists.

It is true that the fascists, right now, do not have the strength that they had in the days of the Old and New Guards. However, their neo-Nazi counterparts in Europe have been breeding at an alarming rate feeding off the huge unemployment and insecurity caused by decaying capitalism and its severe economic crises. Right now, white supremacist outfits are succeeding in whipping up more and more violent racist attacks on coloured individuals. Working class people cannot allow non-white members of our class to be terrorised in this way. We cannot afford to allow people from a non-white background to be so intimidated that they will be unable to undertake the crucial role that they have often played in the struggle for all of our collective rights. We cannot and will not allow Hitler-loving lunatics to divide our side with racism.



Brisbane, 2 May 2014: Trade unionists from the construction industry were in the forefront of an action that swept the white supremacist Australia First Party off the streets. Mobilising trade union contingents is crucial to anti-fascist struggles. Union contingents represent social power and carry with them the implied threat of industrial action if they are attacked. Workers' contingents at anti-fascist mobilisations have the potential to compel police intent on defending the fascists to stand aside, thus allowing the fascists to be driven off the streets.

However, to date and albeit with a very small number of important exceptions, the leadership of the union movement has not seriously mobilised the workers movement to stop the fascists. This is despite union activists being amongst those at the top of the fascists' hit list (need anyone be reminded of Anders Breivik's murder of 69 members of the Norwegian Labour party's youth league to demonstrate that it is not only the far left that is the political target of these insanely violent neo-Nazis). Instead, the pro-ALP union bureaucrats hope that the state will one day intervene to stop the fascists. However, the key state organs – the police and courts – have inevitably sided with the violent racists during stand-offs with anti-racist demonstrators. In Melbourne on May 31, police not only allowed the violent racist group, United Patriots Front, to march upon (in the end rather unsuccessfully) an anti-racist rally gathered outside Richmond Town Hall but actually escorted the neo-Nazi-led outfit as they moved threateningly towards the anti-racists. In contrast, when three dozen anti-fascists attempted to march towards a rally of the extreme white supremacist Australia Defence League in July 2011, police would not allow any anti-racists to get within 100 metres of the sinister racist provocation. Meanwhile, after neo-Nazi Scott Hasenkamp murdered Aboriginal youth Errol Wyles in Townsville in 2003, the courts sentenced the neo-Nazi murderer to just a 15 month sentence, of which he only served two months in prison! The same pattern exists in all other capitalist countries where significant fascist forces exist. In Greece, it has emerged that members of the armed forces have been training hit squads of the neo-Nazi, Golden Dawn party. Media reports in Greece have further exposed that the head of the police's special forces, internal security, organised crimes, firearms and explosives divisions have been assisting Golden Dawn's criminal activities.





Indian student Sukhraj Singh spent more than two weeks in a coma and sustained permanent severe brain injuries after being bashed by a gang of racist youth in Melbourne in 2009. The racist thugs armed with wooden bars attacked an Indian grocery store in the suburb Sunshine. They indiscriminately assaulted customers as they yelled out, "bloody Indians, f--- off." The extreme racist rhetoric of far-right rallies aims to incite such racist violence on the streets.

The fact is that the police and judiciary in capitalist countries have far, far more in common with the racist and anti-union, far-right than they do with anti-fascists. Here in Australia, police have perpetrated the outright racist murder or manslaughter of countless young Aboriginal people in custody over the last three decades including Eddie Murray, TJ Hickey, Mulrunji Doomdagee, Kwementyaye Briscoe and Julieka Dhu. The legal system for its part – from coroner's inquests to royal commissions – has whitewashed each of these racist crimes. The police – backed by the courts – are also notorious for harassing Asian, African, Islander and Middle Eastern youth living in working class suburbs. And the way that police have assaulted union picket lines and the manner in which the ongoing Royal Commission into Unions is squarely attacking the entire union movement is what the far right thugs are inspired by and seek to emulate in a more extreme fashion. In a capitalist society like Australia, the state and its key organs have been built up to maintain the rule of exploitation of the capitalist class over the working class – and that includes enforcing the ruling class' racist divide-and-conquer tactics. Thus the police, courts, army and prisons serve the same exploiting class as the thugs of the far-right extremist movement. Although the bulk of the Australian ruling class don't want to right now openly identify with such extremists, the capitalist rulers know that the far right outfits are on their side. The *oh-so-civilised* corporate elite wash their hands of the crude race-hatred of the far-right extremists as they know that openly associating with it is harmful to their lucrative trade and investments in Asia. Yet secretly they grin at how the far-right bigotry is helping to divide the working class and divert mass opposition away from themselves. Meanwhile, the more far-sighted of the capitalists and their political think-tanks cannot help but realise that the iron fist of the fascists are a vital force to have in reserve should the big con of parliamentary democracy lose its power to keep tricking the masses into submission. That is why so few politicians from any of the pro-capitalist parliamentary parties have been prepared to make even strong verbal denunciations of the "Reclaim Australia" racist movement.

The far-right extremists can only be effectively combated through the united mass action on the streets of all the intended victims of the fascists. Such an anti-fascist movement must be spearheaded by the organised working class – the class with both the interest and the power to stamp out the neo-Nazi threat. When an anti-fascist mobilisation is, as is frequently the case, confronted by a large police presence defending the violent racists, it is the participation in the anti-racist movement of union contingents that can compel the police to stand aside because the trade union presence signals the threat of retaliatory industrial action should the police attack the anti-Nazi action.

## PREPARING ANTI-RACISTS FOR A COUNTER-DEMONSTRATION AGAINST VIOLENT FAR-RIGHT THUGS

There has been much debate amongst leftists and other anti-racists about how best to counter the upcoming far-right mobilisation. Various small-l liberals, including many supporters of the Greens as well as the left groups Solidarity, Socialist Alliance, and the Communist Party of Australia want a rally that protests against the *views* of "Reclaim Australia" but rules out, beforehand, any action to *shut down* the white supremacist mobilisation even if the forces exist to do so. This strategy is wrong. Even if there is a large anti-racist rally that demonstrates widespread community opposition to the "Reclaim Australia" movement, if an attempt to stop the fascists is ruled out then the white supremacists will still be emboldened since, at the end of the day, they will have gotten away with openly fomenting their extreme race hate right in the middle of inner-city Sydney, in the case of the upcoming July 19 rally. Hardened, but presently unorganised, racists watching at home will then in turn be radicalised and encouraged to become active fascists (as some were after the first Sydney "Reclaim" rally on April 4 was not shut down). Hearing media excerpts from nice speeches by participants at the anti-racist rally will make little difference to them – they have been incubated against left wing rhetoric by the venom of the racist ravings of Alan Jones-style shock jocks as well as the barely disguised prejudice of mainstream politicians. Instead, seeing the active white supremacists get away with controlling space in an area in the very heart of Sydney – effectively making a big section of Martin Place a no-go area for coloured people, just like the Cronulla Beach riots sadly did to Cronulla Beach – this is exactly what will embolden them to commit acts of racist violence. To tell anti-racist activists to *confine* themselves to explaining what is wrong with racism in the face of a movement that perpetrates and incites violence is to disarm and damage the anti-racist struggle. It is following the road of the leaders of the German Social Democratic Party – then and now the biggest party within the German workers movement – who in the lead up to Hitler's seizure of power were saying that so long as the Nazis do not quit the ground of legality, there is no room for an *on the streets* struggle to physically stop them!

Unfortunately, this stance is also held by the party which in this country covets the proud title of Lenin and Trotsky's party which not only led the world's first successful socialist revolution in Russia in 1917 but whose USSR workers state that they led the creation of inspired the Soviet people to heroically and with great suffering withstand and ultimately crush the greatest fascist behemoth ever arrayed against the multiracial working people of the world, that is the enormous Nazi army led by the genocidal maniac Adolf Hitler in World War 2. We are, of course, referring to the Communist Party of Australia (CPA) which, in their article "Lessons from Reclaim Australia protests" by Peter Mac in their newspaper *The Guardian*, decry the April 4 counter-action in Melbourne for being "violent" and denounce statements by an unnamed group (who happen, incidentally, to be us in Trotskyist Platform) that 'the neo-Nazis ... must be swept off the streets' and that we must 'drive the violent white supremacists out of stolen Aboriginal land!' The CPA stance is representative of that of the whole liberal-pacifist wing of the anti-fascist movement. For the CPA and the small-l liberals the model anti-fascist strategy is exemplified by the pacifist April 4 anti-"Reclaim" rally in Adelaide led by the good pastor, Brad Chilcott, and his "non-violent 'subtle and symbolic' strategies", some of which, somewhat tellingly, he "had to abandon ... because of public safety concerns" (*The Guardian*, 22 April 2015) It is true that the counter-demonstrators in Adelaide were indeed "peaceful" even though it has to be noted that this Chilcott-led rally was the weakest of all the anti-Reclaim events in the capital cities on April 4 with the anti-racists outnumbered ten to one by the far-right racists. However, that does not mean there was no violence. Far from it! What the CPA did not report (and to be fair they were likely not aware of) is that following





Charleston, South Carolina, United States: Friends and relatives of victims at a ceremony to mourn the murder of nine attendees at the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church. White supremacist activist, Dylann Roof (Right) entered the church – known as a church where black people congregated – and indiscriminately opened fire on church goers. Every Reclaim Australia and UPF rally brings Australia closer to a Charleston-style far-right terrorist massacre.

the Adelaide April 4 “Reclaim” action, some of the invigorated fascists followed a group of indigenous activists participating in the counter-protest back to their home and assaulted them. Meanwhile, the emboldening of the “Reclaim” participants – and the bigots “watching at home” – just by the fact that they were able to get away with openly spewing extreme racist filth in the heart of Adelaide can only lead to more racist violence on the streets.

Fortunately, at planning meetings for the Sydney July 19 anti-racist rally those promoting the pacifist line have been outvoted by others – including Socialist Alternative supporters and anarchists – who rightly argued that the action should seek to undermine the hardcore racist demonstration by taking over the space that the white supremacists plan to gather at prior to the scheduled start of their “Reclaim” rally. However, the official call for the anti-racist action – for example on the Facebook Event page – remains flawed. For one, at the insistence of Socialist Alternative, the call insists that the anti-racist demonstration will be “peaceful.” Of course, it would be wrong to say that our action will be “violent” – it is the far-right who are the creators of racist violence while the police often use violence to attack progressive struggles – like anti-racist actions and union picket lines. But to insist that a counter-demonstration against those who are inciting, threatening and perpetrating violence against coloured people and anti-racists will be “peaceful” is like telling the Palestinian people to be “peaceful” in the face of the Israeli military’s murderous terror. Mainly white, reformist socialist groups may think that they have the luxury of decreeing that an action against violent racists shall be “peaceful,” however socially-aware coloured people know that they have little hope of deciding when or where their reality is going to be peaceful or not. Politically conscious coloured people know that they face the danger *at any time* of being attacked by rabid racists while on the streets, in public transport or at nightspots – not to mention when in the far more fraught situation of participating in a demonstration against extreme racists!

Today’s issue of Melbourne’s *The Age* newspaper reported that social media discussions amongst fascists showed that they planned to bring weapons to the Melbourne race-hate rally next weekend. Thus, for anti-“Reclaim” organisers here to lull people who are planning to join the counter-demonstration into a false sense of security that the action will necessarily be “peaceful” is highly irresponsible and potentially catastrophic. It might mean that rally

attendees do not take precautions when coming to the rally. Instead of organising to come to the rally in groups with friends as they should, anti-racists may be lulled into thinking it is safe to rock up as an individual wearing anti-racist badges and t-shirts and all – a practice that could set them up to be attacked on their way in by a neo-Nazi gang (themselves on their way to the same location for the rival mobilisation). When at the rally site itself, participants who, convinced by the rally call that the demonstration will be “peaceful” and having illusions that the police will intervene to protect them should any threat emerge, may decide to stand around in a very geographically dispersed area rather than in a tight pack with their fellow anti-fascists. This could open them up to being picked off by far-right thugs itching to unleash violence against anti-racists.

How this can play out was shown all too brutally at a stand-off between fascists and anti-racists in Melbourne on 18 March 1995. It was then that 37 members of the then most prominent fascist group in Australia, National Action (NA), rallied on the steps of Melbourne’s parliament house. They were protected from 300 anti-racist protesters by a line of police. However, the anti-racists, lulled into thinking that the police would by necessity keep the two sides apart let their guard down. A squad of NA led by their then fuhrer Michael Brander then charged towards a section of the anti-racist crowd. *The police line actually opened up to let the fascists through* and in the fascist attack that followed one anti-fascist was severely beaten on the head by a thick flagpole carried by the fascists. The NA squad then retreated behind the police line which closed up behind to protect them as swiftly as it had opened up to let them through. The head injuries sustained by the assaulted anti-fascist demonstrator, who had previously been a very active leftist, were so serious that it kept him out of activism for several years.

## MASS WORKING CLASS-CENTRED ACTION TO STOP THE FASCISTS

A militant strategy to stop fascism should be guided by the perspective of mass action centred on the working class rather than small gangs of committed anti-fascists attempting to deal blows to the racist thugs in a series of isolated clashes. Currently, some of the most sincere, dedicated and brave anti-fascists lean towards the latter strategy. Sometimes their actions succeed – something which all anti-fascists can only celebrate. However, the neo-Nazis, obsessed as they are with weapons and combat training, are also capable of clever tactics. Should anti-fascists suffer a defeat in a small scale clash or be arrested by police, this would not only take out from the movement (for some period at least) some of the most committed anti-fascists but news of the setback would be seized on by small-l liberals and reformists to discredit any perspective to physically stop the far-right scum.

There is, however, a bigger problem with the specialised anti-fascist, commando-like group perspective even if the participants are fortunate enough to suffer no serious defeats. That problem is that this strategy sidesteps the working class masses whose most politically conscious layers may not even be aware that the clashes are taking place. This perspective does not seek to mobilise the working class masses but rather to substitute for the masses the heroism of the anti-fascist activists. Yet it is the working class masses that have the power to consistently deal defeats to the fascists in open confrontations – as occurred on May 2 last year in Brisbane. And although it is a blow to a neo-Nazi to be taught a lesson by a small anti-fascist gang while walking on a street or on their way home, it is far more demoralising for the fascists – and those bigots watching at home on their TV sets – to see themselves being



trounced in the open by a large crowd spearheaded by the muscle of the organised workers movement. However, those focussed on attempting to deal blows to the extreme racist thugs through small-group actions must believe, in various kinds of ways, that the working class is currently too backward to mobilise against fascism or that it takes too long to build up such mass worker mobilisations or that they themselves are personally too isolated from the workers movement to help mobilise working class-based anti-fascist struggle. Thus, these determined anti-fascists end up believing that they must forge ahead of the politically advanced layers of the working class and launch their own actions separately from any section of the masses. In effect they believe they must act as a kind of vanguard of anti-fascist action – although most of them would hate such a self-description.

In the context of a working class-centred mass movement to stop the far-right fanatics, some degree of “black ops” activities against the neo-Nazis can play a useful supplementary role. However, right now all our energies must be devoted to building up the *mass* anti-fascist movement. If the very serious anti-fascists currently focussed on the hardcore, small anti-fascist group perspective were to instead immerse themselves in the workers movement and use their considerable energies and talents to winning their fellow workers to an internationalist program – a program that necessarily includes mass action to crush fascism – the anti-fascist struggle would receive a decent boost. The activists involved would have to make the leap from being the vanguard of militant anti-fascist action to being a different type of vanguard – one that does not believe it is better than the masses and rather than seeking to forge ahead of the masses seeks to bring the best layers of the masses with them. This perspective will require the activists involved to clarify their own outlook into a very precise revolutionary, internationalist program as they will be stepping into an intense battle with Laborite social democracy for the hearts and minds of the workers. It will require them to undertake work that is more tedious, more patient and far less glamorous than the perspective of small group confrontations with the fascists. Nevertheless, especially now that the far-right forces have grown in Australia so much and are increasingly receiving open support from some sections of the mainstream establishment, it is only the working class that has the clout to decisively crush the fascists.

### **FOR A UNITED, INTERNATIONALIST & STRONG WORKING CLASS THAT WILL SMASH FASCISM FOR GOOD**

Mobilising the working class against the far-right threat is not simply a matter of contacting union officials. Organisers of most anti-fascist actions have always attempted to do this. Nor is it simply a matter of distributing anti-fascist rally leaflets to rank and file union members at worksites although this is certainly essential work. To be effective in mobilising the working class, rally calls must openly appeal to the interests that workers have in opposing the extreme racists. Unfortunately, the official call for the Sydney July 19 anti-racist action does not make such an appeal to the class interests of workers. Anti-fascists often recoil from such a call even though they nominally accept the importance of the workers movement to the anti-fascist struggle. They fear that open appeals to workers class interests will put off some middle-class liberal anti-racists and sympathetic, trendy café owners (who want to be seen as progressive but don't like unions because they fear that the workers that they exploit might one day join one!) But if appealing to workers' class interests offends such layers, so be it! It is the working class and not small-l liberals and “small business” bosses that is the strategic force that will defeat fascism.

Encouragingly, a section of anti-fascist activists seem to be increasingly understanding this point. One stream of anarchists have issued a powerful poster building for the July 19



*Sweden, 22 October 2015: A far-right activist, Anton Lundin Pettersson (Left), dressed in a Dark Vader outfit stabs to death a teaching assistant and pupil at a school in the industrial city of Trollhättan. The school was targeted because it had a high proportion of non-white migrant-background youth. The student who was murdered by the white supremacist terrorist is Somali-born, 15 year-old Ahmed Hassan (Right). Those who believe that fascists can be stopped through simply debating them are badly mistaken.*

mobilisation, signed “Anti-Fascist Action,” that in calling to “Shutdown Reclaim Australia” clearly appeals to workers’ class interests in the fight to “Smash Fascists!” and “Drive Them Off Our Streets.” The poster explained that the fascists’ “hateful ideology is an attempt to divide the working class and help the bosses and landlords.”

Appealing to workers class interests is one part of the struggle to mobilise the working class against fascism. The second crucial part is the political struggle that internationalist-minded workers need to wage within their workplaces and unions against nationalist sentiments within the workers movement itself. Right now the CFMEU construction union is waging a divisive nationalist campaign raising fears that local workers will lose out because Chinese companies investing in large projects under the China Australia Free Trade Agreement may be able to bring in Chinese workers. To be sure the social democratic nationalism of the CFMEU bureaucrats is not the same as the violent racism of the fascists. The CFMEU is, after all, the union whose members were at the forefront of the powerful action in May last year that trounced the fascist Australia First Party in Brisbane. However, the economic nationalism of the pro-ALP union leadership does feed into the mainstream nationalist climate that nurtures the far-right extremists. Furthermore, by promoting in more moderate form the local worker versus overseas worker rivalry that the far-right forces spew in extreme form, the union bureaucracy is to some degree legitimising the far-right and thus diluting workers’ inherent hostility to the fascists.

Instead of the divisive and ultimately losing strategy of setting local workers up against their overseas counterparts, our unions must fight to unite all workers in the fight for improved conditions and more jobs for all workers. The fight for jobs means first and foremost an industrial action-based struggle to stop the greedy Australian capitalist bosses from retrenching workers to boost their profits. Yet bowing to the anti-union laws and chained to a strategy of relying on parliament to affect progressive change, it is precisely militant industrial action that the present union officialdom recoils from. And the more the social democratic, current union officials step back from class struggle, the more they are left with having to advance economic nationalism as the “solution” to unemployment. The struggle to purge



the union movement of poisonous economic nationalism must go hand in hand with a fight to unleash the power of the working class against attacks on workers' jobs and conditions. To fight for such a perspective an internationalist, revolutionary current within the unions must be built to challenge the failed policies of the current Laborite leadership. The growth in influence of such class-struggle union caucuses would see the union movement start to unleash its power against unemployment and casualization and thus begin to cut the ground from under the fascists. A revolutionary current within the unions, linked to a multi-racial revolutionary workers party, would also seek to unify the workers movement across racial lines by fighting to mobilise it to support Aboriginal resistance to the forced closure of remote Aboriginal communities, to ensure victory for the Redfern Aboriginal Tent Embassy struggle, to free the refugees and to revoke the racist anti-terror laws. In this way, by starting to dig out the racist soil that this society is built on, working class anti-racist actions like these will necessarily start to uproot the fascist filth from the putrid ground in which they are allowed to otherwise fester and grow.

Yet as today's despicable acceptance of anti-working class austerity by the left-wing Syriza government in Greece proves, as long as the capitalist class still hold state power then the conditions of unemployment, inequality, poverty and insecurity can never be decisively swept away. No matter how left-wing or radical the government sitting in parliament is. Only the overthrow of capitalist rule through workers' revolution and the establishment of a collectivised economy on a worldwide scale can ensure that fascism is finally consigned to where it truly belongs – the dustbin of history.



Photo: Anti Fascist Action Sydney  
(antifascistactionsydney.wordpress.com)

*Hardcore opponent of socialistic China, Caterwood Ko, is an active member of the fascist Party For Freedom (PFF). Ko has Hong Kong origins and is a staunch supporter of the right-wing, Hong Kong student protesters that oppose Red China's influence in Hong Kong. Despite being virulent white supremacists and haters of Asian people, the Party For Freedom make an exception and embrace ethnic Chinese Ko (and the right-wing Falun Gong outfit) because they too are driven by overwhelming hatred of socialistic China and of communism more generally.*

## HUMANITY'S FUTURE: FASCISM OR COMMUNISM

To see how capitalist economy nurtures fascism it is enough to note that in Australia a large part of the working age population are either unemployed or working far less hours than they want to or else in insecure casual jobs or worried about being retrenched. The far-right seeks to appeal to these people by offering blatantly false but simplistic analysis blaming immigrants and overseas producers for their plight. However, although unemployed and underemployed people make up some of the personnel of neo-Nazi gangs, the main social base of the far-right are the most reactionary sections of the middle class as well as smaller scale capitalist business owners. The far-right groups aim to recruit insecure, self-employed service providers and tradies buffeted by the wild fluctuations of the capitalist "free-market" by insinuating that competition from migrants and overseas producers are undermining their businesses. Those capitalist business owners whose businesses are struggling are also open to such demagoguery. That is why it is in the crisis-ridden capitalist economies of Europe where the fascists are most alarmingly gaining strength and most openly getting the backing from sizeable chunks of the big capitalists.

In capitalist society, both the middle class self-employed and capitalist small business owners are ground down by capitalist banks and big landlords as well as the tyranny of big corporate business. They are fearful of being dragged down – often *back* down – into the working class. Middle class individuals can either be won to siding with the working class against the capitalists that oppress them or, alternatively, will follow the capitalists in their push to ever more exploit the working class. Fascism is, in the main, a movement of middle class individuals fanatically mobilised against the working class whom they fear being dragged down into and whose class struggles they fear will either challenge their relatively privileged position or will challenge them in their roles as henchmen (managers, foremen, security guards etc) for the capitalists. Fear of coloured people, LGBTI people and the *other* of society in general naturally goes hand in hand with fear of the workers movement and its powerful, multi-racial character.

Although most of the Australian fascists revere Hitler, many of them realise that since Australia was on the opposite side to the Nazis in the bloody imperialist squabble that was World War II (with the big exception of the Soviet workers state's heroic resistance against Nazi invasion), it does not sit well with Aussie nationalist mythology and militarism to outwardly show any allegiance to Nazism. Today, with the mainstream pro-capitalist parties stirring up fear of Muslim people, the far-right see a chance to push their broader agenda using anti-Islam as a battering ram. They promote the notion that Australia is being taken over by Islam and Sharia Law as well as other cultures and needs to be "reclaimed" by white people. This is, of course, ridiculous. It is the Aboriginal people whose land was stolen and culture decimated – not by people coming to the country seeking to contribute to society as part of making their own lives better as today's migrants do – but by murdering, brutal colonial conquerors. As for the notion that non-white people have taken over the economy (and there is no reason that white people should control the economy anyway!) it is worth noting that of Australia's 50 richest people, just two, that is a measly 4% are coloured.

With just 2.2% of Australians being Muslims the idea that Sharia Law could be imposed in Australia is also complete bonkers. In fact, the real threat to secularism is from Christian fundamentalists. Not a single advocate of Sharia Law holds any elected position in state or federal parliament. In contrast, in NSW the balance of power is held by the Christian fundamentalist zealot, Fred Nile. Nile wants mothers confined to the home so much that earlier this year he railed against child care centres as "day orphanages." Nile and his Christian Democratic Party denounces homosexuality, opposes the Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras, opposes giving parents



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## Which countries invest in Australia?

The total value (stock) of foreign investment in Australia stood at \$2.8 trillion at the end of 2014.

The United States and the United Kingdom are the top two sources of investment in Australia, ahead of Belgium, Japan and Singapore.

Levels of Chinese and Indian investment in Australia have grown since 2005, reaching \$65 billion and \$11 billion respectively at the end of 2014.

### Which countries invest in Australia? 2014

Rank	Country	A\$b	% of total
1	United States	758.2	27.2
2	United Kingdom	484.2	17.4
3	Belgium	226.1	8.1
4	Japan	174.7	6.3
5	Singapore	80.2	2.9
6	Hong Kong (SAR of China)	77.3	2.8
7	China	64.5	2.3
8	Luxembourg	58.8	2.1
9	Netherlands	56.6	2.0
10	Switzerland	54.6	2.0

*Opposition to foreign investment in Australia is pushed in a rabid way by the Far Right and in a softer way by the Greens and some pro-ALP social democrats. No matter which country it is targeted at, this opposition diverts the masses from the required task of opposing the capitalist exploiters. The high profile opposition to Chinese investment is driven by racism and anti-communism. As the above official figures show, despite being the most populous country in the world, China is only the seventh largest foreign investor in Australia. Chinese investment in Australia is barely above 2% of total foreign investment in Australia – ten times less than that from the U.S! Investment from mainland China is also notably less than from Chinese-majority Singapore. However, foreign investment from Singapore is much less frequently targeted by right-wing groups because Singapore is capitalist and China is socialistic.*

the chance to allow their children to opt out of scripture classes at school and fanatically opposes women’s right to abortion. The first, non-state, terrorist murder in Australia this century was perpetrated by a far-right, Christian anti-abortion bigot, Peter Knight who in July 2001 shot dead an employee at an East Melbourne abortion clinic in what he planned would be a massacre of all the staff and patients at the clinic. Today, members of the Right to Life movement that Knight was part of as well as other cowardly, Christian-based bigots continue to harass women seeking abortions outside clinics.

Although the current main focus of the far-right is against Muslims, the ultimate main target of fascist agitation and pogroms will be Asians. Fascism is built on fear and after the white capitalist ruling class “dealt” with the “threat” from Aboriginal people by committing

genocide and completely dispossessing this country’s first peoples, the main theme of racist White Australia xenophobia has been the fear of Asians – especially Chinese people. This is the fear that immigration from the populous masses of Australia’s Asian neighbours will dilute the relatively privileged economic position of resource rich and sparsely populated Australia or even threaten white domination of this country. Thus, alongside brutal prejudice against Aboriginal people, anti-Asian xenophobia has dominated Australian racism from the 1861 anti-Chinese violence on the Lambing Flats goldfield to the anti-Chinese laws of the late 1800s to the formal introduction of the White Australia Policy in 1901 and right up to today’s anti-China hysteria.

Already, the most prominent fascist parties, the Party for Freedom and the Australia First Party, devote much of their attention to opposing Asians and the Peoples Republic of China. Last month, the Party for Freedom held a rally outside the Chinese embassy opposing Chinese nationals buying real estate and blaming them for exorbitant house prices. Yet the facts show that Chinese investors spent approximately just 2% of all the money spent on purchasing residential property in Australia and most of this was spent on developing new dwellings. Indeed, for all the hype, official figures from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade show that despite having 20% of the world’s population, investment in all areas from China makes up only 1.3% of the total stock of foreign investment in Australia – 20 times less than that from the U.S.A.<sup>2</sup> Indeed, Chinese investment in Australia is nearly matched by Australian investment in China. China does not even make the top five of foreign investors in Australia and even tiny Switzerland and the Netherlands have more investments here! There is, however, no agitation here against foreign investment from the big, white investing countries: the U.S., Britain, the Netherlands and Switzerland (nor should there be, in fact). It is bleeding obvious then that the hysterical far-right opposition to Chinese investment and the media hype directed against it is based on racist bigotry.

However, there is another aspect to the anti-China crusade. Singapore is also an ethnic Chinese majority country and investment in Australia from Singapore is almost twice that from mainland China. Why then do we not see agitation against investment into Australia by Singapore? Because Singapore is a capitalist country while the Peoples Republic of China (PRC) has a socialistic system administered by a Communist party. Hostility to the PRC from both the mainstream of the ruling class and from the far-right fanatics thus combines racism with anti-communism. That is why much of the mainstream opposition to Chinese investment is focussed on the fact that most of it is from state-owned companies. Although the wavering bureaucracy that administers China has treacherously allowed a fair deal of capitalism to penetrate the PRC, in the PRC socialistic state-owned enterprises continue to dominate all the key sectors of the Chinese economy (unlike in capitalist Australia where public enterprises have only ever played a supplementary role to support a system which is based on wealthy private individuals owning the bulk of the economy).

It is worth noting that the white supremacist Party for Freedom has recruited hardline anti-communist Chinese individuals from the Falun Gong group. There is, of course, a similarity between the fascist agenda of the Party for Freedom and the ideology of the ultra-right Falun Gong group with its fascistic belief in racial purity, its disgusting notion that people of mixed race are inferior and its virulent homophobia. However, what mostly allows the white supremacists to grit their teeth and allow ethnic Chinese members into their party is their shared, extreme hostility to Red China. Fascists see communism as the greatest obstacle to their agenda. That is why the Reclaim Australia breakaway, the United Patriots Front, made its first action (on May 31 in Melbourne) a “rally against communism.”



Should the fascists continue to grow, they will offer themselves up to the ruling class as the force that can stand up to Communist China just as Hitler advertised himself as the force that could destroy the USSR. And just as it took Hitler to attempt to realise the capitalist dream of wiping out the USSR, it may well take a fascist regime in the U.S. and Australia to crush the workers movements in these countries savagely enough to allow the ruling classes in these countries to launch what would necessarily be an extremely bloody war on Red China. That anyone could countenance such a catastrophic war seems insane. However, the fascists are not sane. Furthermore, even today the mainstream of the U.S. and Australian ruling classes are seeking to put military pressure on China and to begin to make war preparations, which is why there is the U.S. “pivot to Asia” and why U.S. troops are being stationed in Darwin. This drive to conflict with socialistic China is driven by the very logic of capitalism. As capitalism bounces from one economic crisis to another, the capitalist rulers fear the masses in their own countries seeing any example of workers’ rule – even one like in China that is, admittedly, bureaucratically deformed and weakened by capitalist intrusion.

Furthermore, the only way for capitalists to avert their economic crises is to open up new areas of the world to capitalist exploitation (or else to grab existing neo-colonies from their fellow, imperialist rivals). However, one in five people in the world live in a country, China, where the U.S., Australian and other capitalists’ “right” to exploit is severely restricted. Being a country with a per capita GDP several times lower than Australia (due to the resource poor country being burdened by enforced backwardness from its days of colonial subjugation which it only began to catch up from after the 1949 anti-capitalist revolution), wages in China are necessarily lower than in Australia. However, wages in China are much higher than what they would be should China have been capitalist. Thus, Chinese wages are the second highest of the developing countries in Asia. The relatively better conditions of Chinese workers relative to capitalist societies with similar per capita GDP is especially evident if one considers the high social wage Chinese workers receive – including cheap public transport, free cultural facilities and extensive low-rent public housing. Of course, in a huge and complicated country one could also find many a horror story of exploitation of workers in the private sector – especially light manufacturing industries in the Southeast region bordering Hong Kong which are dominated by foreign, private investment. However, that is increasingly becoming old news. In 2008, the PRC enacted a pro-worker Labour Law that gave workers rights unheard of for workers in Australia (such as a guarantee that long-time employees within five years of retirement cannot be retrenched for any reason). Meanwhile, a government-supported unionisation drive has seen the rate of trade union membership in China balloon. China has the fastest growing workers’ wages in the world – wages there have grown by an average of close to 12% per year over the last few years, well above the rate of growth of GDP in China. Many Western manufacturing corporations like Nike and Adidas have completely abandoned their operations in China for lower wage countries even though the infrastructure in China is much better. So, the only way left for Western capitalists to turn the world’s most populous country into the huge sweatshop for exploitation that they want and, indeed, need it to be in order to relieve the crises in their own economies – is through smashing socialistic rule in China. Far-right forces are promoting themselves as the hardcore anti-communists who can get this job done.

As the socio-political climate in Australia lurches towards one that could see new, terrifying, Cronulla-style mass racist riots, it is worth dwelling on the fact that the fascists – the most radical defenders of the current racist and exploitative social order – see communism as their main political enemy. This is because communism – a society based on collective ownership of the economy where each would contribute according to their ability and receive according

to their need – would see the creation of a society where exploitation of human by human would be non-existent and discrimination on the basis of race and gender would be things of the past. Such a society, where the eventual dissipation of all class differences would also see the state itself start to wither away, would bring out the very best in humanity. It would enable all humans to live in friendship, enjoying themselves as they pick out what they want from a rich smorgasbord of cultures.

Increasingly, we are faced with the choice of either fighting for this kind of communism or being plunged into the abyss of fascist-ruled capitalism that will bring yet more racist violence, hatred, oppression of workers and catastrophic wars. The first step in the fight for a communist future is the overthrow of capitalist state power and the construction of worker states. These states would protect the newly established socialist system from the counterrevolutionary efforts of the overthrown exploiters and guide the former middle class to shake off the selfish, capitalistic spirit that they were haunted with from the previous times and, instead embrace the collectivist values of the new epoch. However, to accomplish the revolutionary seizure of state power is not an easy thing. The working class must first be trained both ideologically and practically in a series of partial struggles. An important part of this training involves the working class gaining confidence in its own power through flexing its muscles while unchaining itself from any political ties to capitalist institutions and pro-capitalist political parties. A great way to flex those muscles is to mobilise its own power – united with Aboriginal people, coloured ethnic communities and other anti-racists – to shut down the looming, far right threat. Then, using the confidence we gain from such struggles, we can launch a badly needed counter-offensive against all the greedy, exploiting bosses.



*“Fascism - The Most Evil Enemy of Women. Everyone to the Struggle Against Fascism!” Poster by Nina Vatolina who asked her neighbour, whose two sons had already left for the battlefield, to model for this poster. It was published in August 1941, five weeks after the Nazi invasion of the Soviet Union, with an initial print run of 75,000 copies.*





*Workers at Ausreo's Western Sydney plant picket the site. After maintaining a picket line for 10 weeks and with solidarity from other trade unionists, the workers, members of the AMWU trade union, triumphed in their battle for improved pay and conditions. Class struggle is the road to defending workers rights.*

## **CASUAL & LOW PAID WORKERS IN NON-UNION WORKSITES FACE EXTREME EXPLOITATION UNIONS WAGING MILITANT STRUGGLE CAN INSPIRE THE UNIONISATION OF CURRENTLY UNORGANISED WORKERS**

**13 November 2015** – They often work on gruelling – and sometimes dangerous – night shifts. However, they have been paid as low as \$10 an hour for that work. That has been the fate of hundreds upon hundreds of workers at Australia's biggest convenience store chain, 7-Eleven. Details of this horrific exploitation has emerged in the media over the last five years. This is hardly just a case of an odd rogue franchisee or two. When the company, under pressure to be seen to be correcting its practices, audited its franchises in July, even it had to admit that 69% of the stores were illegally underpaying workers. However, insiders believe that this figure is, actually, closer to 100%.

The scale of the exploitation is truly frightening. Franchises have systematically used a practice where they would pay workers \$12 an hour – half the award rate – and then cook the books to look like they worked only for half the hours that they actually did. Sometimes the bosses would then assign the other hours to ghost workers – often their own relatives – to look like the hours have been covered. Most workers were

not paid penalty rates for weekend and night work or overtime rates for shifts longer than ten hours.

Many of the exploited workers were on student visas. Draconian measures restricting the rights of those on student visas as well as the racist vigour with which the Australian authorities are known to deport immigrants from Asian, Middle Eastern and African

backgrounds greatly assisted the exploiters. Those on student visas are banned from working over 20 hours a week. However, because 7-Eleven bosses were grossly underpaying their workers – in some cases workers received a flat rate of just \$10 an hour for shifts which, with penalties, should have earned them \$37 an hour – workers were forced to work twice as long as they wanted to. The bosses then used the fact that the workers had exceeded the 20 hours per week limit to threaten to get the workers deported if they complained or ... in some cases even if they left their jobs! The worst bosses even refused to pay some workers anything for months. One former 7-Eleven worker, Prakash Kumar, reported that he found a co-worker rummaging in the bins for old sandwiches because he hadn't been paid for eight weeks (*The Sydney Morning Herald*, 23 September 2015).

The story of Sam Pendem, an international student from India, is typical of the workers who have suffered at the hands of 7-Eleven bosses. Pendem came to Australia in 2011 with three university degrees. He worked at three different stores under four franchisees in the Gold Coast region. His tale of suffering was reported in an article in *The Sydney Morning Herald* (29 August 2015) as part of a series of exposés:

Pendem still has nightmares from his time working at 7-Eleven, where he worked long shifts of up to 16 hours without a proper break.

He was robbed twice in the space of 18 hours by a man in a balaclava brandishing a long serrated knife. Both times his boss scolded him for not fighting back to stop the robber taking \$180....

Pendem was paid \$10 an hour at one store and \$14 an hour at another store, which is well below the award rate of more than \$24 an hour – not including penalty rates for working nights, weekends or public holidays.

No wonder a whistle blower within 7-Eleven head office described the company's operations this way: "the business is very proud of itself and the achievements and the money it's made and the success it's had, but the reality is it's built on something not much different from slavery." (*7-Eleven: The Price of*

*Convenience*, Four Corners, ABC TV)<sup>3</sup>

The owners of 7-Eleven have tried to claim that it is all the franchisees' fault. The franchisee bosses have, indeed, proved by and large to be utterly ruthless capitalist bullies. However, the 7-Eleven owners were also up to their necks in it. They knew that their franchisees were ripping off the workers but deliberately allowed it – and very likely organised it as well since franchisees in different parts of the country seemed to all know the same scams. As a whistle blower pointed out about 7-Eleven's head office bosses on Adele Ferguson and Klaus Toft's *Four Corners* investigation: this exploitation "was a fundamental part of their business. They can't run 7-Eleven as profitably or as successfully as they have without letting this happen." The 7-Eleven owners encouraged their franchisees to brutally exploit their workers by running the business on the model where the head office takes 57% of gross profit while the franchisees take the remaining 43% out of which wages must be paid. The company owners, in effect, outsourced the super-exploitation task to the franchisees.

The greedy capitalists who own 7-Eleven have made a killing from all their cruel exploitation. Last year, the company made a profit of over \$1.4 billion. The owners of the company – Australians Russ Withers and his sister Bev Barlow – are billionaires who, as well as owning 7-Eleven, control the Starbucks café chain in Australia and 300 Mobil stores. Earlier in the year, Barlow bought a seaside mansion in Brighton for over \$20 million while Withers main place of residence is a 250,000 square metre property in Victoria's Yarra Valley wine district estimated to be worth about \$10 million.

The massive fees that Australian universities and institutes charge international students has made it easier for Withers, Barlow and their franchisees to exploit their workers. The annual fees for some courses exceed the total income that a full-time worker on the minimum wage would earn in an entire year! Many international students, desperate for any work to be able to pay these fees, have been forced to accept terrible conditions at workplaces like 7-Eleven. Those students who have been forced to work more than 20





Where do the fruits of the labour of 7-Eleven workers end up? Paying for the extravagant lifestyle of the owners of this Australian-owned company. Exploiting 7-Eleven workers has made company owners Russ Withers (Bottom Right) and his sister Bev Barlow filthy rich. In June 2015, Withers upgraded his corporate jet to a Challenger 604. A month earlier, Barlow purchased a \$20 million mansion in the Melbourne suburb, Brighton (Bottom Left). Withers for his part lives in a huge mansion in a large property in Victoria's Yarra Valley wine district (Top Right).

hours per week to get by – while somehow trying to pass exams – are then blackmailed by their bosses who threaten to dob them into the racist immigration authorities.

The slave-owner-like bosses have also been protected by the Fair Work regulator's deliberately soft approach to the illegal practices of the 7-Eleven bosses. This approach was taken both during the time of the current Liberal government and during the administration of the former Labor government. Workers at 7-Eleven stores and union activists first raised the alarm about what the 7-Eleven bosses were doing over five years ago. However, in response, the Fair Work Ombudsman merely asked some franchisees to do a "self audit" and then only looked at the books of a few of the franchisees that did. Fair Work refused the calls from activists to compare store timesheets with the cash register logins which would have helped to detect some of the timesheet frauds conducted by 7-Eleven franchise bosses. No wonder the 7-Eleven bosses felt confident to continue their extreme exploitation of their workers. It was only after the outrage against 7-Eleven had become so widespread that some four years later (in September 2014) did the Fair Work Ombudsman organise a raid of some stores. Twenty stores were

raided and 60% of these were found to be illegally underpaying staff. Yet as we go to press only two franchise bosses are facing any legal action – a drop in the ocean compared to the 225 franchises in existence – the vast majority of which are suspected of illegally underpaying workers. Meanwhile, even in cases where Fair Work has found that workers were being underpaid, many workers are still yet to be reimbursed. As we go to press, one worker, Mohamed Rashid Ullat Thodi, hasn't even been reimbursed a full four years after the 7-Eleven store in Victoria that was ripping him off was ruled to be underpaying its workers.

It is only due to the brave defiance of some 7-Eleven workers – who risked deportation and having their years of study count for nothing – as well as the support of union activists that the extreme exploitation of 7-Eleven workers has been brought to light. As a result, some workers finally have received the back pay they are due – not that this could adequately make up for the years of suffering and threats they have endured. For these workers to even begin to be properly compensated, their bosses should be made to pay back to these workers several times the amount of wages they had previously withheld!

## 7-ELEVEN OUTRAGE NOT AN EXCEPTION BUT THE TIP OF THE ICEBERG

The revelations around the semi-slavery at 7-Eleven have led to the news organisations that broke the story being flooded with similar accounts of extreme exploitation at takeaway outlets, restaurants, petrol stations, nail bars and many high-profile franchise networks (*The Sydney Morning Herald*, 1 October 2015). Furthermore, it is far from simply international students and those on other temporary visas who are copping 7-Eleven-style exploitation in Australia. Nor is the oppression of workers confined to simply gross underpayment of wages. Alongside the bosses ripping off workers' labour comes their bullying and intimidation of workers. One former employee at the Subway restaurant in Granville, a Trotskyist Platform supporter, described the arrogance with which the boss, known as "Johnny", treated workers. "Johnny" made it a habit of humiliating workers by yelling at them in front of customers. On several occasions, he threw the food prepared for customers by workers down on the floor claiming that it was not prepared properly and then proceeded to badmouth the workers to the customers. It is disgusting that any worker should be abused and humiliated in this way – doubly so given that these casual workers already had to put up with terrible conditions where they could be called early in the morning and pressured into doing a shift. Those who refused to heel would simply be punished by having other shifts withheld. "Johnny" was notorious for especially picking on workers of Indian background. As is often the case with oppressors of workers, they have a racist edge to them as well – something that is today encouraged by the racist social climate created by bi-partisan attacks on refugees and racist "anti-terror" laws.

Particularly harsh exploitation of workers in Australia has increased with the growing casualization of the workforce – a phenomenon that has occurred over the last three and a half decades in nearly all capitalist countries. The proportion of workers in casual employment in Australia has increased from 16% in 1984 (*Transitions from Casual Employment in Australia*, Project 09/05, Hielke Buddelmeyer, Mark Wooden and Suzan Ghantous) to 24% today (*Casual employment in Australia: a quick guide*, Parliament of Australia Research Paper, 20 January 2015). When we include workers on short term contracts, we find that 35% of the workforce are either casual or on contract (*ABC News website*, 17 June 2015). That's a large chunk of the workforce with virtually zero job security.

It is worth noting that while under capitalist Australia's laws workers can be kept indefinitely on the insecure status of being casuals or on repeated short-term contracts, in the socialistic Peoples Republic of China (PRC), Article 14 of a pro-worker industrial relations law introduced in 2008 decrees that as soon as a worker on a fixed-term contract has their contract renewed once, that worker automatically becomes a permanent employee – if they so choose – once they finish their second term and the employer

has not been able to prove that they are incompetent. Furthermore this PRC labour law – implemented in the face of howls of protest from Western corporations operating in China – does not allow for workers to be hired on a casual basis. If an employer wants to use workers on a short term, casual basis they must obtain workers from a labour-hire company which, by Article 58 of China's labour law, must retain workers for a minimum period of two years and must pay them the minimum wage for any time that they are not placed – therefore giving these workers considerably more stability than casual workers in Australia. The fact that China had to pull itself up from the immense poverty of its pre-1949 days when it was a backward neo-colony added to its lack of natural resources relative to its huge population means that Australia is a lot wealthier than China currently is and, therefore, Australian corporations can offer higher wages here. Nevertheless, in the socialistic PRC workers enjoy more workplace rights and much better job security than workers do in capitalist Australia.

It is not only bosses engaged in illegal practices who are especially cruelly exploiting workers in Australia. There are millions of workers toiling for low – but legal



– wages as factory process workers, cleaners, hospitality workers, retail workers, farm labourers and childcare workers. Typical of what these workers face can be seen in the work conditions at food processing company, Beak & Johnston. Owned by multi-millionaire CEO David Beak, the rapidly expanding company had a total revenue of 300 million dollars in 2013. Through the efforts of its workers, Beak & Johnston is not only a major supplier of fresh and chilled meat products but is also Australia's largest fresh soups and ready meals maker. Yet the Australian-owned company makes its workers suffer low pay and poor working conditions. Last year, several Beak & Johnston workers told Trotskyist Platform of the working conditions that they face. One worker who had been there for around five years said she receives only just over \$17 an hour – barely above the national minimum wage – even though she and her fellow workers had to toil hard in a cold, uncomfortable work environment. Newer workers are getting only the minimum wage which is currently \$586 per week after tax (\$656 before tax). To see how low that is, consider this: this weekly wage that many Beak & Johnston workers are receiving is only \$176 more than the median weekly rent for units in Greenacre and only \$26 more than the median weekly rent for houses in this working class suburb in Southwest Sydney where Beak & Johnston's main facility is located! The management at Beak & Johnston workers has a reputation for unfairly driving workers to work faster and some managers are known to shout abuse at workers in front of their co-workers. Casual workers are treated especially badly. Workers reported that there was a steady stream of casual workers being hired and then dismissed after a short period. It seems that the company employs a strategy of hiring a certain amount of casuals that they can drive especially hard – knowing that these workers would feel insecure without the benefits of permanent employment. However, once these workers were in the workplace long enough to form friendship bonds with permanent workers and the confidence to resist bullying from the management, they would then be summarily laid off. No wonder David Beak and his henchmen have fiercely resisted efforts to build union coverage at Beak & Johnston. Over the last year, however,

the Australian Meat Industry Employees Union and the National Union of Workers have made more determined efforts to recruit Beak & Johnston workers to their unions.

Poor working conditions and bullying of workers are prevalent even in sectors where most of the workers are white collar and skilled. Take the IT application and infrastructure business industry. Thousands upon thousands of IT professionals work for companies like UNISYS, Datacom and HP Enterprise in providing data handling and IT support services for major government departments and corporations. One worker at a major firm in this industry, Datacom, told Trotskyist Platform of the work conditions at his workplace. He said that management produce statistics about each worker's work like the number of customer issues that they address (as is typical for capitalist firms the bosses care about the *appearance* of quality to their customers and not about the actual quality of work – just look at Volkswagen-Audi!). These statistics are then shown to everyone and those workers not meeting arbitrary performance targets have their statistics shown in red. The statistics are used to drive workers harder through the crude methods of embarrassment and intimidation. Through the pretext of these "performance" statistics, several workers have been sacked while other workers on fixed-term contract have been effectively dismissed through the company refusing to renew their contracts.

It is the sizeable proportion of workers without permanency whose life is made especially stressful by the bosses' use of "performance measures" to threaten workers. Like many businesses throughout Australia, Datacom likes having workers without permanency as it uses these workers' understandable feeling of job insecurity to squeeze yet more from them and thus drive down the conditions of all workers. Some workers who have been employed for up to four years have been refused the relative security of permanency – instead repeatedly getting fixed term, six-month contracts. This system of keeping workers stressed and insecure through short contracts, "performance" statistics and occasional sackings – as well as paying their workers low wages relative to these workers' skills and output – have enabled Datacom to

squeeze out a huge profit. Datacom's 2014 Annual Report showed that it made an annual, after tax profit of over \$51 million dollars. That amounted to a whopping 33% annual return on shareholders invested funds. At that rate, Datacom's main owner, New Zealander John Holdsworth's \$86 million invested in the firm

will turn into nearly \$350m in just nine years – all without doing a shred of work himself! No wonder Holdsworth was already near the top of the latest NZ rich list with a total wealth of \$200 million.<sup>4</sup>

## **BUILD UP OUR TRADE UNIONS & TURN THEM INTO ORGANISATIONS OF MILITANT WORKERS' RESISTANCE**

**The most extreme exploitation and bullying of workers in Australia has often occurred at workplaces where no strong trade union presence exists. One on one against a capitalist boss – who has the power to sack workers – a worker has no chance. It is through unity with fellow workers – and unions are in essence organisations of workers' unity – that workers gain the power to successfully resist capitalist exploiters. Of course, having every worker in a union is not by itself a guarantee against extreme exploitation. Casualisation of the workforce has spread so much in Australia over the last three decades that even some workers in the most strongly unionised sectors are toiling away without the security of permanency. Thus, in today's stevedoring industry – a sector where union membership is almost universal amongst workers and which is known for staunch unions – many wharfies working for the major stevedoring firms like DP World do not have permanency. Yet it is through building our unions – and just as importantly through turning these unions into organisations of militant class struggle – that workers can fight back.**

*11 August 2015: Hutchison Port workers and their supporters picket the company's Port Botany terminal. The workers while on strike maintained a picket line that successfully stopped all truck flow and ensured no scabbing. To the credit of the workers and the MUA leadership, the strike and picket were maintained in defiance of a typically anti-strike ruling from the "Fair Work Commission." However, the MUA leadership's subsequent calling off of the strike, in obedience to a Fair Work Commission arrangement to negotiate with the company, has dissipated the power shown in the initial struggle. Despite the company being held back by workers' solidarity from overseas dock workers, if the strike is not resumed, the workers and union will likely be forced to accept some redundancies and/or the turning of permanent jobs into casual ones.*





Currently, it is often in the newer sectors of the economy – like IT support firms and call centres – where union representation is weakest. This is because these sectors have developed at a time when the union movement has suffered a number of defeats, has been hit by anti-strike laws and been weakened by the reluctance of its pro-ALP leaders to unleash its industrial muscle. Thus, when they look at what is happening in the rest of the workforce, many often young workers in newer sectors do not understand the potential of unions to win real gains for workers. In contrast, in older industries where a strong union presence already exists, young workers joining firms are given an understanding of the importance of unions through contact with existing, proudly union, workers.

Unions have had some success in organising a few call centres. But what is needed is an aggressive union organising campaign throughout the workforce to organise currently non-union workers. This means already union-conscious workers persistently and patiently discussing the importance of workers organising with their co-workers, it means secret out of work meetings between interested workers and union activists and – when the time and forces are right – open struggle against the bosses for workers' rights. It is through exposure to hard-fought struggles that workers are often recruited into unions and, in any case, that's exactly how our trade unions were built up in the first place.

The success that class-conscious workers have in unionising currently non-union workplaces depends a lot on not only what they and unions do in these workplaces but on what happens in currently unionised sites. When workers in non-unionised workplaces and in insecure, casual jobs see unions throughout the country fighting aggressively for workers' rights, it will raise their level of class awareness and encourage them to build unions in their own workplaces. The problem is that they have seen far too little of unions unleashing powerful industrial action. When militant workers press their union leaders for such action, the pro-ALP officials often respond that they would like such a struggle

but the various anti-strike industrial laws prevent such action. Indeed, there are a host of anti-strike laws that have been brought in and maintained by Liberal and ALP governments alike – from laws criminalising secondary strikes (i.e. strikes in solidarity with workers on strike at another workplace) to laws restricting the time periods when strikes can be launched. These often carry with them penalties of hefty fines and even threats of jail. Yet, because it is workers' very labour that is the source of the ruling class' profits and wealth, workers when united can force the government to shy away from using its own laws for fear of provoking workers into unleashing still more powerful industrial action. This was seen this August in the early days of the struggle of Maritime Union of Australia (MUA) waterfront workers against the retrenching of 97 workers in Sydney's Port Botany and Brisbane by port operator, Hutchison Ports Australia. Workers at the two Hutchison terminals responded to the job slashing by walking off the job and, with the help of unionists from other workplaces, picketed the sites. Solidarity statements flooded into the pickets from trade unionists from around the globe – including from Hong Kong port workers who two years earlier had waged a 40 day strike against Hutchison's Hong Kong terminal. Meanwhile, the Port Botany picket received support from other oppressed groups including contingents from supporters of the Redfern Aboriginal Tent Embassy and activists from the LGBTI community. The pickets at the Hutchison terminals successfully stopped all trucks attempting to bring goods into the struck sites. Importantly, workers maintained the picket in defiance of an order by the industrial court, the Fair Work Commission, to end the picket. However, the government and courts did not dare fine the workers or their union. They knew not only the strategic industrial power that dock workers had but also the level of support the MUA workers were receiving from other trade unionists and embattled sectors of society. After seven days of the solid picket lines ensuring no scab goods entering or leaving the terminals, the bosses' courts, the Fair Work Commission, realised that it needed to make a partial concession to workers in order to defuse the struggle. It ordered that the sacked workers

be reinstated until negotiations between the union and company were held and a future court hearing dealt with the matter.

The power shown by the Hutchison workers' strike and their defiance of the industrial courts seemed to help trigger a brief period of greater union action throughout the country. For example, in the six weeks that followed the Hutchison pickets, Melbourne rail and tram workers defied loud condemnations by bosses organisations, the Andrews Labor government and the mainstream media to stage five separate half-day public transport strikes. Unfortunately, after the Fair Work Commission was forced to grant the retrenched Hutchison workers a temporary reprieve, the MUA leaders called off the strike and picket even though there was no guarantee that workers would permanently get their job backs. Indeed Hutchison, while continuing to pay the workers that they had previously retrenched, has provocatively refused to give these workers any shifts – a tactic aimed at demoralising and intimidating the workers. As we go to press, Hutchison workers and the MUA are maintaining a protest camp outside Hutchison's Port Botany site. However, without company profits being hurt by industrial action, the bosses have the upper hand. If strike action is not re-started, the Hutchison bosses seem to be set to get away with retrenching at least some of the workers.

The presence of the anti-strike laws do mean that winning strikes requires that our unions be prepared to go all the way to win. Every threat to use – or actual use – of anti-union laws must be met by a still wider and more powerful mobilisation of workers. Yet it is precisely such upping of the ante that the current social democratic union leadership do not want. They see improvements in workers' rights coming mainly through ALP governments that would softly-softly seek to gain a concession or two from the capitalist bosses without upsetting them too much. Hard fought strikes get in the way of such a perspective. Yet, this perspective has proven to be a losing one. It is a losing strategy for the simple reason that, especially with capitalism worldwide lurching from one economic crisis to another, the exploiting

class is unwilling to grant even the slightest concession to workers without a fight. It is this strategy of trying to improve workers' rights without overly upsetting the capitalist rulers that has greatly contributed to the workers movement suffering a series of defeats over the last three decades or more. Since the early 1980s, under both right-wing Liberal/National governments and social-democratic ALP administered governments, workplace conditions have worsened, more and more workers are toiling in insecure casual jobs, the share of company income going to the bosses as profits over workers' wages has skyrocketed and social services that most affect working class people, like public housing, has been eroded.

Lacking a perspective of militant class struggle, the current, pro-ALP leaders often promote the very false idea that favouring "Aussie workers first" over guest workers and temporary residents can protect local workers' jobs and conditions. Similarly, they make protectionist appeals to favour Australian corporations over overseas producers in the awarding of contracts – from everything from trains to submarines. Yet, favouring one of group of workers over another – in this case locally based workers over guest workers and overseas workers – is a total violation of the very essence of unionism which is the idea that workers must stand united *as one* to collectively fight for their rights. It is no different to playing into the bosses' hands at an individual workplace by playing off long-term workers against junior ones. Getting local workers to favour Australian companies and workers over their overseas counterparts only encourages unions abroad to similarly favour their own local producers against their Australian counterparts. In the end all that happens is that workers are divided and the capitalist exploiters everywhere are laughing all the way to the bank.

We need our unions to be run by a program and leadership that is based on the truth that the only way for working class people to defend their rights is through uniting as a class and allying with all the oppressed in a common fight against the capitalist bosses. Anything that destroys workers unity – like



divisive calls to favour local workers over their guest and overseas counterparts – is thus harmful to the struggle for workers' rights. What we need is not protectionism but some hard fought strikes with solid picket lines and solidarity strikes at related workplaces to smash the ruling class' attacks on weekend and overtime penalty rates and to, instead, extend the applicability of these rates and demand a big increase in workers' wages overall. We need to fight for jobs for all by stopping job cuts through industrial action and by forcing company owners to increase their labour force at the expense of their profits. Since anti-strike laws have outlawed the type of *full on* industrial action methods that are needed – including secondary

strikes – our unions need to be prepared to defy those laws. Our unions also need to be willing to defy the rulings of the Fair Work Commission industrial courts which, like the entire current legal system, exists to serve the big end of town capitalists. In meeting threats from the capitalist legal system by raising the level of class struggle we do, of course, understand that the capitalists have a whole state machine – consisting of police, courts, prisons, the military, ASIO and top level bureaucrats – that has been built up to enforce their interests. That is why the struggle of the working class and all the oppressed must finally culminate in the sweeping away of this capitalist edifice and the construction of a new, workers state.

### **DEFENDING THOSE TOILING IN THE MOST INSECURE, LOWEST PAID JOBS IS THE DUTY OF THE ENTIRE WORKING CLASS**

**When workers in currently non-unionised workplaces see unions throughout society winning gains for workers they will be inspired to build unions in their own workplaces. The union movement as a whole must also defend those workers toiling under the worst conditions in a more direct way: through a nationwide campaign of struggles demanding concrete rights for these workers. Such a struggle would demand that all workers – including part-time, fixed term and currently casual workers – have the rights of permanent workers including a guaranteed weekly number of work hours, restrictions on arbitrarily being sacked and paid holiday, sick and carers' leave.**

The workers movement must also raise demands to address the needs of those groups of workers who are especially exploited. To stop the exorbitant fees that international students pay – as well as the fees that local students pay – forcing desperate students to accept the most grotesque working conditions, we must demand no fees for all local and international TAFE and university students and a genuinely liveable stipend for all students. To stop 7-Eleven style use of threats of deportation to enslave visa-holding workers, our unions must demand that every person living here including international students, 457 visa workers and refugees have the full rights of citizens – including freedom from the threat of deportation. If our unions fought for these demands and also mobilised its members to be in the forefront of the struggle to crush the far-right, racist groups – the ones who have helped to incite the violent racist attacks and abuse that many non-permanent resident workers face in their daily lives – the union movement would

quickly win the respect and sympathy of many visa-holding workers.

Women workers suffer an especially high rate of exploitation. The Australian Government's own Workplace Gender Equality Agency admitted in a September 2015 report that women workers on average earn a massive \$284 per week less than male workers. What is more, that gender pay gap has increased from under 15% ten years ago to nearly 18% today – the highest it has been for at least the last twenty years. Meanwhile, women workers are more likely to be working in casual jobs than their male counterparts. This is compounded by the lack of affordable childcare which forces many women workers into insecure casual jobs as their only way of being able to secure employment that may enable them to not be working when they have to meet their kids after school. Therefore, an important task of the workers movement is to struggle for equal pay for equal work, for free, round-the-clock childcare and free and safe,



Photo: UNITE union

13 February 2009: More than 100 people protest outside a 7-Eleven store in Geelong, Victoria. The action demanded workers receive unpaid wages and that a worker sacked for making a complaint be reinstated.

state-provided transport of children from schools to after-school sports and cultural activities and child care centres.

The fight against the exploitation of workers naturally meshes with the struggles of other oppressed sectors – with the fight for the emancipation of women, with struggles against student fees and with the battle against the legal inequality and racism faced by international students, guest workers and coloured migrants. When the working class struggles against their capitalist exploiters it naturally brings them together with Aboriginal people resisting the horrific racist oppression that they continue to face under capitalist rule. Therefore, it is essential that workplace activists at the forefront of the industrial struggle against the bosses be brought together with the most committed activists from other oppressed groups. The organisation that can bring these activists together is a revolutionary workers party. Such a party would ensure that workplace activists do not narrowly focus on only the struggles of their own workplace but see that crucial struggle as part of a broader

struggle of the exploited working class and its allies against the capitalist exploiters. This party that we need to build would unite the struggles of the working class and all the oppressed on a united program of opposition to the capitalist system – the root cause of the exploitation of workers, the oppression of women and racist attacks on Aboriginal people and non-white “ethnic” communities. Only when the industry, mines, transport, communications infrastructure and, indeed, the major retail chains have been ripped from the hands of the filthy rich capitalists and placed into the collective hands of the people can we ensure that the 7-Eleven style super-exploitation of millions of low-paid and casual workers in Australia is consigned forever to the dustbin of history. The implementation of such a socialist system would also emancipate the rest of the working class from systematic exploitation and the ever-present threat that exists today of being thrown into unemployment or into an unstable casual job working just a few hours a week for a pittance.



6<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2015, SYDNEY AIRPORT: SUPPORTERS GREET

ARRIVAL OF DPRK SOCCER TEAM FOR ASIA CUP FINALS



**D-P-R-K!  
Workers  
State is  
Here to  
Stay!**

*When the DPRK soccer team arrived in Sydney for the January 2015 Asia Cup Finals, the capitalist-owned media went all out to demonise the team as highly secretive, repressed and without support. This is part of their general propaganda war against socialistic North Korea. The aim of this campaign is to justify to the Australian masses the Australian ruling class' participation in the relentless imperialist drive to crush the DPRK workers state through military, economic and political pressure.*

*However, the media narrative took a blow when people at Sydney Airport coming to pick up their arriving friends and relatives found an enthusiastic group of DPRK supporters welcoming the arrival of the team. Supporters of Trotskyist Platform, the Australia-DPRK Friendship Society and the Communist Party of Australia rallied at Sydney Airport to welcome the DPRK soccer team.*



## **DOWN WITH CAPITALIST AUSTRALIA'S MILITARY BUILD UP! U.S., AUSTRALIAN MILITARIES: STAY OUT OF THE SOUTH CHINA SEA!**



## **DEFEND SOCIALISTIC CHINA AGAINST MILITARY INTIMIDATION BY CAPITALIST POWERS**

**26 February 2016 - In October 2015, the U.S. warship, the USS Lassen destroyer (Above) sailed through waters, not far from mainland China, that are claimed by the Peoples Republic of China (PRC) as its territorial waters. This provocative action in the South China Sea was fully backed by the right-wing Australian government and the ALP Opposition. Moreover, yesterday's Defence White Paper released by the Turnbull government announced a massive military buildup for the Australian Defence Forces (ADF) which the White Paper could not hide was squarely targeted at China. The government "defence" plan announced that the ADF would have its troop numbers boosted to 62,400 in five years. That means that the Australian military as a percentage of the population will be over 60% larger than the PRC's military which, in contrast, is in the process of reducing troop numbers by 15%.**

The White Paper also announced the ADF's massive expansion of military hardware including the acquisition of 12 new submarines, 9 warships, 12 patrol vessels, 75 joint strike fighters, two fleets of drones and additional helicopters for special forces troops. Excited by this announcement, racist former defence minister in the Abbott government, Kevin Andrews called for Australia to join the U.S. in sending warships into China's claimed territorial waters in the South China Sea. Yet it is not only hardline right-wingers like Kevin Andrews who are demanding such aggressive actions. Months earlier, Labor shadow defence minister Stephen Conroy started demanding the same thing<sup>5</sup>. Meanwhile, Liberal defence minister, Marise Payne yesterday refused to rule out the possibility that the Australian Navy may

take such incendiary action in the future.

The aim of this Australian military build-up and provocations is supposedly in large part to defend "international laws" of the sea in the South China Sea. What lies! The Australian ruling elite do not care at all about international laws of the sea. After all the Australian government outrageously violated such laws by claiming the rich oil and gas resources on East Timor's side of the mid-line in the waters between Australian and Timor. And joining the U.S. in targeting the PRC in the South China Sea certainly does not have anything to do with "defending Australia's shores." The South China Sea is thousands upon thousands of kilometres from Australia, while being adjacent to China! Imagine the hysteria there would be if the PRC Navy sent

warships without Australia's permission to storm through the Bass Strait or to sail just off the coast of Sydney in the Tasman Sea.

The fact is that the Australian government and the ADF - like the entire state apparatus in capitalist Australia - does not serve the Australian people as such but only one small section of the Australian population: the capitalist exploiting class. In doing so the Australian government and military acts against the interests of working class people. This was seen all too clearly when the Australian army mobilised to smash the huge 1949 NSW miners strike and then in 1989 when the then Hawke Labor government unleashed the Air Force to fly scab planes to break the airline pilots strike. The Australian state also acts against the interests of the masses when it acts abroad. In 1989, the Australian military assisted the PNG military to brutally attack and blockade the people of the PNG-controlled island of Bougainville after they had risen up against the destruction of their land and lack of compensation by Australian owned mining giant CRA (which later become part of today's Rio Tinto). Then in 1999, the Australian military occupied East Timor under the guise of "liberating" the oppressed East Timorese people but actually in large part to try and establish a subservient regime there that would enable the greedy Australian corporate bosses owning BHP and Woodside Petroleum to plunder East Timor's natural resources. When the East Timorese government proved not obedient enough, the Australian military returned in 2006 in a second "peacekeeping" operation to help facilitate a coup that deposed the local government. Meanwhile, the ADF's participation in the U.S.-led invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq and more recently in the bombing campaigns in Syria and Iraq serve to make the ruling class in this country more arrogant and bullying at home as well - thus making them more confident to attack workers unions, threaten public health care, undermine social welfare, persecute refugees and continue to savagely oppress Aboriginal people. That is why the workers movement in Australia must demand:

***Not one person, not one cent for the Australian imperialist military!***

Yet why would the Turnbull government and Australian military want to target China? After all, China has for a long time been effectively holding up the Australian economy. The PRC is by a long way Australia's biggest export destination with nearly one-third of all Australian exports being bought by China. So the big business owners here get a lot of money from trading with China. So why would they want to risk this by participating in provocative military actions against the PRC, thousands and thousands of kilometres from Australia's shores? Is this madness? No, not from the point of view of the Australian capitalist rulers. And this all has to do with the fact that although capitalism has made big inroads into China, it has not taken over the country. China remains a socialistic state - a workers state however deformed it may be from the socialist "ideal." That has the capitalist powers seeing red! They rightly see that the most populous country in the world remaining under any form of socialistic rule as a potential threat to capitalist domination of the globe. They rightly understand that the existence of the PRC workers state is a barrier to turning China into a huge sweatshop for unrestricted exploitation of cheap labour by Western corporations - as currently occurs in the likes of capitalist Philippines, Bangladesh or Indonesia. As a result the Australian capitalist rulers are willing to risk the \$90 billion that China pays to buy Australian exports (that's worth on average \$10,000 for every household in Australia if the system here would allow fair distribution!) for the sake of undermining socialistic rule in China through joining the U.S.-led anti-China war drive.

In the long-run Australia's military build-up is aimed at preparing for a possible future war of the capitalist powers against the socialistic PRC. After all we should remember that the ADF's biggest post-war military operations involved participation in cruel capitalist wars against workers states and communist insurgencies - from the 1950-53 Korean War against the North Korean workers state to the 1950s war against communist rebels in Malaya to the losing war against the heroic Vietnamese revolutionaries. Today the ADF's build up targets not only the PRC but other workers states like the DPRK





*A giant portrait of Chinese communist revolutionary leader, Mao Tse Tung, looks over Beijing's main square. Photo: Trotskyist Platform.*

(North Korea). Furthermore, a strengthened ADF would surely be increasingly used to help Australian business owners and top bureaucrats bully and exploit the peoples of smaller Asia-Pacific neighbours as seen in the past ADF interventions in Bougainville, Solomon Islands, East Timor and Tonga. And from past record and given the instability of the capitalist-dominated world, one can certainly expect the ADF to be mobilised to help the Australian regime's U.S. senior partner to grab control of oil supplies and outmanoeuvre capitalist rivals in the Middle East.

However, the number one target of the Australian military build up is to target Red China. Even right now the U.S./NATO/Australian military pressure against China has a very immediate purpose. It is aimed at sending a message to the PRC that as long as China refuses to abandon its socialistic system it will be harassed and confronted by the capitalist world. This message is particularly meant to strengthen the hand of pro-capitalist elements within Chinese society and even within the ruling Communist Party of China (CPC). It will help them to argue that China has no choice but to abandon socialism if it is to be able to develop unhindered. If these forces within China – from Western-funded “NGOs” to rightist elements within the CPC to young capitalist billionaires waiting for a chance to overthrow the system and truly secure their wealth and privileged position – were to triumph it would be a disaster not only for the Chinese masses but for working class people around the world. As the new

capitalist rulers would be able to drastically drive down real wages in China, the capitalist bosses here would wield their access to this new, cheap labour source in China as a stick to beat down wages and the unions in Australia. Meanwhile, fresh from their capitalist victory in the world's most populous country, they would be emboldened to attack the workers movement here. That is why it is urgent that the workers movement and all genuine socialists in Australia stand for the defence of the the PRC workers state against all the pro-capitalist forces threatening it. That means opposing the U.S. and Australia's military incursions into the South China Sea, standing against the massive planned anti-PRC, ADF military build-up and challenging all other imperialist interventions aimed at undermining the PRC workers state – from constant Western demands that China privatise the huge, state-owned enterprises that dominates its economy to Western support for pro-capitalist, pseudo-“human rights” elements like the extreme anti-communist artist, Ai Weiwei.

If there is a movement of leftist and worker activists in the likes of the U.S. and Australia publicly mobilising actions in defence of the PRC workers state it will boost the morale of the many Chinese workers and leftist intellectuals – including leftist elements within the CPC – who are truly committed to socialism and thereby encourage them to intensify their efforts to defeat capitalist restorationist forces within China and renew the PRC's course towards socialism.

## AN AFRICAN PERSON WHO STUDIED IN RUSSIA TELLS HIS STORY: **CAPITALISM BREEDS RACISM**



### A FIRST HAND ACCOUNT OF HOW **RUSSIA'S RETURN TO CAPITALISM** **LED TO AN EXPLOSION OF RACISM**

*Ugly reality after capitalist counterrevolution. Russian police detain 1,200 migrants from the Caucasus who worked at a vegetable warehouse in Biryulyovo district in the south of Moscow. The October 2013 police raid followed a terrifying riot against migrants in the area by violent white supremacists. The racist police round up of the migrants thus legitimised the fascist riot.*

**The unemployment, economic insecurity and inequality of capitalism provides a fertile ground for the growth of racism. Racial prejudices are, in fact, consciously nurtured by the capitalist exploiting class as a way of diverting and dividing the working class masses that they exploit. Here in Australia, the big business-owned media constantly stigmatize Aboriginal people even as this country's first peoples face racist police violence and daily discrimination in every aspect of their lives. The Liberal/National regime demonizes refugees and the ALP Opposition acquiesces to this. Then the ALP leaders divert workers' understandable anger at unemployment and fear of losing their jobs into hostility to the presence of immigrant guest workers. Meanwhile, the dog-eat-dog mentality that naturally accompanies an economic system based on cut-throat competition means that everyone is pushed into seeing everyone else as a rival. This, inevitably, leads to divisions within capitalist society developing along racial and religious lines and people from minority ethnicities and religions are, ultimately, victimized.**

In short, capitalism breeds racism. The construction of a socialist society will, on the other hand, guarantee that there is no longer a ruling class interested in dividing the masses with racism as well as other means because the very essence of socialism is the ending of the exploitation of the working class masses. Furthermore, a socialist society is based on collective ownership of the economy and economic decisions made for common needs rather than for greedy individual goals. Such a

system thus naturally brings people *together*.

All this is not just theory. It has been proven by history. In its pre-1917 period of capitalist-feudal rule, Russia was an imperialist empire where the non-European peoples of Central Asia and the Caucuses suffered racial discrimination, Jews and Poles faced massacres by fascist gangs called the Black Hundreds and non-Russian nationalities from the Ukrainians to the Georgians to





*Days of the Socialistic USSR: International and local students at Novosibirsk State Technical University pose for a photo in front of a statue of Russian Revolution leader, Vladimir Lenin.*

the various Central Asian nationalities faced brutal suppression of their national rights. However, the 1917 October Socialist Revolution in Russia changed all that. The victorious revolutionary workers created their own state, the Soviet Union (USSR) workers state, that over time led to a massive improvement in the status of the Kazakh, Uzbek, Tadzhik, Turkmen, Kirghiz, Georgian, Armenian, Azeri and other peoples of Central Asia and the Caucasus. From the time the communist-led workers took state power, they mobilized to smash the fascist and other anti-Semitic gangs.<sup>6</sup>

Inspired by the Russian Revolution and incensed at the destruction and poverty that capitalist rule had brought them by the end of the inter-capitalist World War I, the years following the 1917 Revolution saw revolutionary struggles break out in Germany, Hungary, Italy and many other countries. However, the communist parties in these countries were too newly formed to lead these revolutions to a victorious

conclusion in the way that Lenin and Trotsky's Bolshevik Party (which was later renamed the Communist Party of the Soviet Union) had done. As a result the young Soviet workers state remained isolated and thus faced intense external capitalist military threat and economic blockade much as North Korea faces today. Meanwhile, Russia and the other parts of the USSR were economically devastated by the World War that preceded the revolution and the four years of Civil War that followed it when the Soviet masses heroically defended their revolution against invading armies from fourteen capitalist countries and armies built by the overthrown Russian capitalists. Under these conditions of encirclement and economic scarcity and with the masses exhausted from the years of wars and demoralized by the failure of revolutions abroad, a more right-wing leadership took over administration of the USSR and the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. This leadership turned its back on the internationalist outlook that was key

to the revolution and replaced the workers democracy that followed the revolution with an administration where career-minded bureaucrats were allowed to come to the fore.

However, despite this bureaucratic degeneration that took place in the mid-1920s, the USSR still remained a workers state based on the socialistic, collectivized economic system that was established after the Russian Revolution. This system not only brought terrific improvements to the education, health and standard of living of the masses but brought much greater racial equality between the majority ethnic Russians and the diverse non-Russian peoples

of the USSR. Although the bureaucratic rulers at various times undermined the founding ideals of the USSR by embracing a degree of ethnic Russian-centeredness, from the time the Soviet Union was able to recover from the great sacrifices and untold human and material cost of its great, heroic victory over the sinister, barbaric and uber-racist Nazi threat in World War 2 and then go on to uplift the standard of living of the masses to a decent level by the 1950s, from that time and up until the immediate lead up to the Soviet Union's collapse in 1991-92, the USSR overall truly did live up to its motto of the "Friendship of Peoples."

*Established in 1960 in Soviet times, tens of thousands of international students from Africa, the Middle East, Asia and Latin America studied on scholarship at the USSR's University of the Friendship of Peoples. Although local students also studied there, the USSR established the university specifically for the purpose of providing an education to people from the ex-colonial countries. In February 1961, the university was renamed, after the Congolese anti-colonial leader, to Patrice Lumumba University of the Friendship of Peoples. This renaming of the university after Lumumba was a gesture of solidarity with the people of the world standing up to colonialism and neo-colonialism. It came only one month after Lumumba was assassinated by Belgian authorities in a plot orchestrated by the U.S. CIA and with the complicity of the UN. Top Left: First graduates at the university. Top Right: A Russian language lesson in progress. Bottom: Students from different countries and local students intermingling at the university.*







September 2015: Hungarian police brutally attack refugees. Capitalist counterrevolution in Hungary has led to an explosion of racist violence by the Hungarian police and fascist paramilitary groups.

Nevertheless, the presence of a bureaucratic administration – with all its accompanying corruption and the fact that ordinary workers were not involved in decision making – prevented the socialistic economy of the USSR from reaching its full potential, something that became more pronounced the closer that the USSR actually came to catching up with the economies of the richest countries. Furthermore, the material privileges of the bureaucracy (as petty as they were compared to the exorbitant wealth of tycoons in capitalist countries) and the suppression of workers democracy *depoliticized* the masses and weakened their commitment to socialism – even while socialistic rule had greatly improved their lives. All this made the USSR brittle in the face of the gigantic military, economic and political pressures it faced from the capitalist powers who were/are determined to crush any workers state. When a small layer of capitalist counterrevolutionaries backed by Washington, London, Tokyo and Canberra amongst others made its bid for power in the USSR in 1991, the Soviet masses had, in fact, become *so* depoliticized that most of them did not resist in any effective way at

all – even though many were fearful of the consequences of capitalist restoration.

If the establishment of socialistic rule in the former USSR, Yugoslavia, Cuba and China has proved the potential of socialism to eradicate racial oppression and tensions, the 1989-1992 restorations of capitalism in the USSR and East European workers states also proved how it is capitalism that does actually breed racism. Take, for instance, Hungary. In its socialistic period from the late 1940s to 1989, Hungary was known by the many international students from South Asia, the Middle East and Africa who studied there as a place where they were treated with warmth and respect. Although the workers state in Hungary was bureaucratically deformed and the government of the then Hungarian People's Republic was far from perfect in the treatment of the country's Indian-origin, Roma minority, Roma in the socialistic period enjoyed access to guaranteed jobs, improved housing and, most crucially, freedom from racist violence. However, following the 1989 capitalist counterrevolution, Hungary changed into an extremely racist society. Today, neo-Nazi skinhead gangs roam

Hungary's streets looking to inflict violence against Roma, Jews and international students. Several Roma have been murdered in pogroms perpetrated by organized fascists and these far-right paramilitaries often descend on neighbourhoods with significant Roma populations to terrorize Roma families with snarling dogs, whips and death threats. These attacks occur with the deliberate non-intervention and often direct connivance of the racist Hungarian police force.<sup>7</sup> Meanwhile, **today decent people around the world are aghast at the extreme brutality of the Hungarian regime in its treatment of refugees fleeing Western-instigated violence in Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq and elsewhere.**

Perhaps the most striking example of how capitalism creates racism can be seen by examining the impact of the capitalist counterrevolution that swamped Russia and the rest of the former USSR in 1991-92. We are happy to present below the experiences of comrade El-Hassan who actually lived in Russia through this period – having arrived in Russia during the days of the socialistic USSR and remaining there until seven years after the counterrevolution. As a dark-skinned person of African origin, comrade El-Hassan felt the question of race relations in a very personal way. He described his experiences in a discussion with comrade Samuel Kim, excerpts of which are detailed below:

**Samuel Kim:** *El-Hassan when did you exactly first go to Russia and when were you there until?*

**El-Hassan:** Before answering that I just want to say – since this discussion will be written up – that I think Trotskyist Platform is doing very good work in the fight against capitalism, fascism and racism. Trotskyist Platform is not just talking but actually organizing and participating in the struggles.

Now I first came to Russia in 1990.

**Samuel Kim:** *That was in the socialistic times, in the times of the USSR.*

**El Hassan:** That's right. I had been living in Sudan and active organizing with the Sudanese Communist Party. In 1989, I found out that I was just about to get arrested and

so I fled to Egypt. There I met my brother who had studied in the USSR. Many people from Africa were given places to study in the USSR. My brother encouraged me to study there and helped me apply for a place. There were many communists from Asia and Africa that studied in the USSR. I was granted a place at Moscow State University where I studied journalism.

I studied there until 1994-95, eventually doing my Masters Degree in journalism. After that I stayed in Russia until 1998 when I came here to Australia.

**Samuel Kim:** *So you were in Russia until many years after the 1991-92 capitalist counterrevolution. You saw Russia in both its socialistic days and its capitalist times.*

*How were you treated during the days of the USSR?*

**El-Hassan:** I was treated very well. All the students, professors and everyone welcomed me and all the other international students. We were very warmly welcomed and respected. I can say that I did not experience any racism at all. There was no racism against anyone.

**Samuel Kim:** *How much did you pay for your studies in the Soviet times?*

**El-Hassan:** I studied for free – I was on scholarship. I also got free board and free food. I did not have to pay rent or any bills. I was given a stipend of 90 Roubles per month. This does not sound like much but things were so cheap then that it was actually a lot. I could save money with that stipend and many of my fellow international students use to send part of their stipend back to their families in their home countries.

**Samuel Kim:** *Another comrade told me that international students in the Soviet Union often went to other parts of the USSR on holiday during university vacation. Is that right?*

**El-Hassan:** Yes. We could get very cheap holiday travel. I myself went on many holidays like to Sochi on the Black Sea coast.

**Samuel Kim:** *What about student politics then?*





Bottom: A young African migrant to China from the Democratic Republic of Congo with team mates in his youth soccer team in Guangzhou. Top: Debujiada Best, a migrant to China from Guinea Bissau with fellow contestants at the popular Chinese dating show, *If You Are the One*. In 2013, the Masters of Economics student at China's Heilongjiang University became one of the most popular contestants on the show and a social media sensation in China because of her assertiveness and expressed social values. In the socialistic Peoples Republic of China (PRC), migrants from Africa and other parts of Asia do not, in general, meet the extreme and often threatening hostility that they face in capitalist countries like Australia, France, Hungary, Ukraine and Russia.



Some problems with racism are, however, still prevalent in China where the transition to socialism is far from complete and remains tenuous. Inherited backward values from China's pre-1949 capitalist-feudal times have not been fully overcome and market reforms exacerbate wealth and class divisions and thus recall the old stereotypes where darker skin was associated with poor peasants toiling in the fields. In terms of the times since the 1949 anti-capitalist revolution, these problems were worst in the PRC's most right-wing period in the late 1980s when the government toned down statements of solidarity with ex-colonial countries, when the West was glorified in many quarters and when the then rapid roll out of pro-market measures was leading to widespread economic insecurity. In late 1988- early 1989 right-wing Chinese students rioted against African students in Nanjing. The Chinese students linked protests against what they said was the Communist Party of China's (CPC) favouring of African students at the expense of local students to demands for "Human Rights." These racist, pro-"Human Rights" demonstrations became the pre-cursor to the June 1989 Tiananmen Square protests that began with rallies by students linked to the liberal, right-wing of the CPC.

Today, despite lingering problems, darker-skinned migrants to mainland China not only face a far lesser threat of racist violence than they do in capitalist Australia, North America, Europe and Russia but are also better treated than non-Chinese people in capitalist, ethnic Chinese-majority parts of the world like Singapore and Hong Kong. The final triumph of socialism in China as well as the rest of the world will see the creation of societies fully free of racial oppression and prejudice.

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**El-Hassan:** There were student groups involved in solidarity with "Third World" countries. They showed sympathy with many struggles in Africa and around the world. They were against imperialism.

**Samuel Kim:** What else could you say about life in the days of the Soviet Union?

**El-Hassan:** There was a rich social life in the USSR. It was great fun. The other important thing is that women had the same status as men then. For example many of the professors at the university were women and women lecturers were amongst my teachers.

**Samuel Kim:** And what happened after the 1991-92 capitalist counterrevolution?

**El-Hassan:** Everything changed. Nationalism became more and more prominent. People in the streets became more and more hostile to me. Later even some fellow students started being rude to me. You could tell they did not want me there. Unemployment grew quickly. People were angry and confused and they took it out on us. Many Russian people tried to escape their problems by turning to drugs.

**Samuel Kim:** What was the attitude of people to the capitalist counterrevolution?

**El-Hassan:** Many people just stood by and watched it happen and went by trying to live life as usual.

**Samuel Kim:** Did your material circumstances change?

**El-Hassan:** Some of the aspects of the old system remained for a while and things took a while to collapse. But things got a lot harder. I was still able to keep my scholarship until my studies finished. However, the stipend was kept at 90 Roubles even when the prices rose very quickly. The 90 roubles was now worth nothing. You could hardly buy anything with it anymore.

After I finished my studies my scholarship ended. I was not able to get a job as a journalist and when I ran out of my money I had to stay with friends.

**Samuel Kim:** I read that there have been over 1,000 pre-meditated racist murders committed by fascists in Russia in the last ten years. I know that you yourself was physically attacked by Russian white supremacists after the capitalist counterrevolution. Can you describe what happened?

**El-Hassan:** That happened in 1995 after I finished my studies. Many of my fellow international students had already been attacked by then. I had moved to Voronezh, a city which was about ten to twelve hours by train from Moscow. I was walking along the street when seven neo-Nazi skinheads on the footpath saw me. They started following me and so I walked faster. I knew I was in trouble. I headed towards the bus stop to try and catch a bus away. But they attacked me and I fought back.

**Samuel Kim:** Did anyone come to help you?

**El-Hassan:** Yes, several people around came and started shouting at the neo-Nazis to stop. They did not physically intervene but shouted at the skinheads who eventually stopped. I ended up bruised and with a black eye.

**Samuel Kim:** What did you do for work in Russia after you finished your studies?

**El-Hassan:** There was a lot of unemployment and people in Russia were angry and confused. I became a worker at a store carrying cartons. But all these stores were being bullied by the mafia. The boss where I worked had to pay protection money to the mafia. I think it was something like \$700 a month. The mafia threatened that if the store owners did not pay their store would go up in flames. The shop owners all feared that the criminals would carry out their threats. Russia became run by mafia.

**Samuel Kim:** What was life like after you moved to Australia?

**El-Hassan:** At first I thought that my life would be very good when I got residency in Australia. But my journalism qualifications were not recognized. The racism in Australia has been getting worse and worse and in the last year it has got extremely bad. I told you what happened to me recently. I was taking a passenger [El-Hassan now works as a taxi driver] and suddenly he started threatening me. He said that you Muslims want to kill us so I am going to kill you first. I was in a bad situation as I was driving the taxi and was getting on to the M4. It would have been very dangerous to be in a fight at that moment while driving. I said no I do not want to kill anyone. He then said that if he sees me again he will cut my head off and play football with it just for fun.

Detail from a 1920s Soviet poster addressed to the traditionally Islamic Tatar people of the old Russian empire, now included within the ranks of the new Soviet workers' state. Its text - on the poster written in both Russian and Tatar - reads "Tatar Women! Join the Ranks of the Women Workers of Russia. Arm-in-arm with the Proletarian Women of Russia, You will Finally Break off the Last Shackles"





# IMPERIALIST HYPOCRISY, NATIONALISM & REPRESSION AFTER PARIS TERROR ATTACKS



Far-right forces have seized on terrorist attacks by ISIS/Al Qaeda, like the 13 November attacks in Paris (Above Left), to promote their extreme racist agenda. The Paris attacks carried out by ISIS were indeed cruel, cowardly attacks on innocent civilians. However, the condemnation of the attacks by the Western capitalist rulers and their media is the height of hypocrisy – given their own horrific crimes. Photo, Above Right, shows the hospital in the Afghan city of Kunduz in flames after U.S. aircraft repeatedly bombed the hospital on 3 October 2015, killing at least 22 and up to as many as 50 civilians. The only reason that this barbaric war crime received any media coverage is that the hospital was run by the French NGO, Médecins Sans Frontières. MSF reported that they desperately contacted U.S. and Afghan authorities by agreed channels to tell them that the hospital was being bombed but the U.S. military continued their precise bombing of the hospital for at least a further half an hour. At the height of their occupation of Afghanistan, the U.S, French, German, British and Australian imperialist forces were every seven weeks murdering as many civilians as were killed in the Paris attacks! Meanwhile, during their intense bombing of Libya to impose regime change there, the U.S., French and British imperialists – backed by Australia’s capitalist rulers – killed thousands of Libyan people. Photo, Below Left, shows a man and a child found dead in residential buildings that were destroyed in a 19 June 2011 NATO air strike on the outskirts of the Libyan capital. Of course, there was never any blanket media coverage of these attacks the way the Paris attacks have been covered in the media nor any officially organised mourning for the victims. Was the Opera House ever lit up in the colours of Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya or Syria to mourn the civilian victims of Western imperialist atrocities? Gruesome attacks by white supremacist terrorists like the murder of 77 people in Norway on 22 July 2011 by neo-Nazi, Anders Breivik (Below Right) also never got the same condemnation and overwhelming media coverage as the Paris attacks.



Extreme reactionary forces like ISIS and Al Qaeda were, actually, initially built up by Washington and Co. to serve their neo-colonial agenda but then escaped their master’s leash. Top Left: Then U.S. president Ronald Reagan meets with extreme fundamentalist Mujahedin leaders at the White House in 1985. Reagan described them as the “moral equivalents of America’s founding fathers.” These reactionary cut-throats were massively financed and armed by the Western capitalist powers in their barbaric, anti-communist war against the then leftist – and pro-

women’s rights – Afghan government and its Soviet Red Army protectors. Among the fundamentalists backed by Washington in Afghanistan was Al Qaeda founder, Osama Bin Laden. Bottom Left: In May 2013, prominent U.S. senator John McCain meets Abu Bakr Al Baghdadi, leader of the Al Qaeda offshoot, ISIS and other Western-backed Syrian “Rebel” leaders. After this meeting, which was covered by CNN, McCain lavished praise on Baghdadi and Co. as “moderates.” The U.S., French, British and Australian rulers only turned on ISIS over a year later after it started to attack the West’s other Syrian “Rebel” allies and after it encroached on Western interests in Iraqi Kurdistan.

Meanwhile, it is the ongoing neo-colonial exploitation and brutal repression of “Third World” Middle Eastern, African and Asian people by the imperial powers that – in the situation where a communist alternative force is still being built up – has led some originating from these lands to seek salvation in ultra-reactionary forces like ISIS and Al Qaeda. Below Right: Nazi-like savagery! Eleven civilians including five children murdered in a U.S. attack on an Iraqi house in the town of Isahaqi on 15 March 2006. The U.S. military claimed that the civilians were killed as “collateral damage” in an attack on supposed militants in the house but even the U.S.-puppet, Iraqi colonial authorities had to admit that the U.S. troops actually shot each of the victims – including the children – in the back of the head - execution style - as “revenge” for insurgent attacks on the U.S. military. Below Left: Algerian protesters massacred by French police in Paris on 17 October 1961. The unarmed Algerian migrants demonstrated against a discriminatory curfew and against French colonial rule in Algeria. French police, many of whom had been Nazi collaborators during World War II, responded by beating to death many protesters in police stations and woods while others whom they had beaten unconscious they then drowned by throwing them into Paris’ Seine river. It is estimated that the French police massacred 200 people that day.<sup>8</sup>







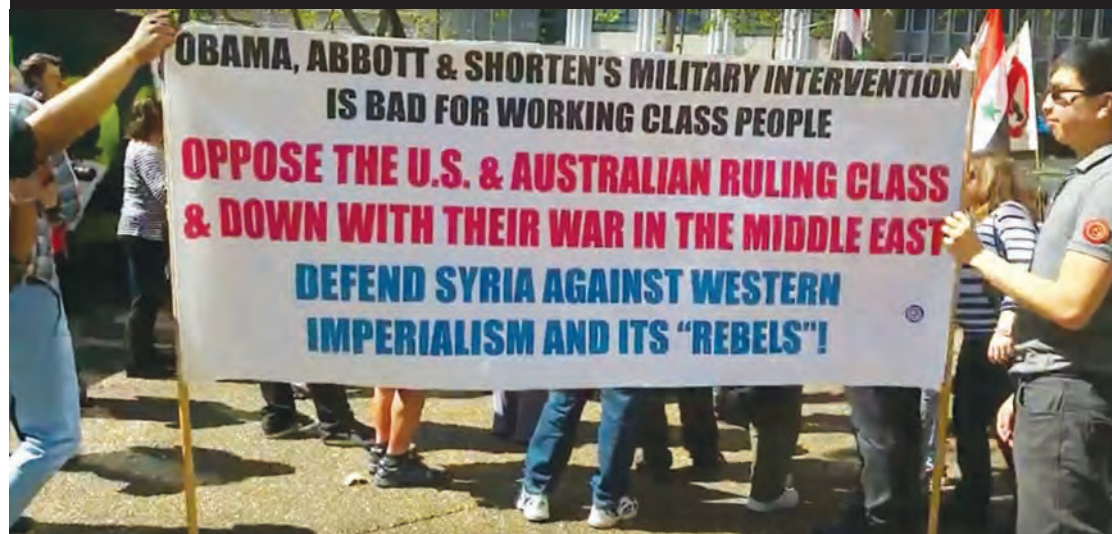
Today, capitalist rulers from France to Australia are cynically seizing on the terrorist attacks to whip up patriotic fervour and a supposed "common identity" as people who embrace "liberal democratic values." This serves to mask the fact that the capitalist ruling class exploit their "own" working class. Top Left, 5 October 2015: Air France workers storm through the gates of the company's headquarters after the capitalist bosses announced the retrenchment of 2,900 workers. Angry workers ripped the shirts off a couple of high-ranking executives and were about to dispense a healthy dose of workers' justice to these greedy corporate thugs when the terrified bosses were rescued by security guards and climbed over a fence to escape (Bottom Left). Today's post-attacks patriotism is meant to not only dampen such class struggle but the yet more added powers that the capitalist authorities are giving themselves in the name of fighting terrorism will in the end be used against the workers' movement, leftists and anti-imperialists.



Below: Melbourne, 2010: Police arrest 29 of the striking workers picketing the Visy manufacturing plant in Melbourne.



# OPPOSE ALL U.S. & AUSTRALIAN MILITARY & POLITICAL INTERVENTION IN SYRIA & IRAQ!



**Sydney, 13 September 2015:** Trotskyist Platform banner (Above) at the 'No Australian War on Syria' rally (Below). The conflict in Syria has involved both internal rivals and several different capitalist powers intervening in a murky way – sometimes involving shifting alliances. Yet one thing is absolutely clear: all intervention by the U.S. and allied British, French and Australian imperialist rulers will only mean yet more suffering for the Syrian people. This is the case whether that intervention is through direct military participation, arming and financing of "Rebel" proxies or diplomatic manoeuvring. As we go to press in the days after the 13 November 2015 terror attacks in Paris, all the barbaric capitalist powers have seized on those gruesome attacks to justify not only heightened state repression and racist scapegoating at home but increased intervention in Syria and Iraq. The intensified air strikes by these powers will cause further civilian casualties that will dwarf in number the 129 people killed in the Paris attacks.

If the imperialist powers succeed in strengthening their domination of the Middle East and forcing through a full or partial political transition in Syria then that will still further strengthen their economic grip over that country and will embolden them for yet more aggressive intervention in the ex-colonial countries of the Middle East, Asia, Africa and Latin America. It will also pump them up to still more arrogantly attack working class people and ethnic minorities at home. That is why the workers movement and leftists in Australia and abroad must say: No to imperialist-imposed regime change (or subordination/co-opting of the existing government) in Syria! Down with all U.S., French, British and Australian imperialist military, political and "diplomatic" intervention in the Middle East!





# REDFERN ABORIGINAL TENT EMBASSY STOOD STRONG AND MADE GAINS



Copyright Barbara McGrady



Activists establish the Redfern Aboriginal Tent Embassy on its first day, 26 May 2014. At the front of the Bottom Left photo is embassy founder, Jenny Munro.

**7 September 2015:** There was a feeling of satisfaction amongst activists of the Redfern Aboriginal Tent Embassy (RATE) as activists packed up the protest camp over the last few days. The RATE struggle had made headway in securing affordable housing for Aboriginal people in Redfern's historic Block area. After over fifteen months of hard struggle, RATE has won an agreement whereby 62 new houses will be built on the Block to provide accommodation at low cost to Aboriginal people. Prior to the RATE struggle, it was apparent that not only would the provision of affordable housing on the Block be delayed but it would likely not be provided at all. The Aboriginal Housing Company (AHC) had removed the last of the Aboriginal residents living on The Block four years ago with the promise that they would be able to come back into affordable accommodation in newly built houses. However, by early last year it was confirmed what Aboriginal people in Redfern had long suspected: the 62 affordable housing dwellings that the AHC had promised to build as part of its Pemulwuy project were to become – at best – an afterthought to its plan for the area to be turned by the developer Deicorp into shops, office space and higher-end commercial housing for students.

RATE was established on 26 May 2014 by Aboriginal women and supporters with its central demand that affordable housing for Aboriginal people on The Block be built prior to any commercial development. Amongst those who set up the Embassy were Aboriginal former Block residents. RATE then quickly inspired support from Aboriginal people and other anti-racist activists angry about not only the lack of affordable housing for Aboriginal people but also the brutal oppression Aboriginal people continued to face in all aspects of their lives from racist police violence to the forced closure of remote Aboriginal communities. Aboriginal activists from Gamilaraay country in northern NSW and from far away as Queensland and Western Australia came to do stints camping at RATE while RATE was flooded with statements of solidarity from far flung places. In September last year, the morale of RATE supporters was greatly lifted by a visit to the camp by Palm Island, Aboriginal resistance hero Lex Wotton – the leader of the November 2004 uprising on that island that courageously responded to the racist police killing of Aboriginal man Mulrunji Doomadgee and the subsequent police whitewash of the murder. Those involved in overseas indigenous rights

struggles from places as far away as Hawaii also visited RATE to offer their support.

On a few of the days when RATE was facing threatened eviction, dozens of students from nearby Sydney University went down to RATE in solidarity. They showed that they refused to be part of plans to turn The Block into accommodation for Sydney University students when that was being done at the expense of affordable housing for Aboriginal people. Especially crucial was the solidarity given to RATE from trade unions. From the early days of RATE, the CFMEU construction union helped with logistics such as providing RATE with a porta-loo. On the first anniversary of RATE on May 26 this year, dozens of MUA members marched down to the RATE site. As they waved union flags they expressed their determination to stand by RATE and support its demands. A joint meeting that day of RATE activists and MUA unionists stated:

Trade unionists and supporters of the Redfern Tent Embassy (RATE) gathered here on May 26 to express our ongoing solidarity with the action being taken by the Redfern Aboriginal Tent Embassy in occupying Aboriginal land at the Block in Redfern to stop a commercial property

*26 May 2015: The Maritime Union of Australia rally at The Block to support the Redfern Aboriginal Tent Embassy on its first anniversary. Although the level of support from the union movement as a whole was modest compared to what it should have been, the support that did come from the powerful trade union movement played a role in assisting RATE to win the gains that it did.*







27 August 2015: Key Aboriginal activists spearheading RATE confident as the struggle heads towards securing gains for affordable housing for Aboriginal people.

development planned by Deicorp and the Aboriginal Housing Company.

Aboriginal housing is desperately needed and should be built before any commercial development is allowed to progress.

Many long-term Aboriginal residents of Redfern/Waterloo are currently living in overcrowded, unsuitable state housing, or are homeless, while Aboriginal land is being taken over for commercial development.

Both the Commonwealth and state governments are refusing to release public funds for any Aboriginal-controlled community housing projects anywhere in Australia. This discriminatory policy has to end. Public funding must be allocated immediately for Aboriginal community housing for the Block and across the country.

We call on trade unions, and Unions NSW, to pass similar resolutions and take political and practical steps to ensure that the proposed development does not proceed before the housing demands are met.

By the last weeks of the RATE struggle, the flags of around a dozen different trade unions were flying on the RATE site showing solidarity with the Aboriginal struggle from the organised workers movement.

The strategy of RATE was powerful yet beautifully simple. By camping on the very site that the commercial development on The Block was to take place, RATE ensured that no such development could take place unless either the AHC/developers/government came to an agreement with RATE or the police unleashed violence to forcibly remove RATE. Seeing how RATE activists had refused to be deterred by either severe storms blowing down tents or by police repression or attacks by thugs and, importantly, seeing the statements of solidarity for RATE from trade unions, the government/AHC/developers calculated that they had no choice but to negotiate a settlement with RATE. After steadfastly refusing to provide any support for the development of affordable housing on The Block, the federal Liberal government reluctantly stepped in at the end to provide a \$5 million grant as well as organising for a larger bank loan to fund the affordable housing. The deal done between the AHC, the federal government and RATE commits the AHC to building the affordable housing either before or simultaneously with the commercial development. Thus, if the deal is honoured, the core demand of RATE would have been achieved. The Aboriginal activists who led RATE have emphasised the need to be vigilant in order to ensure that the

deal is adhered to and that no excuses are made to delay the building of the affordable housing. Furthermore, activists will need to ensure that the AHC does not knock back the Aboriginal people most in need of access to affordable housing in order to have the housing occupied by more affluent Aboriginal people who the AHC knows will be more “acceptable” to the future upper-middle class occupants of the commercial retail and residential development.

Of course, given the level of homelessness that Aboriginal people in inner-city Sydney suffer and the extreme level of racist discrimination

that Aboriginal people face when trying to rent privately, there is a need for much more than 62 affordable dwellings on The Block. Ideally the entire re-development of The Block should be to provide low rent public housing for Aboriginal people and associated services. Such a re-development would also have better ensured that The Block was retained as a social and political centre for Aboriginal people. However, the fact is that what will likely now be built on The Block as a result of the RATE struggle is a lot better than what was on the cards prior to this struggle.

## A DECADES LONG WAR ON ABORIGINAL HOUSING ON THE BLOCK BY GREEDY DEVELOPERS AND RACIST GOVERNMENTS



Police stampeding around Redfern's The Block. The Aboriginal community on The Block faced decades of violent police raids and racist bullying.

**Aboriginal people have been living on The Block in low-rent housing since the early 1970s. This affordable housing had been won through a struggle by Aboriginal militants and the militant Builders Labourers Federation trade union. That struggle which triumphed in early 1973 forced the then Whitlam Labor federal government to provide a grant for Aboriginal people to collectively buy up the area. The Aboriginal housing in the area came to be managed by the Aboriginal Housing Company (AHC) which was established by the activists who fought for The Block for the sole purpose of providing comfortable and happy low-rent accommodation for Aboriginal people. Despite facing much racist discrimination – including from banks reluctant to do dealings with an Aboriginal organisation – the AHC's work in its early days ensured that low-rent accommodation came to be provided for up to 300 Aboriginal people on The Block.**



However, like most economic or social organisations – whether black, white, “ethnic” or multiracial – that exist in capitalist Australia without a clear anti-capitalist perspective, the AHC became more and more subordinated to the agendas of powerful economic interests. Specifically, the AHC ended up speaking not for the interests of low-income Aboriginal tenants – as it was originally constructed to do – but became a vehicle for the schemes of wealthy capitalist developers and their mates in government. In the eyes of these developers, The Block was prime inner-city real estate which could be turned into a lot of money. And they were determined to lay their grubby hands on it! They wanted to gain access to the land so that they could eject low-income Aboriginal tenants and build high-end commercial housing and shops that would sell for big bucks. Successive NSW state governments, which like all governments in capitalist Australia serve the interest of the corporate exploiting class, have been happy to sing along to the tune of these greedy developers.

Racist governments had an additional motive for wanting to dilute the Aboriginal character of The Block. The Block came to be not only a centre of Aboriginal culture and a meeting place for Aboriginal people from all over Australia but also a centre of Aboriginal political resistance against racist oppression. Over the years, many rallies for Aboriginal land rights and against racist police violence started, finished or passed through The Block. In February 2004, The Block and nearby Lawson Street saw hundreds of Aboriginal youth courageously hold their ground in a nine-hour pitched battle with racist cops. The youth were 100% justifiably responding to provocations by Redfern police who clamped down on the community after racist cops had murdered 17 year-old Aboriginal youth TJ Hickey. Earlier, in May 1981 and then seven months later, 200 Aboriginal people responded to incessant racist police harassment by barricading Eveleigh Street on The Block and bravely responding to the marauding police by throwing projectiles back at them. There have also been numerous smaller versions of such heroic acts of resistance to racist police violence on The Block.

The developers and government’s agenda was greatly facilitated by the AHC’s journey away from its founding spirit as a community organisation set up by militant black activists. One indication of just how far the AHC has travelled was seen in the way that AHC CEO Mick Mundine held a joint press conference with Redfern top cop Luke Freudenstein in February last year to express his support to Redfern police in their condemnation of a large protest march demanding justice for TJ Hickey on the tenth anniversary of TJ’s killing by racist cops.

The AHC’s drift away from its original purpose of serving low-income Aboriginal tenants was the result of the confluence of several currents. One force pushing the AHC away from its stated purpose was simply the pressure of the capitalist “free market.” As an entity that had no stable source of external funding and was meant to operate within the confines of “market principles,” the AHC, as a body without a clear anti-capitalist agenda, inevitably became easy game for whoever had the market power to either promise to deliver housing construction and maintenance at a lower price or on the other hand promised, in exchange for land use rights for commercial development, big money that could be used to subsidise its housing program. In this way, the AHC became associated with and dependent on wealthy capitalist corporations who began to use that influence to set more and more of the AHC’s agenda. Prominent on the AHC’s own website’s list of “Partners” is not only the developer Deicorp but Westpac Bank and the South Sydney Business Chamber. Then there was developers and governments directly influencing the AHC leaders through financial enticements. Some in the Aboriginal community have long suspected this has involved outright bribery of AHC leaders. To be sure, that would hardly be just a problem with the AHC – just look at successive NSW state governments! From developers handing over tens of thousands of dollars in cash to politicians in brown paper bags to business bosses bribing the former premier with an expensive “gift,” the last few years have revealed just a small fraction of the massive corruption that the leaders of this state wallow in. Yet just as the big business bosses can control politicians with more “legal”

forms of enticements – like large donations to the respective political parties and invitations to sit in corporate boxes at sporting events – so too can greedy developers and their government cronies bring an organisation like the AHC under its control through more subtle but even more insidious means of buying influence. This could include offering AHC leaders invitations to fancy business/government lunches and functions and seducing AHC leaders into making them feel that they are part of elite circles by allowing them to participate in government/corporate policy discussion sessions.

As the AHC bent to the pressures of the capitalist “free market” and came under the increasing influence of rich corporations and the state government, staunch Aboriginal activists and grassroots tenants who objected to all this were increasingly purged from the organisation and its leadership. This in turn further accelerated the AHC’s path away from its original purpose.

When the pressure of “market imperatives” and corrupting influences was not enough to bring the AHC completely into the developers’/government’s fold, the NSW state government unleashed its “legal” muscle to bring the AHC to heel. Thus, even long after the AHC had sold out its founding principles, the NSW government at first refused to give the AHC planning approval for its Pemulwuy project. The government insisted that there be even less affordable housing for Aboriginal people in a re-developed Block than the AHC had proposed. Indeed, even as Aboriginal people were being squeezed out of The Block, the 1995-2011 NSW ALP government refused, for a whole decade, to give the rebuilding of affordable homes for Aboriginal people planning approval until the AHC agreed to give further priority to the commercial aspects of the Pemulwuy project. To resist such bullying from the government would have taken a campaign of mass protest action. The AHC did very briefly flirt with a diluted version of this idea and even organised a hundreds strong protest rally in Redfern in August 2006 in support of affordable housing for Aboriginal people on The Block. Yet already by then the AHC had strayed way too far into the camp of the enemies of Aboriginal

people’s rights to honestly want to sustain such a campaign. What is more, the AHC had by then lost any real credibility with the grass roots Aboriginal people needed to wage such a campaign anyway.

As far back as twenty years ago, the AHC first started in effect implementing the developers’ and government’s plan to drive Aboriginal tenants off The Block. In the mid-1990s, Block residents were enraged when they confirmed that the AHC had drawn up plans to actually abolish all affordable housing for Aboriginal people on The Block and, instead, planned to turn most of the area into commercial office space. Although they later modified this plan, the AHC had already started creating facts on the ground by neglecting repairs on houses so much that tenants could not tolerate it anymore and started leaving The Block “voluntarily”.

Meanwhile, police attacks on Aboriginal people in Redfern assisted the ruling class agenda of driving Aboriginal tenants off The Block. This police violence was not solely about kicking low-income people off from prime real estate. It was also motivated by pure racism – by the racist culture that permeates the police force and which, in turn, arises naturally from the police’s role as the enforcers of an unequal and discriminatory social order based on the dispossession of this country’s first peoples and the exploitation of labour by wealthy business owners. However, the big end of town’s agenda to push black people off prime inner-city real estate gave the police attacks added impetus. Aside from daily bullying of Aboriginal youth, almost every year saw a large-scale police assault on The Block. One of the most brutal such raids took place on 8 February 1990.<sup>9</sup> It was on that day, just before 4am, that some 135 cops led by the heavily armed Tactical Response Group (whose functions today are largely performed by the Public Order and Riot Squad) smashed into several homes on The Block with sledgehammers and iron bars. Residents woke up terrified as they saw these men bearing shotguns break into their homes and point weapons at them. The police put guns to women’s heads, roughed up residents and abused people. But after all that the police did not charge anyone with a



serious offence like a violent crime or even charges of dealing in drugs or weapons. Of the eight charges that they did bring against people, two were for unpaid fines, one was a more than 7 year old warrant for breach of bail, another a warrant for failing to appear at a court nearly six years earlier and another a warrant for a resident allegedly being drunk on a train close to six years earlier! Additionally, three people were charged with having possession of stolen goods because they could not provide receipts for relatively minor items like a TV, a radio cassette player, an electric shaver and *unbelievably* a pair of goggles! And for this the local community was terrorised and left traumatised. To put it all into perspective, nearly one and a half times as many police were mobilised to find a couple of allegedly stolen TVs and a pair of goggles on The Block as the 92 police who were put on duty in Cronulla on 11 December 2005 when the police knew full well that the violent, white supremacist riot that subsequently took place there was indeed very likely to happen! Police terror against the Redfern Aboriginal community culminated in the February 2004 killing of 17 year-old TJ Hickey by racist police who rammed his bicycle while he was riding on it and impaled the boy on a steel paling.

The incessant police attacks, the demoralising effect of living in houses where repairs were not being done and the daily discrimination

that Aboriginal people faced in employment and every aspect of their lives inevitably led to social problems on The Block. These problems were played up by the capitalist-owned media and seized on by the state government to justify their push to drive Aboriginal tenants out of the area. The combined effect of relentless police attacks, the deterioration of the houses, social problems and the AHC's push to move tenants off The Block meant that by late 2010 there were just 35 people living on The Block – down from a peak of over 300. To get the last of the tenants to move, the AHC on the one hand threatened higher rents and eviction orders and, on the other hand, promised residents that they would be able to move back once the re-development took place. Residents, however, were sceptical about being able to move back and expected that the 62 new affordable houses would still be way out of their price range. What really enraged former Block residents and supporters of affordable housing for Aboriginal people was when last year AHC CEO, Mick Mundine, claimed that it was not commercially viable to pursue affordable housing on the Block. "That's on the back burner at the moment," he said. "Our first priority is the commercial build" (*The Sydney Morning Herald*, 26 April 2014). It was this confirmation of the fears of many that led Aboriginal activists to establish RATE.



1967: Aboriginal activists from the Gurundji stockmen and domestic hands' strike together with Builders Labourers Federation (BLF) members at a meeting to support the Gurundji struggle for land rights. The leftist-led BLF trade union would later play a key role in the Aboriginal struggle for affordable housing on Redfern's The Block. The workers' movement must stand solidly behind the struggle for justice of Aboriginal people.



1970s: Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal BLF union members working on the construction of affordable housing for Aboriginal people on The Block.

## FROM 1972 TO 2015: THE STRUGGLE FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING FOR ABORIGINAL PEOPLE ON THE BLOCK CONTINUES

**The enemies of RATE tried everything to defeat the RATE struggle including a series of violent attacks on RATE activists. Family members of a senior AHC employee staged several of these attacks. In one attack last year, at least one of these family members was amongst a group of four men that came to the embassy and assaulted RATE activist, Raymond Munro. Yet when police arrived, it was Raymond Munro and another RATE activist who had come to his defence that the cops arrested and charged with affray. Police only charged two of the actual four attackers. Also last year, another relative of the senior AHC employee invaded the embassy in the dark of night – bearing a piece of wood – and attacked two women including embassy founder Jenny Munro. Enemies of RATE also seemed to have enlisted criminal elements to stage random attacks on RATE activists staffing the embassy or to enter the embassy grounds with the aim of causing fear and disruption. Amongst the most frightening attack was when occupants of a black, flashy four-wheel drive vehicle passed RATE on two separate occasions and hurled flares at the embassy. They aimed to set the tents on fire.**

Alongside the attacks by thugs, RATE faced repression from the organs of the capitalist state. The police arrested four key RATE activists during the duration of the struggle – outrageously all resulting from incidents where violent intruders and provocateurs had invaded the embassy grounds. The arrested RATE activists were then set bail conditions banning them from the vicinity of The Block, thus laying bare the police strategy – to strip RATE of its key activists. Amongst those whom the police arrested – and for a period banned from the Block – was RATE leader Jenny Munro.

Meanwhile, in August, the NSW Supreme Court ruled against RATE and ordered its eviction. In doing so the courts stayed true to form, proving once again that like the police, prisons and entire legal/state machinery they are an instrument for the oppression of Aboriginal people and all the exploited and oppressed by the big end of town.

Yet despite all that was thrown at RATE and its activists the struggle made a significant advance. Congratulations to all those who joined the struggle. It was the Aboriginal activists in RATE that provided the leadership





15 June 2014: Hundreds gather to defend the Redfern Aboriginal Tent Embassy (RATE). RATE attracted broad support from supporters of Aboriginal rights and campaigners for affordable housing.

and the strong drive that was key to success. The Aboriginal activists spearheading the movement deeply understood not only how the lack of affordable housing has forced many Aboriginal people into homelessness but also the importance of saving the Aboriginal character of The Block given its special significance as a historic centre for militant black resistance against racial oppression. Many non-Aboriginal people also supported the RATE struggle. This included people from various non-white “ethnic” communities – who especially identify with the Aboriginal rights struggle because of their own experiences in racist white Australia – as well as committed anti-racist white activists. Special mention here must be made to activists with links to the anarchist Black Rose collective who did a lot of heavy lifting in terms of staffing and protecting the embassy at night. Trotskyist Platform activists also did regular night and graveyard shifts to guard the embassy. Also participating in the struggle were activists from Socialist Alliance and individuals from a wide range of different anti-racist political standpoints. When RATE held rallies – both

on as well as outside The Block– still broader layers of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people joined these actions to express their support.

Just like RATE, Aboriginal housing on The Block was first won in a hard fought struggle. That early 1970s struggle faced even more obstacles than RATE did but, at the same time, was bolstered by a higher level of trade union support than the RATE struggle received. The back drop of the original struggle for affordable housing on The Block was the movement of many Aboriginal people from rural areas to the city in search of work. Many found work at the Eveleigh rail yards (at the site of what is now the Australian Technology Park) where they were paid terribly low wages – much lower than other workers. However, due to rampant discrimination by racist bosses, many Aboriginal people could not get work at all. To compound their problems, discrimination by landlords meant Aboriginal people had trouble getting tenancy in rental properties. In the early 1970s some of the homeless Aboriginal people would squat in unoccupied houses owned by absentee landlords in the area that later became known as The Block. They were

often arrested and brutalised by local police who imposed a defacto selective curfew on Aboriginal people. Meanwhile, the racist South Sydney Council ran a campaign against those – including a local church – who would offer shelter to homeless Aboriginal people. As a result, in late 1972 black militants and allied anti-racist white people organised a plan to move homeless Aboriginal people into the unoccupied houses in Louis Street in what is now part of The Block. Those houses had been bought up by a greedy developer called Ian Kiernan (who would later founded Clean Up Australia and was awarded an “Australian of the Year” award). Kiernan had evicted all the previous mostly Aboriginal renters and planned to re-develop and gentrify the area with the aim of renting out the new dwellings at higher rates.

Being greedy capitalists, Kiernan and his firm, IBK, of course objected to the Aboriginal squatters. However, the leftist-led Builders Labourers Federation trade union made it clear to him that no work on his development would take place if the Aboriginal people were evicted. Meanwhile, several trade unions organised for work to be done to renovate the homes which were in a poor condition. As one of the former black militants that spearheaded the struggle for the Block, the late Bob Bellear, put it:

“The now exiled State Builders’ Labourers, through Bob Pringle, were called in to erect doors, fix windows etc., while some members of the Plumbers Union fixed taps, toilets and other plumbing facilities required for a more liveable habitation. The electricians turned on the power ...”

- “How the Aboriginal Housing Project Was Born”, Bob Bellear, *Koori History* website

7 November 2008: Flags of the MUA union proudly fly at a 200-strong demonstration in Sydney in support of Lex Wotton - the Palm Island Aboriginal resistance leader who led the November 2004 uprising that responded to the whitewash of the police murder in custody of Mulrunji Doomadgee. The Sydney rally was held to coincide with the sentencing hearing that Lex Wotton had to face in a Townsville court for his part in the heroic struggle. Like the BLF in its work in support of the struggle for affordable housing for Aboriginal people on The Block in the early 1970s, the MUA took industrial action in support of the crucial struggle to defend Lex Wotton



During the struggle, the black militants and their anti-racist white allies faced constant harassment and almost weekly arrests by the police. They were especially targeted by the NSW Police’s hated 21 Division – elite special operations cops (following police reorganisations its functions today are performed by the police’s Public Order and Riot Squad and its Tactical Operations Unit). One of the 21 Division’s favourite tactics was to send in people to cause trouble and then to arrest as many Aboriginal people and their friends as possible in the ensuing raid on “grounds” like swearing, public drunkenness and resisting arrest. Meanwhile, the ALP-led South Sydney Council also did everything possible to oppose the struggle for housing for the homeless Aboriginal people. The racist Council was encouraged by a local community group formed by racist white residents fanatically opposed to the Aboriginal occupants. One night one of these white residents, a security guard, entered the houses where Aboriginal occupants were living and opened fire with live ammunition!

However, despite all this the Aboriginal militants and their BLF union allies stood firm. As it was clear that the Aboriginal struggle was determined to face down any opposition and with the BLF preventing any capitalist development in the area, the Labor federal Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Gordon Bryant, bowed to demands from the Aboriginal militants to provide a grant for Aboriginal people to collectively buy up the area freehold and renovate the houses to use them to provide affordable accommodation for the most needy Aboriginal people. This victory was achieved in April 1973.



## LESSONS OF THE STRUGGLES FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING ON THE BLOCK

Affordable housing for Aboriginal people on The Block was won in a period of much working class and other progressive social struggles. The early 1970s was also a time when the U.S. and Australian capitalist rulers were weakened by the defeats they were suffering in their brutal war against the communist workers and peasants of Vietnam. Meanwhile, just five years before The Block was won, capitalist rule in France had its foundations shaken by the militant May 1968 general strike and factory occupations by millions of French workers. A year later, Italy saw similar convulsive struggles that came to be known as the Hot Autumn. Fearful of the threat of socialist revolution that had been posed by the French and Italian events, anxious about the wave of working class and other progressive struggles, weakened by the defeats it was suffering in Vietnam and terrified at the open support for the Vietnamese revolutionaries by a significant number of Australian leftist workers and youth, the Australian capitalist rulers felt the need to make concessions to the masses in order to stave off events that seemed to be heading in a revolutionary direction. Thus, the late 1960s and early 1970s was a period when not only was The Block won but advances were made more broadly in Aboriginal rights, workers' rights and women's rights and headway was made in undermining the racist White Australia Policy exclusion of non-white immigrants. Similar gains were won in this period by the working class and downtrodden in Europe and the United States.

Yet by the early 1980s, capitalist rule had stabilised worldwide. We now saw a right-wing period of union-busting and a Cold War anti-communist push against the socialistic USSR and Vietnam. In the mid-1980s, the Hawke Labor government and Victorian and NSW state ALP governments together smashed the BLF union that had been so crucial to winning affordable housing for Aboriginal people on The Block. In the period from 1989-1992, socialistic rule was destroyed in the former USSR and allied East European countries like Hungary and East Germany. The capitalist ruling classes of the world were greatly emboldened by this and felt they could get away with further attacking the rights of the masses at home. The period of the 1980s Cold War and then post-Soviet capitalist triumphalism has seen unions and workers' rights diminished, the gap between rich and poor widen, Aboriginal rights and organisations undermined, mandatory detention of refugees introduced and the Left weakened. It is in this context that the decades-long campaign by the developers and NSW government to drive Aboriginal tenants off The Block gathered steam.

The world we live in is still affected by the direct and indirect effects of the restoration of capitalism in the former USSR. Yet, in the last several years, we have also seen periods

of militant worker and progressive social struggles in Greece, Nepal, Portugal and Spain. Inevitably there will again be a period of a sustained upswing in the class struggle like the late 1960s-early 1970s because the capitalist economic system, which is lurching from one economic crisis to another, leaves the masses no choice but to fight back against the ever greater suffering it imposes on us. However, to be able to open the doors to such an upsurge and, most importantly, to be able to channel it to a decisive victory we should learn the lessons of every struggle of the past. The RATE struggle is especially important in this regard because in a period when most struggles have been defeated or have not been able to make much headway, RATE made gains.

One reason for its success is, obviously, the steely determination of the Aboriginal leaders of RATE and the courage of all who participated in the struggle. Yet, many losing struggles have also had a combination of leaders devoted to the cause and brave activists. Key in the RATE struggle was the fact that the movement's main strategy was *not* focussed on appeals to the government or mainstream politicians, legal action or other methods based on trust in one or another institution of the racist rich people's state. Instead, RATE's primary focus was to create



*The 1980s anti-communist Cold War against the Soviet Union and the subsequent collapse of the USSR was associated with intense union-busting and racist attacks at home. Left: A statue of Lenin is pulled down during the 1991-92 counterrevolution that destroyed the Soviet workers state. Centre: Victorian police brutally arrest members of the Builders Labourers Federation during the late 1980s smashing of that militant trade union. Right: A still from a 1992 video that outraged any decent person. White NSW police officers at a charity function wear blackface and mock Aboriginal people who have been killed in custody. The despicable racist cop shown in the photo said "I'm Lloyd Boney" as he impersonates an Aboriginal man hanging. Five years earlier, Lloyd Boney had been found hung in Brewarrina police station just one and a half hours after being arrested. He was widely understood to have been murdered by racist cops. It was during this period of racist, anti-working class reaction that the campaign by the developers and NSW government to drive Aboriginal tenants off The Block gathered steam.*

facts on the ground through mass direct action – that is, by establishing itself at the heart of the area where the commercial development on The Block was to take place so the development could not proceed while the Embassy was still standing. Although the capitalist governments had the power through their cops and courts to physically evict RATE, in the end it calculated that doing so would incite such a firestorm of social protest that it would be better to make concessions. Mainstream politicians would have noted that the many police/legal/thug attacks on RATE had not deterred the movement one bit and realised that any eviction of RATE would have to be a major and violent police operation that would enrage RATE's many supporters nationwide. They would have been aware of the large size of the protests against the closure of remote Aboriginal communities and have been worried that a brutal attack on RATE would only fuel these protests and increase the authority of the staunch, radical wing of the Aboriginal movement. Furthermore, although the level of union support given to RATE was relatively modest, the social power of the workers movement is so great that its endorsement of RATE was in itself a significant deterrent to the authorities. The ruling class would have been worried that a violent eviction of RATE could have provoked a backlash by sections of the workers movement and they

would especially have dreaded the prospect of the CFMEU construction union slapping a ban on the commercial development in the same way as the BLF did in the original 1970s struggle for The Block. Perhaps, most of all, the capitalist rulers would have been very concerned that not only had many workers unions endorsed RATE but that RATE was sending contingents of activists to support an MUA wharfies' picket line at Port Botany. Most of all, the exploiting class fears steps towards uniting the militancy of the most subjugated sections of the population – like Aboriginal people – with the social power of the organised working class: the enemy knows that this will be a formidable combination.

It is important that the gains won by the RATE struggle *not* be remembered as a case of "if you bang on about something long enough the politicians do start to listen." Indeed, the involvement of mainstream politicians with the RATE campaign – even to make themselves look good – had been very minimal. A couple of Greens politicians did, on very rare occasions, pop into RATE but as is typical did not widely publicise their claimed solidarity with RATE and made little effort to make it a national issue. When, at the very end, the federal government eventually came up with funding for affordable housing on The Block, a whole fifteen months after



the start of the RATE struggle, Minister for Indigenous Affairs Nick Scullion pretended that he was sympathetic to the RATE struggle and was making the grant out of sympathy for Aboriginal people's rights. This is the same Nick Scullion that cut off federal funding for remote Aboriginal communities! The truth is that the Liberal and ALP politicians accept the current capitalist order and are mates with the greedy developers. Nick Scullion did not have a sudden change of heart but simply wanted to make himself look good while making a concession that he has been forced into. **There is no way that Nick Scullion would have made the concession that he did if activists had simply been making submissions and representations to him without the presence of RATE as a physical obstruction to future commercial development. RATE made headway because it was based on mass, direct action by determined Aboriginal activists and non-Aboriginal anti-racists and because it won trade union support.** As RATE leader, Jenny Munro, put it:

"I'm old school. My teachers taught me the principles of our resistance – we never ceded our land to anyone.

"The embassy has demonstrated that for our people, resistance is the only way to go."

The lessons of the RATE struggle not only has implications for the struggle for Aboriginal rights but also for the broader struggle

*Federal Minister for Indigenous Affairs, Nick Scullion (Left), was involved in a deal between the Aboriginal Housing Company and the Redfern Aboriginal Tent Embassy (RATE) that saw the latter make headway on its key demand that affordable housing for Aboriginal people on The Block be built prior to any commercial development. Scullion was forced to make this concession to RATE because through mass, direct action and with the backing of trade unions, RATE posed a physical obstruction to future commercial development. Scullion's concession, finally wrested out of him after 15 months of RATE's hard struggle, does not change the fact that Scullion is an enemy of the struggle for Aboriginal rights who carried out the racist policy of cutting federal funding for remote Aboriginal communities. Right: 19 March 2015 rally in Perth against the government's forced closure of Aboriginal communities.*



for affordable rental accommodation and for the entire struggle of the oppressed and exploited. To maximize the chance of being victorious, the struggles of the working class and all of the downtrodden demands a strategy based on mass, direct action and not at all upon reliance on the state institutions and mainstream political parties that serve the capitalist ruling class. In order for struggles waged in this way to achieve major victories against a powerful and ruthless exploiting class – and when the opportunity arises to culminate in the seizure of state power by the oppressed masses – the movements need to be buttressed around the strength of the organised working class. However, for the power of the workers movement to be unleashed, the influence of illusions in a capitalist parliament, divisive "Aussie workers first" nationalism and the loyalty to the capitalist order promoted by the ALP social democrats needs to be purged from the workers movement. We need to turn the workers movement into one that only trusts in its own power united with all the downtrodden, that fights for workers of all races, nations and pay levels to stand together truly as one and which champions the cause of all the downtrodden. Let's be encouraged by the successes of the RATE struggle to work harder for this goal so that victories for the oppressed will not be rarities but will, instead, become commonplace and part of the long march towards a final revolutionary victory.

# SMASH THE CUTS TO SERVICES WORKING CLASS PEOPLE NEED THE MOST! STOP THE SELL-OFF OF PUBLIC HOUSING MASSIVELY INCREASE PUBLIC HOUSING JUST LIKE SOCIALISTIC CHINA IS DOING

*China, May 2013: Prospective tenants visit a new public rental housing complex in Shanghai. In the first nine and a half months of 2015, socialistic China had started construction of almost 7 million public housing units. The Chinese government has planned for 18 million public housing dwellings to be built or rebuilt between 2015 and 2017.*

**On 16 July 2015, a speakout rally was held in the multi-racial working class Sydney suburb of Auburn to oppose the cuts by governments of all stripes to public services. The protest was held under the slogans, *Smash the Cuts to Services Working Class People Need the Most! Stop the Sell-Off Public Housing. Massively Increase Public Housing – Just Like China is Doing. No to Abbott's Squeezing of Public Hospitals and Schools. Rollback the Former ALP Government's Cut to the Sole Parent Payment.***

The demonstration was held because the capitalist big-end of town and the governments that serve them are waging all-sided attacks on the services that working class people need the most. These attacks, alongside bosses' cuts to workers' conditions, are making life harder and harder for working class people. Whether we are employed workers, unemployed workers, single mothers, pensioners or students, we are all feeling the pinch.

One of the crucial public services that are under attack is public housing. We need public housing because the greedy private sector developers who determine what is built in the private sector know that they can make a lot more money building expensive homes for the wealthy rather than affordable

homes for the masses.

So we need low-rent public housing to alleviate this situation. But what are governments doing? The very opposite! From Millers Point and the Rocks in the inner city to Auburn, Bonyrigg and Claymore in western and south-western Sydney to Bellambi and Wollongong in the Illawara, the authorities are selling off or demolishing public housing. They are also refusing repairs in order to wear down public tenants and force them into leaving "voluntarily." These are cruel attacks on working class tenants. In Millers Points, many of the public tenants facing eviction are retired wharfies, seamen and ship painters or families of such workers. In the Illawara, among those threatened with eviction are people who have toiled in the



mines, steel works and related industries of the area and have suffered many a work injury during their decades of hard labour. Now the state authorities are “rewarding” them by trying to sell off the homes they have lived in for decades.

The speakers at the July 16 rally included representatives of tenants groups opposing the sell-off of public housing in each of the Illawara/Wollongong, Millers Point and Campbelltown areas. They all spoke powerfully of the cruelty of the campaigns to throw them out of their homes. Also addressing the protest was an Auburn working-class resident ground down by the high private rents she is paying and a representative of Trotskyist Platform. The rally was chaired by Trotskyist Platform chairwoman Sarah Fitzenmeyer. Below are excerpts of some of her remarks as well as the speech at the rally by Trotskyist Platform editor, Yuri Gromov (which have been lightly edited for publication).

**Sarah Fitzenmeyer (rally chair/Trotskyist Platform chairwoman):**

From 2006 to 2013, governments cut the number of public housing dwellings in

*Bulli, 11 October 2014: Members of the Illawara-based Public Housing Union and pro-public housing activists from Sydney – including Millers Point residents and Trotskyist Platform supporters – protest the sell-off of yet another public housing dwelling as yuppie real estate agents conducting the sale look on.*



Photo: Illawara Mercury

Australia by 13,000. This is not disputed. These figures come from a Senate inquiry into housing affordability. In other words the very people administering the slashing of public housing are admitting their crime against working class people. And governments of all stripes have been overseeing this – both Liberal and Labor state governments in collaboration with the Howard Liberal government, the Rudd ALP government, the Gillard ALP/Greens government and now another Liberal-National regime.

With so little public housing being made available no wonder, we have the ridiculous situation that some relatively low rent private apartments can have fifty or sixty people applying to rent them. No wonder the private landlords feel confident to raise rents. No wonder many of them feel confident to bully their tenants.

As usual the ruling class is doing to Aboriginal people what they are doing to all working class people in an especially severe way. The WA government is trying to forcibly close hundreds of Aboriginal communities and drive Aboriginal people out of their homes and communities. Everywhere federal and state governments are refusing to fund



*In 2015, teachers, staff and local residents across NSW protested against cuts to TAFE. The government's cuts have seen hundreds of TAFE teaching jobs slashed and whole TAFE courses axed.*



Aboriginal community affordable housing projects including in Redfern's historic Block. Meanwhile the puppets of the government and developers that run the Aboriginal Housing Corporation demolished the affordable housing that did exist on The Block and want to put up there commercial projects. That is why Aboriginal people have established a tent embassy in Redfern to stop this atrocity and win back affordable housing for Aboriginal people.

I want to address a claim by governments that things like public housing are outdated, that they are not relevant in today's world, that all services in the world are either being privatised or are moving towards user pays. There is a huge problem with that argument. And that is the fact that in the world's most populous country – and Australia's main source of export dollars – they are doing the very opposite. The Peoples Republic of China is set to exceed its 2011 to 2015 target of providing 36 million additional households with access to public housing! Since 2008, China spectacularly built 45 million new public housing apartments. Additionally, the PRC government having driven down the price of housing through restrictions on the number of homes people can own, have started buying up at low price dwellings from private sector developers and turning them into public housing. That is the very exact opposite of what has been happening here!

As a result, in the Peoples Republic of China, over one in five people are now living in affordable, public housing. Whereas in Australia, just one in 25 people have that access!

And what the ruling class is doing to affordable housing in Australia is part of what they are doing to all the services that working class people need the most. Here is a very quick summary of just some of what they have been doing:

- Over the last two budgets, the Liberal/National Coalition has slashed \$50 billion from planned spending for public hospitals and another \$30 billion from the schools budget.
- Following last year's budget the Coalition government pushed through a bill that will see the slashing of legal aid services for low income people. The ALP and Greens voted for the bill.
- The NSW conservative government and federal governments have worked together to undermine TAFE. In NSW, 1200 TAFE jobs are being slashed, students have been hit with much greater fees and many courses have been cancelled or reduced in scope. In a practice begun by the Gillard government, money allocated for TAFE started being siphoned off to low-quality, for-profit private vocational schools. In other words vocational training – like almost everything else! – is being privatised.
- At the start of 2013, the Gillard ALP/Greens government axed the sole parenting payment driving tens of thousands of low-income single mothers into abject poverty. The measure threw over 84,000 low-income single parents off the Parenting Payment and on to the





4 March 2015: Thousands of trade unionists march through Sydney city in a rally for workers' rights and against cuts to social services. Workers demanded an increase in nursing jobs, opposed cuts to Medicare and demanded an end to the privatisation of electricity and public hospitals. A united movement – energised by the power of trade union industrial action – must be built to demand free quality public health care for all, truly free public school, TAFE and university education, jobs for all, an end to the sell-off of public housing and a massive increase in public housing.

much lower Newstart Allowance. If this isn't bad enough, those single parents who have part-time jobs were hit with even more savage cuts to their income as the Newstart Allowance is more ruthless than the Parenting Payment in cutting payments to those who do manage to find any part-time work.

This axing of the sole parent payment was perhaps the single most vicious attack on working class people of all. Single parents with children over eight years old who were new applicants for income support were actually first thrown onto the lower unemployment payment back in 2006 by the Howard Liberal government. However, those already receiving payments were allowed to continue to receive the higher Parenting Payment until their child turned 16. When the ALP came into office, it not only maintained the policy of dumping new applicants onto Newstart but in the 2011 budget additionally threw those still receiving the Parenting Payment with children over 12 onto Newstart as well. Then in 2013, it dumped onto Newstart those with children between 8 and 12 who, previously under their old rules, had still been receiving the Parenting Payment.

Around 90% of families affected by the changes are headed by single mothers. Even before the latest burden was heaped on them, many such families were living under conditions of crushing poverty. They often had to skip meals and default on utility payments and many didn't even dream of going for dental check-ups. Many a low-income single mother had been faced with the choice of either foregoing buying their kids basic clothing or not paying the fee needed to allow their children to participate in a school excursion. Now, on top of all this, the cuts slashed their income by between \$60 and \$110 a week.

One of the effects of such measures is that it puts women with children suffering abuse from husbands or defactors in a terrible plight. If they leave – as they often need to – and do not have an adequate source of income, they and their children will face starvation poverty. So these cuts to the parenting payment has led to more domestic violence against women.

But then the NSW state government has slashed support for women suffering violence. Last year they closed 80 independent

women's refuges. They transferred some of the refuges to corporate – mostly Christian – NGOs. But some of these are now closed on weekends or in evenings, house women with men and do not have refuge workers experienced in providing support to women escaping domestic violence.

So why are governments doing all this? For the same reason that they are attacking our trade unions. For the reason that while the governments may talk differently to each other they all ultimately serve the corporate elite who own all the industry, finance and mining. The Gina Rineharts, James Packers, Andrew Forrests, Frank Lowys, Kerry Stokes and the rest who really run this country. They are the ones pushing governments to slash social services so that they can pay even lower tax rates and so that they can make workers more fearful about their plight and thus less willing to challenge them at work.

This capitalist ruling class has been cruelly slashing the services that working class people need the most for over the last 30 years and this is happening now at an increasing rate. The result has been more and more unbearable poverty, unemployment and homelessness. Moreover, for every homeless person there are dozens of others who are skipping meals just to be able to get by.

We are not going to stop all this by relying on appealing to and lobbying mainstream politicians. Many people have made some great submissions outlining all the facts on issues like the effects of public housing cuts. But these pro-capitalist politicians actually know all the facts anyway so that is not the problem. The problem is that these politicians are committed to serve the current social order where a class of very rich business owners exploit workers and everything is run for this big end of town. Now, no one here needs to be convinced that the Coalition are right-wing dirtbags savagely hostile to the rights of working class people. However, the ALP and Greens, while they may sound nicer, also accept the current social order and that is why they have also been up to their ears too in all these attacks on public services.

So the only way we are going to be able to start to smash these attacks is through mass action on the streets linked to union industrial

action in the workplaces to force and scare the enemy into granting some concessions.

To be able to wage this struggle we must positively resist attempts by the enemy to divert people's anger onto refugees, overseas workers or people living abroad as a way of getting them – the local exploiting class – off the hook.

To be a powerful force, we have to fight our struggles not as a series of single issues but as one fight. That is what this rally is about. That is why this action has been called on the basis of several different demands that affect the interests of working class people. We need a united movement to demand free quality public health care for all, truly free public school, TAFE and university education; jobs for all; an end to the sell-off of public housing and, in fact, a massive increase in public housing.

We should be encouraged by the spectacular advances in public housing that are being made each day in the Peoples Republic of China. We should remember that China is still per person much poorer than Australia – it is catching up from its pre-1949 days when it was terribly ground down as a neocolony.

So if China can make such advances in public housing there is no *technical* reason why it cannot be made here. But there is a big political reason – the social system here and the state power here are committed only to serve the wealthy business bosses.

So we need to stand against that system and fight for a system based on working class rule and public ownership of the industry, mines, banks and productive land. The capitalist exploiting class and the governments that serve them are waging class war on us – it is time to unleash working class power to wage class war on them.

**Yuri Gromov, Editor, Trotskyist Platform:**

When they want to attack countries abroad, governments here like to talk about "human rights." Of course, one of the most basic rights of all is the right to shelter. And that right is under threat for more and more people in this country. The capitalist free market system ensures that while there's a glut of high-end housing, there is a terrible shortage



of affordable housing. A snapshot survey by Anglicare found that of the properties listed as available for rent in metropolitan areas, less than 1% was affordable to a single person on the minimum wage!

Yet the response by governments to all this is to make the situation even worse by selling off public housing. Even the NSW government's own website shows that the expected waiting time for public housing in Fairfield, Parramatta and Bankstown is always more than ten years. They don't actually tell you how much over ten years the waiting time is – it could really be over 20 years!

Governments of all stripes have been complicit in selling off public housing. People rightly hate the openly anti-working class bullies in the Coalition government but it was NSW Labor Opposition leader, Luke Foley, who last month shockingly called for all public housing to be transferred to private control.

Although the ALP and Greens would like to satisfy their supporters by making some improvements, ultimately they accept the current capitalist order. And that's an order where economic power lies with a small class of ultra-rich big business owners. The mainstream political parties all support a state machine that has been constructed to defend the interests of the exploiting class. And it is not a matter of making the ALP and Greens better either. Indeed, as the shocking acceptance of a brutal anti-working class austerity package by the far-left Syriza government in Greece proved, any party, no matter how left-wing, running the current political system **will** always, by definition, betray working class people.

Alongside all the attacks on working class people, we are seeing vicious campaigns to vilify those that are the targets of these campaigns. The Coalition regime has put unemployed people under the Gestapo-like control of greedy private contractors in the latest so-called employment scheme called Job Active. These contractors send people out on pointless interviews and if they miss these pointless interviews they get fined or worse lose their benefit payments for some time. In the worst case scenario, this could lead to falling behind in rent and eviction. The tent cities that have started to recently pop up in the very heart of Sydney in places like Belmore Park beside Central Station are a tragic testament to the cruel failure of these heartless government policies.

The notion behind schemes like Job Active is that the unemployed are lazy and need to be brought to heel. The reality for those of us who don't live in some kind of post-Calvinist dystopia is that there are not enough jobs available because greedy company owners keep on slashing jobs to boost profits. For example, a year and a half ago the Seven Media Group owned by billionaire tycoon Kerry Stokes retrenched 630 workers at its Westrac subsidiary even after having made a nearly \$500 million profit that year.

Not coincidentally, Kerry Stokes' Channel 7 has been at the forefront of vilifying public housing tenants. It has also been part of a mainstream media that has attacked refugees, insulted Aboriginal people and demonised Muslims. They've created hysteria about foreign investment and try to blame Chinese buyers for the housing affordability crisis.

Yet Chinese investors spend only 2% of all the money spent on purchasing residential property in Australia.

We can see why Stokes' media outlet would want to do all this. He doesn't want working class people to see him as the real enemy who has slashed hundreds of workers jobs. He wants to divert our attention toward other targets – both targets abroad and oppressed communities at home. As part of the working class fightback that we so badly need, the workers movement must positively oppose all the schemes to divide its ranks and divert its fire. The workers movement must take up the fight to oppose the forced closure of Aboriginal communities, to defend the Redfern Aboriginal Tent Embassy, free the refugees and thoroughly crush the growing far-right racist groups and their absurdly named "Reclaim Australia" movement.

One of the aims of the ruling class' campaign to vilify public housing tenants is to isolate them from other sections of the working class. Yet the attacks on public housing, like the attacks on public hospitals and single mothers are actually an attack on all working class people. The sell-off of public housing not only affects people in public housing and those on the waiting list. It drives up rents in the private rental markets. That is why here in Auburn, nearly 30% of residents are in housing stress – that means they are paying more than three out of every ten dollars earned in rent or mortgage while being in the bottom 40% income bracket.

Like the Job Active scheme and the slashing of the single parenting payment, the attacks on public housing and public hospitals are aimed in part at making life so miserable for the unemployed that people will accept jobs with terrible working conditions and below award pay. They also aim to make those who do have jobs so intimidated by the prospect of unemployment that they will not get involved in union organising and struggles for workers' rights. That is why the attacks on public services are very much part of the broader attacks on workers' rights: from the union-busting Royal Commission to the plans to introduce yet more anti-strike laws to the plans to cut penalty rates for shift and weekend work.

That's why we need a united fight to smash union busting and to smash the attacks on public services. We need mass action on the streets together with hard fought strikes backed by solid picket lines.

But to fight for this perspective we need a big change in the agenda that is guiding our unions. Instead of standing up to the bosses and their governments, the pro-ALP union officials are busy diverting workers into blaming our overseas worker sisters and brothers or the overseas bosses that they work for. That just divides us from our true worker allies and gets the bosses at home off the hook. Part of the reason the Laborite officials are doing this harmful, divisive stuff is because they are reluctant to call strikes and so are scrambling for other means to save jobs. They put forward the anti-strike laws as their excuse. But we need to turn our unions into ones that fight and are prepared to make these anti-strike laws a dead letter by mobilising industrial action so powerful that the government won't dare use them. We need a union movement that will struggle to unite local workers with our guest and overseas sisters and brothers instead of dividing us. A leadership that instead of tailoring our demands to what the bosses can accept will demand what we actually need: fully paid jobs for all, totally free medical and dental healthcare for all, free access to TAFE and unis, free 24 hour childcare and a massive increase in public housing.

Now the ruling class will respond to this by saying that this will cause economic collapse. To this – just as our working class sisters and brothers in Greece must also do – we will respond: if your system cannot provide for the masses needs without collapsing, then we'll need to take the economy out of your hands. We'll need to put it into the very able collective hands of the working class. Then we can for a start rip the \$194 billion in wealth hoarded by Gina Rinehart, James Packer, the despicable Andrew Forrest, Frank Lowy, Kerry Stokes and the rest of Australia's 200 richest people. That would provide us with funds that are 150 times as much as what the federal government currently gives to the states to spend on affordable housing! Then we can start to build housing for the masses rather than mansions for just a few.



*Opulent Point Piper mansion formerly owned by property developer Ron Medich which he sold for over \$38 million last year. Medich is on trial for the murder of business associate Michael McGurk. Medich is said to have ordered the killing of McGurk allegedly in part because McGurk had a tape of Medich's improper dealings with corrupt figures in the former NSW state ALP government. As corrupt property developers make a killing from organising developments solely according to what is most profitable, the capitalist free market fails to provide anywhere near an adequate supply of housing affordable for the masses.*





*Athens, 12 November 2015: Tens of thousands of Greek workers march during a massive general strike against the austerity policies of the "leftist" Syriza government. The Greek government is implementing cuts to pensions and other social services and large-scale privatisations. Despite calling itself "radical Left", the fact that the Syriza government accepts capitalist state power means that it must necessarily carry out anti-working class policies. Similarly, despite occasional, very soft "Left" rhetoric, the fact that the ALP and Greens accept capitalist rule means that ALP or ALP/Greens governments always serve the big end of town capitalist exploiters. Working class people can only win gains through class struggle against the capitalist ruling class and can only secure a happy future through the eventual overturn of capitalist rule.*

The spectacular advances for public housing in socialistic China point to the potential of a society based on public ownership. One of the reasons China is able to make these advances is that its banks are under public ownership and so are its main construction companies building the public housing. Here in capitalist Australia a lot of the budget for public housing ends up in the pockets of greedy private contractors like that super wealthy firm Spotless which has the contract for repairs.<sup>10</sup>

We have to remember that Red China is making these achievements even while burdened, on the one hand, with a population density 50 times higher than Australia's and, on the other, with the fact that the workers state there is bureaucratically deformed and undermined by a degree of capitalist intrusion. So much more will be possible in a workers state under the rule of democratic workers councils. That is what we need to fight for here and around the world.

Today in crisis-ridden Greece, there is an immediate opportunity to direct events towards the revolutionary construction of a workers state. What is urgently needed right now there is the building of factory committees (that means committees democratically elected by workers on the shop floor) that can begin to take over the

running of factories and other workplaces – in the very first instance those being slated for imminent closure by the bosses. Gradually drawing in wider and wider layers of the downtrodden masses – including the large number of unemployed workers as well as working class youth and pensioners and refugees – these committees can lay the basis for the formation of real workers' soviets – elected working class people's councils – that can begin to vie for power with Greece's capitalist state institutions.

All around the capitalist world we need to advance the class struggle to the stage where the building of such soviets will be posed. A key part of advancing the class struggle in this country is the fight to unshackle the power of our unions by breaking them from the control of the reformist and nationalist ALP. When that happens and when an inevitable crisis of capitalism forces the masses to consider radical solutions, a revolutionary workers party can spur the development of militant organisations of workers. Workers' soviets, that is, that can wrench the power out of the miserly, money-grubbing, bean counting hands of a crumbling, unfair capitalist system and finally deliver public housing – truly public housing – and that means with proper repairs and real respect for tenants – for all who need it.

**“HUMAN RIGHTS” ATTACKS ON SOCIALISTIC NORTH KOREA  
& THE TRADE UNION ROYAL COMMISSION HERE:  
BOTH ARE CAMPAIGNS OF LIES TO “JUSTIFY” ATTACKS ON  
ANYONE STANDING IN THE WAY OF CAPITALIST EXPLOITATION**

# **DOWN WITH THE RIGHT-WING CAMPAIGN OF LIES ABOUT NORTH KOREA!**

**22 August 2015: This month, people around the world marked the 70th anniversary of the two most horrific terror attacks on civilians ever perpetrated in the whole of human history. Seventy years ago the U.S. regime, fully backed by the Australian ruling class, was responsible for the nuclear incineration of the people first of Hiroshima and then of Nagasaki. Yet these very same ruling classes have the hide to wage a campaign against the Democratic Peoples Republic of Korea (DPRK or North Korea) over “human rights.”**

*Democracy in capitalist South Korea? Leftist South Korean parliamentarian Lee Seok-ki shouts as he is escorted into prison by security agents in September 2013. The Unified Progressive Party (UPP) MP was jailed for nine years on bogus charges of inciting a socialist insurrection. Later, the South Korean regime banned the UPP and kicked all its MPs out of parliament. Until it was banned, the UPP was South Korea's third largest parliamentary party with a vote share equivalent to The Greens in Australia.*





Indeed, the DPRK is probably the last country that the Western powers should be raising the issue of “human rights” about. During the 1950-53 Korean War, the U.S. and allied militaries – including those of Australia and South Korea – killed between two to three million North Korean citizens. In the beginning of January 1951, American General Mathew Ridgway ordered the air force to hit the North Korean capital, Pyongyang, “with the goal of burning the city to the ground with incendiary bombs,” which they did in two strikes on January 3 and January 5 (“Consequences of the ‘Forgotten War,’” Bruce Cummings, printed in *Le Monde Diplomatique*, December 2004). Pyongyang and just about every other city in North and Central Korea was again levelled by U.S. bombing in December 1952. Those North Koreans that survived were by then literally living in caves.

Yet the capitalist powers and the big business-owned media that serve them have never shied away from gross hypocrisy and never been bound by the truth. Recall, for one, their now infamous lie that Iraq possessed nuclear weapons. Such lies are spread for a purpose. In the case of the lie about Iraq it was used to justify the 2003 U.S.-led invasion and conquest of that oil-rich country. Here, the Liberal/National Party regime’s lies demonising our trade unions are used to grease the skids for further union-busting attacks and anti-strike laws.

So why are they lying about North Korea then? Because the workers and farmers of North Korea have dared to adopt a socio-political system that is *not* based on capitalist exploitation. The masses of North Korea have dared to insist that they will not subordinate themselves to Western imperialism. For this “crime,” the imperial powers have slated the DPRK for destruction. Their outrageous claims about “appalling human rights abuses” in North Korea are used to justify the ongoing stiff economic sanctions on that country as well as the extreme military pressure that the U.S. and its allies exert on the DPRK. Not only are tens of thousands of U.S. troops stationed in South Korea to threaten the DPRK but U.S. aircraft and warships regularly move in and out of North Korean airspace and waters to amplify this threat. Ultimately, the imperialist

powers see the “human rights” crusade against North Korea as a means of preparing the population in their own countries for a future, full-scale military assault on that country – something that has to date only been stymied by Red China’s alliance with its socialistic sister, the DPRK.

As part of the big lie campaign against the DPRK, the South Korean Consul General in Sydney – in other words the South Korean government – hosted a week of events in Australia from August 17 to August 21 titled “North Korea Human Rights Week.” These events were timed to coincide with the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the liberation of North Korea from Japanese colonial occupation on 15 August. The Sydney Branch of the Australia-DPRK Friendship Society protested outside the Opening Ceremony of this “Human Rights Week” at Sydney City’s main cinema strip near Town Hall station. Participating in the snap protest were several Trotskyist Platform comrades as well as supporters of the Australia-DPRK Friendship Society including one member from the CPA and a representative from the Supporters of the Iranian Peoples Fadaee Gurreillas. Among the placards we carried were signs that read, “Human Rights” Attacks on Socialistic North Korea Are Like the Trade Union Royal Commission Here: A Campaign of Lies Used to Justify Attacks on Organisation/s Standing In the Way of Capitalist Exploitation and “Human Rights” of imperialism = bombing Afghanistan, torture at Guantanamo, killings of Aboriginal people in custody, support for murderous regimes in Egypt, Israel, Philippines and Colombia. How dare they attack socialistic DPRK, China and Cuba over “human rights.” Some passers-by stopped to express sympathy with the protest. Among these were a woman who knew much about the South Korean regime’s jailing of trade unionists and a woman of South Korean origin whose husband was a political activist murdered by the capitalist South Korean regime.

For the brutal, anti-working class South Korean regime to be talking about “human rights” is truly the height of hypocrisy. Yet its attacks on the socialistic North are totally expected. Whilst the DPRK was founded by Korean leftists who heroically fought the Japanese imperialist occupiers



14 November 2015, Seoul: Capitalist South Korea’s brutal police unleash water cannon, pepper spray and tear gas to disperse a 70,000 strong anti-government demonstration of workers and civil rights activists.

and with the vital assistance of the Soviet Red Army freed the Northern part of the peninsula from colonial rule, South Korea was established by the U.S. using many local collaborators with Japanese colonial rule as their henchmen. Among these U.S. henchmen were rich industrialists and big landlords during Japanese rule who defected from the North after the new socialistic power there nationalised industry and divided big landholdings amongst the impoverished poor peasants. Thus for a long time many amongst the Korean masses viewed North Korea as the real Korea and South Korea for what it really was – a U.S.-occupied puppet state. The South Korean regime and its U.S. patrons could only maintain their rule through the most bloody terror and the support of the occupying U.S. military forces.

Against the lies being spread by the South Korean regime and the U.S., British, Japanese and Australian ruling classes, we present here some important facts:

- In the DPRK there is full employment. All workers have a right to work. This does not exist in capitalist South Korea and certainly not in capitalist Australia where greedy bosses feel that they can even get away with sacking workers in strongly unionised workplaces by text message!
- The liberation in the latter part of World War II of the Northern part of Korea from Japanese colonial rule by the Soviet Red Army and communist-led Korean partisans led to the establishment of a workers state in North Korea. This workers state is, however, weakened

by bureaucratic deformations. Thus, although the DPRK defends a pro-working class system based on collective ownership of industry, agriculture and services, the bulk of the working class is kept away from political administration which is in the hands of a relatively narrow bureaucratic layer. There is also a personality cult around leader Kim Jong Un and his late father, previous leader Kim Jong-Il and his deceased grandfather, founding head of the DPRK and former anti-colonial resistance leader, Kim Il Sung. Furthermore, those who form the administrative layer of the DPRK have special material privileges (although these pale in comparison to the extreme wealth of big business owners in capitalist countries). Yet despite these bureaucratic deformations, the existence of a workers state in the Northern part of Korea represents a significant conquest for the international working class. Furthermore, fixing the bureaucratic deformations that weaken the DPRK workers state demands relieving her of the tremendous pressure that is bearing down upon her from the imperialist powers and their South Korean ally.

- Working in a society where workers have guaranteed jobs and are proclaimed as the ruling class means that North Korean workers enjoy a relaxed, friendly work environment. Indeed, if Aussie bosses saw how laid back North Korean workers were and how much they like



to talk to each other whilst working on a production line then they would truly have a fit!

- In contrast to the North, most South Korean workers toil in insecure casual or temporary jobs. Though the trade union movement there has waged many brave struggles for their rights in the face of fierce repression, still workers are forced to work very long hours. In fact, South Korean workers endure amongst the longest working hours in the world<sup>11</sup> and the large number of workers forced to work part-time there means that the statistics, actually, hide the full extent of the reality.
- Despite an industrialised economy, in capitalist South Korea, large numbers of homeless people sleep every day in railway subway tunnels. Many frail elderly people are forced to collect recyclables for petty cash since an aged pension barely exists in this country. In contrast, in North Korea, homelessness is non-existent and all citizens are guaranteed heavily subsidised public housing.
- Despite being devastated in the 1950-53 Korean War, over the following two decades the DPRK built the second most advanced economy in Asia. Up until the late 1960s, the DPRK not only had much better health care, social welfare and education than South Korea but a higher average level of income. At that time, the U.S. decided to massively subsidise South Korean economic development as the U.S. rulers feared that hatred of the South Korean regime and sympathy for the North amongst the South Korean masses would lead to revolution. Thus, South Korea's industrialisation was based on huge U.S. backing as well as cruel exploitation of its own workers.
- Up until the collapse of the USSR in 1991-92, North Korean citizens continued to enjoy a high standard of living. However, the destruction of the USSR had a devastating effect on the DPRK. Faced

with sanctions from the capitalist world, trade and technical exchanges with the former Soviet Union had been the DPRK's economic lifeline. Furthermore, the USSR acted as a guarantor of the DPRK's defence. Now, the DPRK had to provide for its own defence (China's military was, especially at that time, not comparable to the USSR's and incapable of providing the same deterrent to imperialist threats to the DPRK) at a time when the imperial powers felt more emboldened than ever. This forced the DPRK to divert a much larger proportion of its economy to defence which in turn squeezed her economy. A period of serious hardship in the country followed. However, by the start of the 21<sup>st</sup> century this started to turn around and especially over the last few years the DPRK economy has picked up. The military encirclement and the sanctions still hurt the DPRK – for example there is a shortage of fuel and spare parts for machinery and automobiles. Yet the North Korean masses are standing strong much like defiant workers who lose wages whilst on strike. Embarking on the struggle against their enemy brings hardships but they stand firm understanding that victory will open the road to a brighter future.

- In the above sense, North Korean defectors can be compared to weak workers who sneak back to work during a strike because they are looking for short-term economic security at the expense of the long-term well-being of their fellow workers. Some of these defectors, either out of the quest for fame or because of cajoling from the South Korean and Western governments and anti-communist NGOs, have given harrowing tales of life in North Korea. Yet such tales have often been exposed as lies. These included the tales told by the most famous North Korean defector, Yeonmi Park. Her lies were so blatant that even anti-communist news agencies had



*The Australian capitalist regime that attacks the DPRK over "human rights" has overseen the death of over 500 Aboriginal people in state custody since 1980. Some of the more well-known cases of Aboriginal people being outright murdered by racist police or killed as a result of racist treatment while in custody include: Eddie Murray (Top Left) who was killed by police in June 1981 in Wee Waa, northern NSW, within an hour of being arrested (merely for being allegedly drunk); 17 year-old TJ Hickey (Top Right) who in February 2004 was chased by racist police in Redfern who then rammed his bicycle causing him to fly through the air and be impaled on a fence; Mulrunji Doomadgee (Bottom Left) who was barbarically beaten to death by racist police officer Chris Hurley in Palm Island in November*

*2004 and Julieka Dhu (Bottom Right) who while imprisoned in WA's South Hedland watch house in August 2011 was repeatedly denied medical assistance by racist police as she cried out for help. When eventually taken to hospital on two occasions she never got to see a doctor as police lied to hospital staff that, "she was faking it." She eventually died as a result of this torture-like denial of medical assistance 48 hours after being jailed for unpaid fines.*

to report on it.<sup>12</sup> Meanwhile, hundreds of defectors disillusioned with the cut-throat life in the capitalist South with its unemployment and underemployment have, actually, defected back to the North.<sup>13</sup>

- Even despite the hardships that being squeezed by powerful capitalist powers brings, the North Korean masses manage to have their basic needs met. Contrary to the utter lies of the Western mainstream media there is no starvation in North Korea. Indeed, even statistics compiled by Western agencies hostile to the DPRK reveal this. Thus, the list of the percentage of a country's population under the age of five who are underweight due to malnourishment estimated by the CIA – an institution thoroughly hostile to and biased against the DPRK – shows that North Korea is not only **not** among the top ten countries with the highest proportion of malnourished children

but not even in the top 40!<sup>14</sup> Indeed, not only do India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka have much higher rates of malnourished children but so do other strong Western allies like Indonesia, the Philippines and Papua New Guinea.

- Similarly, the UN's World Health Organization estimates life expectancy in the DPRK at 70 years.<sup>15</sup> This is not only decisively higher than in India, Pakistan and PNG but also, actually, slightly higher than in Russia (suffering as Russia is, of course, from the capitalist counter-revolution that dismantled the world's first workers state, the Soviet Union, in 1991) as well as the Philippines.
- Despite the external pressure it faces, the DPRK has completely free health care and education. As a result, the DPRK has one of the highest literacy rates in the world for both women and men and a highly educated population.





North Korean children having fun at a playground near a housing complex. Photo: Trotskyist Platform

- North Koreans enjoy a rich social and cultural life. Peoples' favourite hobbies include sports, dancing and playing music. As in much of Asia, people love karaoke. A recent craze there are amusement parks which have started springing up all over the country.
- North Korea is a sports mad country and you can often see people jogging in the streets, playing in parks or training in the country's many sports pavilions. At the last Olympic Games in London, the DPRK finished 20<sup>th</sup> in the medal tally – punching above its weight for a country of its size.
- Many North Koreans play musical instruments and sing. Classical Korean and classical Western music, light semi-classical Korean tunes and pop music are all popular. The most popular band in North Korea at the moment, the extremely talented, all-female Moranbong Band plays all these styles alongside Western pop pieces.<sup>16</sup>
- In South Korea (the Republic of Korea), the very tough work environment for workers and the cut-throat nature of the capitalist society in general has led to it having the second highest suicide rate in the world.<sup>17</sup> To put this in perspective, the suicide rate in South Korea is more than two and a half times that of Australia's and nearly four times that of the Peoples Republic of China.
- Despite having the hide to attack the DPRK over "human rights," it is South Korea that has an appalling record of crushing the human rights of workers.

The Seoul regime regularly arrests and imprisons trade union activists, including several trade union leaders who were arrested only two months ago.<sup>18</sup>

- Many people are persecuted under South Korea's draconian National Security Law. In 2010 a woman was given a two year jail term for possessing MP3 files of instrumental music that was alleged to have pro-North Korea titles!
- Last December, the South Korean regime banned the country's third largest party in parliament, the left-leaning Unified Progressive Party (UPP), and stripped its MPs of its parliamentary seats.<sup>19</sup> The UPP was accused of organising a pro-North Korea rebellion as the party's actually quite critical attitude to the DPRK is, however, not hard line enough for the South Korean authorities. The UPP had won over two million votes (just over 10% of the total) in the proportional representation side of the last South Korean elections in 2012.
- Capitalist rule in South Korea was consolidated by fanatical right-wing terror. From April 1948 to May 1949, the U.S. military government and their South Korean henchmen killed over 30,000 people on South Korea's Jeju Island after the population rose up following repeated police shootings of pro-communist activists. Even the South Korean regime's own commission – some 60 years after the fact – accepted that at least 20,000 people jailed for participation in the Jeju uprising were later massacred shortly after the outbreak of the Korean War.<sup>20</sup>

Workers at North Korea's Taedongang Tile Plant. North Korea has a relaxed and friendly work environment where at least two people are stationed at assembly line node points that would, in places like Australia or Indonesia, have only one worker doing all the work. Photo: Trotskyist Platform



- More broadly, at the start of the Korean War, the South Korean rulers with the connivance of the U.S and Australia killed communists and those suspected of being communist sympathisers in what was known as the Bodo League massacres. Estimates of the number of people murdered ranged from 100,000 to 1.2 million.<sup>21</sup> For decades in South Korea those who even spoke of these massacres were jailed. Although today South Korea flaunts an image of "democracy" and finally acknowledges, in part, the Bodo League massacres, it remains ruled by a brutal anti-working class regime.<sup>22</sup>
- In May 1980, the South Korean military and police massacred over 2,000 people in the city of Kwangju after leftist students and workers there staged a rebellion demanding an end to martial law and an increase in minimum wages.<sup>23</sup>
- The South Korean regime for decades either pressured or coerced local women to work as "comfort women" prostitutes for stationed American troops. They then stigmatised the women and left them to live in poverty. Over 120 surviving comfort women are now suing the South Korean regime.<sup>24</sup>
- The South Korean regime is far from the only hypocrite amongst those falsely attacking the DPRK over "human rights." So are the rulers of the U.S., Britain, Australia and other Washington allies. In Vietnam, these forces killed over two million Vietnamese people in their cruel but, ultimately, futile and losing war against the heroic Vietnamese

revolutionaries. Over the course of the 1991 First Gulf War attack on Iraq, the subsequent starvation-causing UN sanctions on Iraq and the 2003 invasion and occupation, the U.S., British and Australian regimes caused the death of over one and a half million Iraqi people. In 2001, they invaded Afghanistan to replace the fundamentalist cutthroats that they, themselves, had helped bring to power with a new lot of misogynist tyrants that are, however, even more slavish to them. In the process they bombed Afghanistan back to the stone-age and massacred thousands of civilians in countless "accidental" air strikes on wedding parties and civilian travel convoys. In neighbouring Pakistan, U.S. drone strikes unleashed against the wishes of Pakistan's government kill hundreds upon hundreds of civilians.<sup>25</sup> Meanwhile, four years ago, the NATO imperialists, egged on by the Australian government, violently deposed the then Libyan government. In doing so they not only killed tens of thousands of Libyan people in savage air strikes but turned that once peaceful and affluent country into a nightmarish "failed state" ruled by rival gangs of religious extremists and warlords and caused tens of thousands of Libyans to flee in dangerous boat trips to Europe.

- As part of all these neo-colonial wars of conquest, the U.S. and their allies have used torture to advance their goals. There was the notorious torture of Iraqi political prisoners by the U.S. at Iraq's



People get set for a ride in one of North Korea's many fun parks. Visiting amusement parks is one of the latest crazes in North Korea. You certainly would not know that from the mainstream Western media coverage about North Korea which seeks to do everything possible to demonise the society.

Photo: Trotskyist Platform.



Abu Ghraib prison, NATO's torture in Afghanistan's Bagram Air Base and the ongoing U.S. hellhole prison camp at Guantanamo Bay.

- The Australian capitalist ruling class has perpetrated such atrocities not only as junior partners of the U.S. but sometimes from neo-colonial interventions it has itself led. In the late 1980s, when the people of the PNG-controlled island of Bougainville rose up to resist the terrible destruction of their livelihoods by Australian mining company CRA (this company which operated the huge Panguna mine in Bougainville with callous disregard to the local people later merged with British RTZ to form Rio Tinto), the Australian regime and its PNG government henchmen orchestrated a brutal war and naval blockade against the Bougainville people. As a result 15,000 to 20,000 Bougainville people perished – all for the sake of the profits of Australian capitalist bigwigs.<sup>26</sup>
- Here at home, the Australian rulers who attack the DPRK over “human rights” continue to preside over genocidal attacks on Aboriginal people, including forcibly closing down Aboriginal communities, stripping Aboriginal children from their families and police killings of Aboriginal people in custody. Meanwhile, refugees arriving in this country are thrown into hell-hole offshore detention camps where they face beatings, torture and in some cases murder at the hands of camp guards.
- In the U.S., racist police and white supremacists murder blacks, Asians and Hispanics at an alarming and seemingly ever increasing rate. Meanwhile, the U.S.

has the largest prison population in the world – more than the entire population of Brisbane! The rate of imprisonment in the U.S. is close to four times that of Venezuela and nearly six times that of China.<sup>27</sup>

The truth is that the only “rights” that those waging the anti-DPRK “human rights” campaign are truly concerned about is the right of greedy corporate bigwigs to exploit the toil of working class people and the right of their mouthpieces to propagate the “virtues” of such a system. These rights do not, thankfully, exist in North Korea. And let's keep it that way!

**Defend the DPRK workers state! Down with the right-wing campaign of lies about North Korea! U.S. troops get out of South Korea and Japan! End all sanctions against North Korea! Remove the U.S. troops from Darwin and the U.S. spy facilities at Pine Gap and elsewhere in Australia which are used primarily for furthering U.S.-Australian ruling class threats against the DPRK and the Peoples Republic of China!**

Apart from facilitating attacks on the socialistic DPRK, the lies about the “human rights” situation in the DPRK are used to distract the masses in South Korea, the U.S.A and Australia from the distinct lack of rights that working class people have in their own countries. So we demand: **Repeal South Korea's fascist National Security Law! Revoke the ban on South Korea's Unified Progressive Party! Free all imprisoned trade union activists in South Korea! Free all the refugees in Australia! Down with the police murder of Aboriginal people in state custody in Australia! End the Australian regime's forced closure of remote Aboriginal communities! For the guaranteed right to a full-time job in Australia – just like people enjoy in North Korea!**



## THE TRANSITION FROM SOCIALIST REVOLUTION TO COMMUNISM

*We call ourselves Communists. What is a Communist? Communist is a Latin word. Communis is the Latin for “common”. Communist society is a society in which all things – the land, the factories – are owned in common and the people work in common. That is communism.*

*V.I. Lenin, The Tasks of the Youth Leagues*

## ON THE TASKS OF THE WORKERS STATE IN THE TRANSITION TO EQUALITY AND STATELESS SOCIETY

Greetings Comrades. In our socialist struggle we must prepare for the future struggle and the victory of our working class. The question of *the state* immediately arises and is of fundamental importance in determining our strategy. So what is *the state*? Marxist Leninists assert that, in essence, the state is an apparatus of repression serving the interests of whichever class it is that dominates – that is, rules over – society. This power – this state machine – that arises out of the ruling class' need to oppress their rival class places itself above society and alienates itself more and more from it.<sup>28</sup>



Under capitalist rule, the ruling capitalist class has built up its mighty capitalist state machine – which at its core consists of the police, courts, prisons, legal institutions, army and other bureaucratic institutions – to preserve their class rule over the working class via oppressive means. Therefore, in order to even begin the task of moving towards an egalitarian communist society, the first step for the working class is to overthrow this oppressive capitalist state. If we are to then help guide humanity to communism, we as Marxist Leninists believe it is a fundamental strategic necessity to establish a workers' state after this overthrow of capitalism.

**But what is communism?** Communist society is one where the toiling classes are completely liberated from the yoke of capital, where there is full equality, no classes and, thus, no need for an oppressive state at all. The capitalist system of poverty, unemployment, wars, racism, sexism and homophobia will be no more. People will receive according to their need and give according to their ability. Economic, productive and creative achievement would be at its utmost, fullest potential. There will be no government/state to manage/administer the affairs of the community as the individuals that compose the masses will manage their own community affairs with a self-determined and community-motivated spirit and culture.

Most groups in the Marxist and anarchist Left tend to share this vision of a future communist society. However, there is a controversy between the different tendencies of the left about how we actually get to communism.

The three main left wing tendencies are the social democrats, the anarchists and the communists (Marxist Leninists). The social democrats, even those that truly believe in fighting for socialism, act on the premise that they can reform capitalism into socialism without overturning the current capitalist

state structure. The social democrats deny needing to overthrow the current capitalist state.

In Australia the left wing of social democracy is made up of nominally far-left groups like Socialist Alliance, the Communist Party of Australia, Solidarity and Socialist Alternative. These groups claim adherence to Marxism and Leninism (and even sometimes claim to be revolutionary) but in their daily activities and stances on current political issues tend to promote illusions in the current capitalist state and, specifically, the illusion that pressure can be maintained upon the institutions of the capitalist state in order to successfully force them to play a more progressive role.

In contrast to the social democrats, the best of the anarchists of the Anarcho-Communist and Anarcho-Syndicalist perspective just like Marxist Leninists understand the need to overthrow the capitalist state to open the road to communism. Over the last few years in Sydney, Australia, Trotskyist Platform has been engaged in various united front campaigns with certain militant class-conscious anarchists (who too are quite varied). These campaigns have been various *on the street* struggles such as campaigns against racism and for public housing rights. We have found that some of these anarchists have been very dedicated to oppressed people's struggles and often have been very courageous. Some of the most pro-working class and determined of the anarchists have been in the vanguard of organising important anti-racist actions such as the recent anti-fascist action in Cronulla on the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the horrific white supremacist riot there. Notably, both communists and the best of the anarchists share ideals of a stateless, classless, egalitarian society; we have the same ideological determination to oppose class and racial oppression, capitalism,

poverty, unemployment and homelessness; we share the same hatred of the bourgeois exploiters, of the capitalist state institutions and of the far-right enemies of the working class. However, on the practical and strategic questions of how we achieve revolution and then defend it, Leninists and even the most left-wing and pro-working class of the anarchists fundamentally differ.

In the fight for the revolution Leninists insist that we need to establish a revolutionary workers' party to bring revolutionary consciousness to the masses and lead the revolutionary struggle to a successful

conclusion. Anarchists reject the idea of the workers party. Leninists also insist that after the revolution we require a workers' state which, in the interests of the working class, will defend the revolution and facilitate the progress to communism. However, the anarchists outright reject the need for a workers' state or a party to lead the transition from a workers' revolution to communism. They, unfortunately and quite falsely, believe it is possible to skip to a stateless society immediately after the overturn of capitalist rule.

## A YOUNG REVOLUTIONARY SOCIETY

**After the workers' revolution, the working class will now be the new authority and power. The capitalist state – that machine designed to keep the masses down and the rich in power – will have been thoroughly dismantled and the exploiters heavily defeated. It will be the birth of a new world. But is this the end of the struggle? Do we just lay down our guard and declare that communism has been achieved? Or will we – somewhat more realistically – say that, though it is still distant, communism will eventually and**

**inevitably be achieved without the need for a new workers' state to ensure its progress? Many anarchists do believe this to be the case. Furthermore, can we actually wipe out the power of the capitalists – built up over many centuries – in one go? Especially when, after the socialist revolution, the capitalist rulers still in power around the world would fight tooth and nail to help their deposed capitalist brethren destroy the newly established authority of the revolution? Can we abolish the hundreds of years of capitalist thinking and cultural conditioning overnight? To all these questions, Leninists say “No” and we will explain why below.**

*“Women Workers, Take Up Your Rifles” declares a poster from the early days of the Russian Civil War, circa 1918, calling upon working class women to join the fight against the increasingly foreign-armed enemies of the workers' and peasants' revolution in Russia.*



*Top of previous page: “Beat the Whites with the Red Wedge” Famous Russian Civil War poster. “Whites” was the name given to the capitalist-landlord forces that sought to overthrow the young Soviet workers state. By the great Soviet designer/artist El Lissitzky, this poster was made in the Byelorussian town of Vitebsk and flyposted on its streets in 1920 at the time of the threat of invasion by the forces of bourgeois and landlord Poland. A fusion of Bolshevism's new communist politics and Kasimir Malevich's equally new art movement of Suprematism, it became an almost mythical symbol in the revolutionary struggle, representing as it does the Reds, surrounded by light, stabbing the heart out of the old feudal and capitalist world surrounded by darkness.*



## ECONOMIC CONTROL

**The biggest triumph of the workers' revolution will be the seizure of workplaces, factories, infrastructure, housing and land from the control of the capitalists. Indeed, this is both the beginning and the end of the revolution as more and more of the economy – starting with, most importantly, its commanding heights – becomes collectivised. We must make sure that the means of production – the engine house of any society – are run by the workers and the workers' councils.**

However, this task of seizing the means of production will be resisted not only by the capitalists but also by some petit bourgeois and reactionary layers (which could include small businessmen, supervisors, managers and some of the highly paid technical workers as well as former cops, spies and military officers who would have spent their whole adult life defending capitalist rule)

and even some ordinary workers who are still close to the bosses. Therefore, the task of collectivisation cannot simply be performed by the self-activity of the entire people (even the entire non-capitalist people). It will need to be performed by the defence organs of the revolutionary workers – that is, by a workers' state.

## DEALING WITH THE CAPITALIST CLASS AND COUNTER REVOLUTION



After the October 1917 workers' revolution in Russia, the deposed capitalists and world capitalist powers joined together to organise a bloody civil war to attempt to overthrow the new socialist-based system. Right: Officers from Western imperialist powers meet with representatives of counterrevolutionary Russian leader Alexander Kolchak. Left, March 1920: Troops from the counterrevolutionary Russian White Army march forward.

**We must be on high alert after the workers' revolution for the former exploiters will still have plenty of money, the networks, the connections, the knowledge and the expertise to inflict harm upon the fledgling, socialist society. We can have no doubt about it: these vestiges of the former ruling capitalist class will agitate for a counter-revolution.**

It is exactly for this reason that, immediately after the revolution and defeat of the reactionaries, it is paramount that we are ready to **defend the revolution**. Precisely because they cannot exploit the working class like they used to, the layer of extremely wealthy bourgeoisie, though bruised and dispossessed of a large part of their wealth, will be itching for counter-revolution. Because the bourgeoisie internationally are

very well connected the threat may very well come from abroad. Back at home, the more right wing of the middle classes, wedded as they are to the very idea of private property, as well as many of the former henchmen of the capitalists – including both the armed personnel of the former capitalist state's police and military organs and the capitalists' former workplace enforcers (i.e. higher up managers and foremen) – will also be seeking

ways to undermine the revolution at every turn. This is why the working class must build a workers' state to defend the revolution and suppress a resurgent and desperate capitalist class along with all of its reactionary allies.

The very idea of a socialist or workers' state often comes as a shock to many left-liberals, pacifists and anarchists. Understandably, the word "state" has negative connotations in the context of feudal and capitalist societies. The anarchists are right to regard the state in this present capitalist society as an oppressive bureaucracy and authority that brutally crushes the First Nations people, attacks striking and picketing workers and sponsors troops to fight ruthless capitalist wars abroad. It is absolutely natural that a proletarian or oppressed or exploited person has a healthy hatred of the state and authority in today's capitalist society. However, the future workers' state will embody the living, fighting force of the formerly oppressed and exploited masses and will, inherently, act in a way that is diametrically opposed to the actions of a state set up to serve a rich, capitalist and exploiting ruling class.

We ask the anarchists or the left-liberals: which class will be administering the workers' state? For whose benefit will the

workers' state operate? The proletarian majority or the bourgeois minority? In fact, the socialist workers' state will be nothing like the current capitalist state that we know all too well. In place of arresting picketers and strikers, harassing homeless people, kicking out single mothers who are behind on their rent or oppressing minorities the workers' state will, instead, crush racists and ban hate speech, massively increase public housing, further advance the seizure of empty dwellings owned by the wealthy so that they can be used to house the homeless and needy, organise the economy to ensure full employment and, most importantly, continue socialising and collectivising the means of production. In other words, the working class will be dictating to the overthrown capitalists and their allies via the power of the workers' state. We do not recoil from this word: the workers' state will, indeed, be a *dictatorship* of the proletariat. It will be the liberator of the toiling and oppressed classes and become the primary means of defending the working class from counterrevolution, the conspiracies of the bourgeoisie and all the influence that they can still muster both at home and overseas. Perhaps most importantly of all, it will also serve to facilitate the masses' march towards communism.



From the time that they overturned capitalist rule in the 1917 Russian Revolution, the Soviet working class had to mobilise the forces of armed power to defend their liberation. Right: Founder of the Soviet Red Army, Leon Trotsky, motivates troops in 1918 during the bloody Civil War against insurgent armies attempting to restore capitalist power. Left: Red Army women snipers during the Soviet Union's struggle to defeat capitalist Nazi Germany's invasion during World War II. It is completely unrealistic that a victorious workers' revolution will be able to immediately build a socialist society without constructing a workers' state to defend the toiling masses' conquests against the deposed capitalists seeking to restore their rule and against international capitalist powers determined to destroy any example of a socialist society.





Left, 1966: A Vietnamese communist woman fighter marches a captured American airman through the jungle during the Vietnam war. Right, 2014: Women soldiers in the army of the Vietnamese workers state in training. The founding personnel, traditions and culture of the Vietnamese workers state's organs were, like those of the other workers states in China, Cuba, North Korea and Laos, formed during the heroic liberation struggle against capitalism and imperialism. An important part of these new traditions and culture included placing women's role in society at a much higher level than where it had been during pre-revolutionary times.

## FOR WORLD SOCIALIST REVOLUTION

When a workers' revolution is victorious in one country, attention must soon turn to fellow workers in other lands who may not be as fortunate. They will still be suffering under the capitalist yoke or undergoing the struggle to overturn capitalism. We should, therefore, ensure that we support other socialist revolutions around the globe. The very act of defending the revolution at home will be viewed by the international bourgeoisie as an act of aggression against world capitalism and quite rightly so! Hand in hand with defence – in fact, its very corollary – is the possibility of the workers' state engaging in strategic offensive campaigns.

When supporting international revolution, we will need to demonstrate the utmost respect for the plight and the national aspirations of peoples abroad in order not to frighten the workers of these other nations – especially if they are already living under colonial or neo-colonial oppression – into thinking that we are yet another exploitative or oppressive force. Our main means of solidarity support to struggles overseas will be propaganda and an ideological internationalist perspective. But we must not discount direct military support of international revolutions via

volunteer and professional armies where required to assist the liberation of fellow working class people when they are in the midst of direct revolutionary combat with their capitalist enemies. We need a workers' army and a workers' state not only for the immediate defence of the revolution at home but also to assist revolutions abroad. This is not only in line with our communist ideals of internationalism but, also, essential in guaranteeing the defence of the revolution at home.

## THE MIDDLE CLASS MASSES: FRIENDS OR FOES?

Fighting to support socialist revolutions abroad can be complicated. And the fight to stop the inevitable counterrevolutionary efforts of the overthrown capitalists will be a difficult task. Nevertheless, the methods and strategies required for these tasks are quite clear cut. A much more complicated and nuanced task will be integrating the far more numerous petit bourgeoisie – the so-called *middle* classes – into the new socialist society. What Marxists refer to as the petit (or petty) bourgeoisie is that class of the population who are generally neither exploiters of labour nor wage workers directly exploited by capitalist business owners. Included in this intermediate class are self-employed plumbers, electricians, gardeners, farmers, artists and craftspeople and self-employed grocery, small restaurant, repair shop and hairdresser owners as well as doctors, dentists, accountants and other consultants of various types with their own private practice. Their income may range from that of the very poor to that of the very comfortably well-off. Although not enduring direct exploitation of their labour by capitalists, some of these petit bourgeois layers, to a greater or lesser extent, suffer under the capitalist system – from bullying by the banks, from brutal competition with big monopolies, from the greed of big landlords and the wild economic swings and chaos of the capitalist “free market.” On the other hand, their means of deriving an income induces many petit bourgeois people to have a capitalistic and individualistic *mentality*. Many dream of turning their small, self-employed businesses into bigger businesses that hire and fire exploited labour. That is, they dream of becoming capitalists. Hence, the petit bourgeoisie, both as a class and as individuals, can swing wildly between the two poles of supporting the working class and supporting capitalism. Historically, the proletariat in significant part arose from the dispossessed members of this class who – out of the pure needs of survival – gathered around the lathe and anvil, the loom and production line of modern industry to form a new, proud and powerful class – the proletariat – whose destiny is, indeed, to usher in communism.<sup>29</sup> *During the struggle against capitalist rule, the Marxist strategy is to seek to win over as many of the petit bourgeois to the side of the working class and the struggle for workers' revolution as possible. We will, in particular, appeal to the poorest and most oppressed sections of the petit bourgeoisie while ensuring that their capitalistic and individualistic tendencies do not infect the revolutionary workers or divert them from their ultimate goal of a society based on common ownership of the means of production.*

After the socialist revolution, the ruling working class will seek to maintain the support of those sections of the petit bourgeoisie that did support or, at least, accept the revolution. On the other hand, there will also be some sections of the petit bourgeoisie who will fanatically oppose the revolution, all because of their devotion to private enterprise and their personal closeness to – and even fawning worship of – the big time capitalists. Therefore, after the workers' revolution, the counterrevolutionary efforts of these middle class layers will need to be stopped. Furthermore, to the extent that they remain self-employed people engaged in private enterprise and not employees of socialist *public* enterprises, even many of those petit bourgeois people who accept and even support the revolution will still be infused with a selfish, hustler-type mentality.

This outlook, though essential to surviving the cut and thrust of the daily *dog eat dog* environment of a capitalist economy, becomes outright dangerous to the unity of a collective economy run for everyone's mutual benefit in a society where trust between and kindness towards one's fellow workers is of paramount and vital importance. The petit bourgeoisie's support for the revolution needs to be nurtured and any positive qualities individual members of this intermediary class may possess should be harnessed for the good of the new socialist society. But any tendency towards harmful profiteering, hoarding and speculating from petty bourgeois business people will need to be put under the watchful eye of the revolutionary society and, if necessary, firmly stopped in its tracks. If not checked in time, such dubious economic activity will inevitably corrode the socialist economic sector.



The socialist revolution itself will win many petit bourgeois individuals to a more collectivist, community-minded outlook and later so will the emerging socialist culture of the new revolutionary society. However, as long as those who were petit bourgeois before the revolution remain self-employed business owners afterwards, their economic reality will still push many of them back towards an individualistic, hustler-type view of the world and social relations. This problem is all the more significant because, while the workers' revolution will forcibly seize and collectivise the means of production owned by the big capitalists, it will not forcibly collectivise the business owned by petit bourgeois self-employed people and may not even forcibly nationalise all the business owned by the smallest of the capitalists. This is not for any moral reason or principle – far from it. Rather it is to avoid a massive revolt that could threaten the hard-won revolution. Unlike the relatively few big capitalists, the smallest-scale capitalist exploiters together with the petit bourgeoisie make up a relatively large proportion of the population – in Australia a bit less than 25% of the entire workforce.<sup>30</sup> Therefore, a young revolutionary society will consist of not only masses of revolutionary workers and a tiny number of overthrown big capitalists as well as a small number of their former state and workplace henchmen but also a large number of petit bourgeois individuals, some sympathetic, some hostile to the revolution but most still infected with an attachment to private profiteering and all the social backwardness that this brings (though there will, of course, be some petit bourgeois people who will be able to completely turn their backs on their old outlook and the best of these will even become valuable members of the revolutionary workers' party).

This existence of a large petit bourgeois layer in a young revolutionary workers' society was a major difficulty that the Soviet Union faced in the first decades after the October 1917 Russian Revolution. At the time of the 1917 Revolution, Russia was a backward, mainly agricultural society which, thus, had a relatively small proportion of wage workers and a larger number of self-employed peasant farmers. The peasants were, in fact,

largely sympathetic to the workers-led revolution because it freed them from the burden of having to pay a large proportion of their income/produce as rent to greedy big landowners. However, at the same time, the relatively better off peasants in particular had a strong attachment to private ownership of productive land and were infused with a profiteering, individualistic outlook.

Ultimately, the petit bourgeoisie can only be fully integrated into a socialist society through their gradual evolution into proud employees of socially-owned enterprises – that is, by turning them into proletarians. This will be achieved through a variety of pathways. The society will offer incentives to small self-employed producers – like cheaper credit and free equipment – to amalgamate into bigger and bigger cooperatives and eventually into large scale collectives. In other cases, large, efficient state-owned enterprises will compete with the petit bourgeois small producers while at the same time offering good wages and guaranteed and generous leave entitlements (something that many of the struggling petit bourgeois shopkeepers currently do without) to entice individual producers into becoming employees of these enterprises. The publicly owned enterprises may also offer special incentives for self-employed rivals to sell off their equipment to the public enterprises, abandon their businesses and become well-paid employees of a socialist enterprise instead.

In dealing with small-scale capitalist exploiters of labour – as opposed to those who are strictly petit bourgeois and use no hired labour at all – the revolutionary workers' society will have to use other means at its disposal to make it ultimately more profitable for these people to abandon their businesses and, hopefully, themselves move into well-paid jobs in the socialist sector instead. Today, these small-scale capitalists often exploit their workers with even more ruthlessness than the large scale capitalist monopolies do. After the revolution they will be forced to improve the wages and conditions of their employees and this would gradually drive down their profits. In part, the wages and conditions of their workers would be improved via workers'

state law and regulations. More importantly, their employees would, as the collectivised economic sector develops, be able to find jobs with much better pay and conditions in the socialist sector. This last factor will force the small-scale capitalists to either improve their workers' own conditions or, as is inevitable in the long-run, be themselves swept up in the tide towards the socialist economy.

Although the above carrot and stick measures would entice many petit bourgeois people to happily move into the socialist economic sector, some would be mildly or deeply resentful at being economically compelled to move away from self-ownership of their businesses. Similarly, some amongst the petit bourgeoisie, while being grateful to the revolution for freeing them from the tyranny of capitalist banks, monopolies and big landlords would be unhappy at moves to

curb any profiteering/hoarding/speculative practices on their part. Therefore, all these tasks related to guiding the petit bourgeoisie with a firm but sympathetic hand cannot simply be carried out by the self-activity of the entire population as the petit bourgeoisie, themselves, compose a significant proportion of that population. The job of guiding the petit bourgeoisie will, thus, need to be carried out by a state dominated by the active working class. To be sure, a workers' state would gradually draw in more and more of the petit bourgeois masses into the administration of the state. However, the petit bourgeois class would not have the same representation in the soviet councils as the working class, not until the petit bourgeois individuals, as they are gradually integrated into the collectivised socialist economy, themselves become active constituents of the proletarian ruling class.

## PROLETARIAN DEMOCRACY



*Meeting in Petrograd of the Third All Russia Congress of the Soviets in January 1918 – two and a half months after the Russian Revolution. The Soviet Congress was the highest body of the workers state. It consisted of delegates of workers – and also peasants and soldiers – elected by local grassroots soviets in which the active masses exercised direct political power. The early years after the Russian Revolution saw the workers state administered through this system based on proletarian democracy. Although the system of soviet democracy was strangled by the subsequent bureaucratic degeneration of the USSR, the USSR remained a workers state until it was destroyed by capitalist counterrevolution in 1991-92.*



The proletarian state will be a million times more progressive than the previous capitalist state where only the exploiting few were really represented and the vast majority were simply ruled over. For the first time there will be a state serving the interests of the majority – working class people – not the interests of a tiny few exploiters. Since it will be a state serving the majority of people, a workers’ state will be far less alienated from society as a whole than a capitalist state is.

The revolutionary workers will be directly administering their state via workers’ soviets – which in Australia, Aboriginal workers and Aboriginal activists are destined to play a prominent role in from the get go. These soviets will from the time of their formation prior to the revolution, include not only workers but the most downtrodden layers of the non-worker masses – including the unemployed and low-income single mothers. Over time, the soviets will draw in wider layers of the masses (such as students, pensioners and certain layers of the petty bourgeoisie who have been won over to communist ideals). These workers’ councils or soviets – bodies of organised workers elected democratically – will be the primary voices

determining the tasks of the workers’ state. In a workers’ state, with the key productive centres of capitalism having been taken over by the working masses, the industries and lands that were once run at the behest and for the profit of the rich bourgeoisie will now be under the control of the proletariat and will serve the interests of all of the formerly oppressed sections of society. This is, in essence, the nature of proletarian democracy. For communists, our democracy is about engaging the masses in direct participation of political administration starting from the workplaces. This is not so much a “grassroots” approach as an entire *branch, trunk and roots* engagement of the working people in the running of *their* society. This is in complete contradiction to the way capitalist “democracy” works in a capitalist state where every few years a handful of officials, predictably drawn from the same bourgeois political class, are elected to administer the state and regulate the capitalist economy and whose number one job it is to grease the wheels of capital – a truth that is at best ignored and at worst deceitfully covered up by the social democrats.

## COMBATING CAPITALIST IDEOLOGY

**One of the biggest problems facing a newly formed socialist society and its goal of successfully operating a system based on proletarian democracy is that we begin our long, happy march towards communism handicapped by a certain *cultural deficit*. For centuries the masses have been subjected to capitalist modes of thinking: a middle class type of profiteering, hoarding, speculating and exploiting mentality. In addition, backward, reactionary and divisive religious and nationalist ideologies flourish in competitive man-vs-man capitalist societies. These backward ideologies are also consciously promoted by the exploiters to divide and divert the masses from proletarian consciousness. After hundreds of years of feudal and capitalist thinking pervading our culture, philosophy and even our language itself, one of the major tasks of the new socialist society will be to culturally uplift society. The vanguard of the victorious working class will need to gradually nurture and promote a collectivist spirit and internationalist perspective. For, although the consciousness of the masses would have necessarily surged forward during the revolution (or else there would have been no revolution to speak of!) there will, indeed, still be many people stuck in a very backward mindset.**

Through the fundamental process of the socialisation of the land and industries in the new society and with more and more people engaged in truly productive and rewarding collective labour, a new communist culture will, of course, naturally begin to form in its

embryonic state amongst the masses. In this way, an economic system based on collective ownership and production for the common good becomes the very springboard for creating a new communist society.

However, we quickly come to a *chicken or egg* type of conundrum as the successful operation of collectivised industries itself requires the existence of a collectivised spirit amongst the workers. If we had a small team operating in a collectivised enterprise and individualistic ways persisted in the workplace then this would greatly undermine operational productivity, efficiency and workplace cohesion. Therefore, the new society will need to consciously promote and propagate a collectivist spirit in the masses.

With significant layers still infected with the old capitalist ways of thinking, the population as a whole (and not even the entire non-capitalist population) will not be able to automatically carry out this important job

of instilling in themselves and in society in general an effective, genuine and steadfast communist spirit. It will take a *state under the control of the conscious layers of the working masses* – that is, the revolutionary workers and especially the millions who actively participated in the revolution – to bring all the masses up to communist consciousness. By conducting education within the workplace and schools and through guiding the production of a progressive media and cultural space, the workers’ state will be able to encourage the masses to turn away from the ages old and cynical, individualistic *dog eat dog* mentality toward a friendly, sisterly and brotherly collectivist spirit that is truly fit for a communist future.



Left, August 2008, Beijing: Plainclothes Chinese police drag away the leader of the American-based Christian Defence Coalition, Reverend Patrick Mahoney, as he leads a rally of American bigots opposed to abortion rights in China. After arresting the hardline right-wing activists, the Peoples Republic of China (PRC) police let them go. Good job, PRC workers state police – but maybe next time let these scum rot in jail for a while! The Christian Defence Coalition is an ultra-right wing Christian fundamentalist group specialising in extreme anti-abortion activities, homophobia and opposition to contraception. Mahoney had previously been a co-founder of the militant, anti-abortion group, Operation Rescue, whose members were involved in several terrorist attacks on women seeking abortion in the U.S. and doctors providing the service. Right: Groups like Operation Rescue and the Christian Democratic Coalition either openly celebrated the murder of abortion-providing doctor, George Tiller, or otherwise disgustingly conducted activities to brand Dr Tiller as a mass murderer on his own funeral day. The brave doctor was shot dead in May 2009 in Kansas, U.S.A by a Christian terrorist linked to Operation Rescue.

Already facing the intense military, economic and political pressure of the capitalist powers, the socialistic PRC does not need to have to put up with intrusion from the ultra-right wing of imperialism represented by the likes of the Christian Democratic Coalition and Operation Rescue.





Above, February 2015: NSW Police raid homeless residents camping under a viaduct in Sydney's Wentworth Park. Police cruelly confiscated most of the homeless people's possessions – including tents. In capitalist Australia, the police and other state organs target the most impoverished and exploited layers of the population as well as discriminated against ethnic groups. Aboriginal people in capitalist Australia are incarcerated at a rate that's 13 times that of non-Aboriginal people, while Vietnamese and Afghan-origin people also suffer high rates of imprisonment. In contrast, the Chinese workers state's institutions are toughest on the very rich. Chinese rich lists published by the Hurun magazine are often referred to in China as "fat pig killing lists" for those who appear on the list become targets of outrage from a population and media that hate the greedy tycoons – often prompting the Chinese authorities to investigate these capitalist exploiters. Attempting to downplay the frequent jailing of capitalists soon after they feature in its magazine, Hurun has claimed that "only" 35 of the 3,000 people who have appeared on its rich lists over the last 17 years have been jailed or executed. Yet even this figure represents a rate that is nearly ten times that of the rest of the population. An independent academic study actually found that 17% of the "entrepreneurs" who appeared on China's rich lists between 1999 and 2007 have been either jailed, investigated or executed, even though China's overall rate of imprisonment rate is 40% lower than Australia's and nearly six times lower than the U.S. Below Left, May 2015: Billionaire real estate mogul, Wáng Míng-húa, is arrested by Chinese police for killing giant panda for their fur. In a massive raid, over three hundred members of the Peoples Armed Police raided the property mogul's home looking for evidence. Below Right, November 2015: Xu Xiang, a billionaire owner of an investment firm, dubbed by the Western media as "China's Warren Buffet" is arrested by Red China's police for economic crimes. Chinese police blocked a 35 kilometre bridge for half an hour to facilitate the operation against the greedy hedge fund/private equity operator.



## ROLE OF THE PARTY

Bringing the masses to communist consciousness cannot be done without a revolutionary workers' party. For, although the workers state will be directly administered by workers' councils of millions upon millions of revolutionary workers, all these workers will necessarily have differing levels of consciousness. We need a party that is based upon the most politically energetic and forward thinking layers of the working class. This party will be the source and inspiration for the pursuit of truth and knowledge without which the working class masses who are administering their state will be truly rudderless. Such a party – composed of the revolutionary vanguard of the proletariat – will have the job of guiding the workers and bringing the masses to the most correct theoretical understanding.

After the revolution, the task of the party is to partake in revolutionary cultural education of the masses, unify the working class in industries to further economic building and organise the masses to both defend the revolution at home and carry on the fight for

socialism internationally. The party must also build a communist consensus and carry out education and discussion around the new socialist society, all the while overcoming individualistic mentality in production.

## THE PROBLEM OF PRODUCTION DURING THE TRANSITION PERIOD

**As well as defending the revolution and fighting to spread it internationally, guiding the petit bourgeoisie and combating capitalist ideology, a key challenge for the new society will be the need to increase production.**

Higher production assists in reducing scarcity and petty human-vs-human squabbles. As long as such squabbles exist, the unity required for a communist society cannot be built. Higher economic development also increases the wellbeing, luxury, and convenience of the masses. Crucially, it also helps in securing our revolution. If still existing capitalist countries outperform the socialist state this may lead them to being able to militarily or economically undermine the revolution.

serve the community. These will be people with a socialist ideological and working class consciousness. However, others without this same level of consciousness will require some level of material incentives to spur production. Practical examples of such incentives include extra wages for individuals who work longer hours and higher wages for people to join particular skilled professions where there may be staffing shortages due to work being, for example, more dangerous or because there are currently too few trained professionals in that particular field.

Will the masses rise to the productive tasks required to improve the lives of the community in the new revolutionary society? Under capitalism it is typically only the technical and middle class layers who are motivated to be innovative in production as they hope this will help them climb up the capitalist ladder. For working class people under capitalism the main driving force that makes people productive in their jobs is the fear of sackings by the greedy capitalists which will leave them without a means of survival. How will the masses be motivated to be productive in a socialist society where they are guaranteed jobs and a decent livelihood?

So, in this transition period between workers' revolution and communism, there will be some inequality between different workers. Of course, this inequality is nothing like under capitalism where the main inequality is not between different workers but between all the workers and the capitalist exploiters of workers. Nevertheless, some people in the new, revolutionary society will object to even a limited degree of inequality for, after all, the revolution was made partly in the name of equality. Therefore, it will take a state – a workers' state run by the revolutionary workers – to administer and control this unfortunate albeit socially necessary and transitory inequality.

Some people will be motivated to produce purely out of a sense of responsibility to



We should, however, not be naïve. Even transitory inequality can be dangerous to a revolutionary society. For one, it could give the better paid workers a taste of privilege and thereby encourage in them capitalist restorationist tendencies. It is also potentially corrupting for the workers' state to be defending inequality at all. Therefore, the party must play a key role in explaining to the masses the complex tasks of production in the post-revolutionary society and the vigilance required to be on guard against capitalist restoration. The workers' party must also make extra efforts to unify the masses to ensure that the inevitable degree of division that economic inequality between workers brings is minimised as much as is possible. Furthermore, the more inequality there is in this transitory period, the more the workers' state must be vigilant to crush signs

### WITHERING AWAY OF THE WORKERS STATE

Humanity will awaken to a new future after the socialist revolution.

The backwardness of society that has existed for over a thousand years will start to be radically challenged. But the progress to communism is not an instant task. Communism and the stateless society will need to be facilitated by the workers' state and workers' democratic authority.

What will be the conditions that facilitate the workers' state to actually wither away (because there ceases to be a need for one) and a fully communist society – where there is no state – to emerge?

Firstly, not only must the resistance of the overthrown capitalists be totally defeated to the extent that they no longer attempt to undermine the revolutionary society but there must also be no threat from capitalist restorationist forces from abroad. This, in turn, presupposes that capitalist rule has been overthrown in all the richest and most powerful countries of the world.

Secondly, class differences will need to be eradicated and full equality based on abundance for all will need to be achieved to the extent that we can have the realisation of the ideal: "From each according to her ability, to each according to her need". Achieving this

of any capitalist restorationist tendencies.

As the socialist system enables more and more of the masses to upgrade their skills, and with workers now knowing that their labour and innovative ideas will be used for their own good as well as their comrades' (rather than under capitalism where all their efforts only serve to help their capitalist exploiters get even richer) work itself will become more rewarding and pleasurable. Soon a more advanced communist society will start to remove individualistic tendencies and replace them with a communist motivated spirit where workers are proud that their labour is used to serve the community.

This then helps pave the way for the workers' state itself to wither away as society marches towards communism.

ideal implies that there is growing collective wealth and that resources are so well allocated that the full productive and creative potential of individuals can be harnessed. When class differences and scarcity are eradicated then **the state can wither away because there is no longer a class that needs to be suppressed.**

To fully reach the stage of communism, the inequality that exists between workers in the manual work and the technical realm must also be overcome. In capitalist society, the manual workers often get lower pay and have less opportunities but with socialist rule and development, this inequality and isolation will be gradually removed through massively expanding training and education opportunities for the masses. Everyone will then, in communism, become a highly skilled technical or artistic worker while each and every worker will also do an equal share of the more monotonous and tiring tasks (the number of which will continue to be drastically reduced due to advancing technological and scientific innovations which, under communism, will benefit all workers).

Another essential requirement for reaching communism will be that the old bourgeois traditions be fully eliminated. This will allow

Communism to be realised where individuals that compose the masses manage their own community affairs with a self-determined community motivated spirit and culture *without* the need for a guiding workers' state.

Social democrats and other ignorant apologists for the capitalists don't realise that the capitalist state is an oppressive and freedom-killing institution. The workers' state is the opposite. It does, in fact, call for its own dissolution but only at that point in time when it has succeeded in helping rid society

of backward capitalist traditions and in engaging all the masses in the administration of society to such an extent there is no one left to administer. The role of the councils and the community bodies will then pass over from the administration of people to the administration of things.

This will be the ultimate stage of communist society. It is a future worth fighting for.

**Workers of the world unite!**



November 2011, Above: Workers at the Baida poultry plant in Laverton, Victoria on the picket line during a two-week long strike for job security and against bullying bosses. Left: Baida workers at a picnic to celebrate their victorious struggle. Even today, when workers are in collective struggle, petty rivalries and jealousies and the racial and sexual divisions and oppressions created by capitalist society are to a degree mitigated. This points to how a future communist society will allow all people to live in very warm and happy friendship with each other in a society without oppression or exploitation – and, hence, no need for a state.



## 10 JANUARY 2015: DEFENDERS OF THE SOCIALISTIC DPRK

## SUPPORT THE DPRK SOCCER TEAM AT THE ASIA CUP



From the moment the DPRK soccer team arrived in Sydney for the January 2015 Asia Cup Finals, the capitalist-owned media went all out to demonise the team as highly secretive, repressed and without support. This is part of their general propaganda war against socialistic North Korea. The aim of this campaign is to justify to the Australian masses the Australian ruling class' participation in the relentless imperialist drive to crush the DPRK workers state through military, economic and political pressure.

However, the media narrative took a blow when soccer fans coming to watch North Korea's match against Uzbekistan as well as Sydney public transport users came across a contingent of supporters of the socialistic DPRK coming to support the DPRK team. The contingent – including supporters of Trotskyist Platform, the Australia-DPRK Friendship Society and the Communist Party of Australia – chanted: "D-P-R-K! Workers State is Here to Stay!"



## WHAT STRATEGY IS NEEDED TO COUNTER THE VIOLENT RACIST THREAT? **WORKING CLASS-BASED MASS DIRECT ACTION** vs **LIBERAL/SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC PACIFISM**



Melbourne, April 2015: Fascists (on the left of picture) participating in the ultra-Islamophobic "Reclaim Australia" rally threaten and use violence against anti-racist counter-demonstrators. Fascist forces not only have disgusting views but are people organised to commit violence against Aboriginal people, non-white ethnic communities, leftists and the workers movement. The idea that fascists can be peacefully debated is not a viewpoint based on reality.

**The first "Reclaim Australia" rallies on 4 April 2015 were the biggest open mobilisations of far-right racists in Australia in a long time. With the notable exception of Melbourne, in most places where they rallied on April 4 the racist extremists outnumbered anti-racist counter-protesters. In Sydney, Australia's largest and most multiracial city, the April 4 counter-demonstration was particularly weak. Many long-time anti-fascists did not turn up to the anti-racist counter-rally, organised mainly by the Solidarity group, because the rally leadership's avowed strategy of ruling out any attempt to shut down the white supremacist "Reclaim Australia" mobilisation either positively turned off – or otherwise did not inspire – many staunch anti-fascists.**

When the fascists again rallied in cities throughout Australia on the weekend of July 18/19, anti-racists throughout the country were more determined. A somewhat more purposeful intent shown in the building for the July 19 anti-racist counter-action in Sydney – in comparison with the strategy proclaimed for the earlier April 4 Sydney rally – saw anti-racists this time outnumber the extreme right-wing racists by two to one. However, in Queensland the far-right racist rallies again exceeded in numbers the size of

the counter-demonstrations. Furthermore, again with the partial exception of Melbourne where a determined picket set up by anti-racist counter-protesters blocked some of the fascists from entering their race-hate rally's assembly point, the rednecks were still able to hold their actions unimpeded and turn central parts of major cities into de-facto no-go zones for people with non-white skin. Moreover, the July 18/19 "Reclaim" rallies received more mainstream backing than the previous April 4 mobilisation with one

sitting government MP speaking at a rally and the police even more blatantly siding with the fascists against anti-racist counter-demonstrators.

In the wake of the fascist danger shown by the 4 April 2015 – and then July 18/19 – "Reclaim" rallies there has been much debate amongst leftists and other anti-racists about how best to counter the far-right offensive. This is not a bad thing. Such debates give an opportunity to clarify the strategy that we need to defeat the threat from extreme racists. The lines of these debates focus on several related questions but a key one is whether the goal of counter-demonstrations should be to simply protest against the views of the far-right racists or, on the other hand, should they also seek to physically stop the fascist mobilisations. Amongst those advocating the former perspective – that is, a continuation of the pacifist strategy that the Sydney 4 April 2015 anti-racist rally was built on – are various small-l liberals including many supporters of the Greens as well as the left groups Socialist Alliance and Solidarity. Strongly defending this outlook is also the Communist Party of Australia (CPA). An article in the CPA's *The Guardian* newspaper by Peter Mac, analysing the April 4 racist and anti-racist demonstrations, denounced the Melbourne anti-racist counter-action for being "violent" and continued that:

The likelihood of an eruption of violence was boosted by one group's declaration that the Reclaim Australia rally provided a golden opportunity to shut it down, that 'the neo-Nazis ... must be swept off the streets' and its recommendation to 'drive the violent white supremacists out of stolen Aboriginal land!'

As a result during the Melbourne confrontation Reclaim Australia's chant of 'Aussie, Aussie, Aussie, Oi, Oi, Oi' was met with shouts of 'Fuck off racists' by some of the counter demonstrators, accompanied by spitting, punches and bloodshed on both sides.

"Lessons from Reclaim Australia protests", *The Guardian*, 22 April 2015

The "one group" that the CPA is here attacking happens to be us – Trotskyist Platform. To

properly understand our strategy that the CPA is condemning, one needs to read not just the couple of phrases from our leaflet plucked out by the *The Guardian* but, at the very least, the entire paragraph which we copy below:

It appears that the organisers of the Sydney anti-racist counter-rally want the event to simply challenge the views of 'Reclaim Australia' and expose its racist nature. That is certainly necessary. However, it is far from adequate. What distinguishes the fascists from mainstream racists is that they have a program of using violence to achieve their aim of a 'pure' whites-only society. These are the same groups that helped incite the notorious 2005 Cronulla Beach white supremacist riot. Their neo-Nazi slogans have helped to foment the wave of violent – and sometimes even murderous – attacks on Indian, Chinese, and most recently, Korean students as well as helping to incite the unceasing redneck violence against Aboriginal people. If these white supremacists get away with openly inciting racist hatred on April 4 it will encourage every garden-variety redneck watching to radicalise their racist stance. If such hate parades continue it will be inevitable that we will see here horrific incidents like that which happened in North Carolina last month when three young Muslim American students were murdered in a racist attack. Furthermore, the organised presence of violent white supremacists in the heart of Sydney – no matter if they are interspersed with less extreme racists who they have sucked into their rally – will intimidate and physically endanger the many Muslim and non-white people visiting the area. That is why the 'Reclaim Australia' action must not only be protested against – it must be shut down! The neo-Nazis pulling the strings in organising 'Reclaim Australia' must be swept off the streets. Let's drive violent white supremacists out of stolen Aboriginal land!

"Shutdown the 'Reclaim Australia' Race Hate Rallies", Trotskyist Platform leaflet, 28 March 2015





George Christensen (Centre), an MP from the federal Coalition government, spoke at the 19 July 2015 “Reclaim Australia” racist rally in Mackay. Small-l liberal figures and their social democratic promoters claim that mainstream politicians can be won over to the struggle against far-right racism. But, actually, these politicians are a big part of the reason why the extreme racist forces are growing.

Unfortunately, at this point what was warned against in our leaflet is, for the moment, coming to pass. The white supremacists largely got away with being able to foment their race hate on 4 April 2015 (and indeed on July 18/19) and as a result those unorganised racist bigots sitting at home watching became more radicalised. This has contributed at least in some way to the increase in racist attacks on the streets over the last few months. The one partial exception on April 4 (and also on July 18/19) was Melbourne, where the fascists’ ability to hold their race-hate provocation was at least

challenged by the large counter-rally and some of the racists were blocked from joining their counterparts at their rallying point. Yet, sounding completely like small-l liberals rather than the communists that the CPA proudly claims to be a party of, Peter Mac’s article condemns the “spitting, punches and bloodshed on both sides” thereby equating the determined and laudable anti-racist resistance of many Melbourne anti-“Reclaim” demonstrators with the thuggery of neo-Nazis attempting to crush any obstacle to advancing their violent racist objectives.

### LENIN’S STRATEGY FOR DEFEATING FASCISTS

CPA comrades, as avowed supporters of Lenin’s communist program, should consider the attitude of Lenin’s Bolsheviks to the Russian far-right racists of Lenin’s time, the Black Hundreds. Ardent monarchists, the Black Hundreds were most notorious for perpetrating violent attacks on Jewish people – usually with the connivance and often even the active support of the Tsarist authorities. As well as espousing extreme anti-Semitism, these rabid Russian chauvinists also whipped up hatred against Polish people and opposed any recognition of Ukrainians as a distinct nationality. Like today’s fascists in Australia, the Black Hundreds also staged mass, “patriotic” demonstrations to denounce the influence of non-Christian, ethnic minority, leftist and liberal groups. Yet, unlike the CPA’s newspaper that condemns those taking action to physically impede fascist provocations in Melbourne, Lenin instead condemned those liberals and pacifist leftists who denounced as “reckless” the calls to organise mass, militant self-defence against the Black Hundreds. Thus, when in June 1906 the Black Hundreds perpetrated a horrific pogrom against Jewish people in the town of Belostok (sometimes spelt Bialystok) in the western part of the then Russian empire (in today’s Poland), Lenin wrote:

... there are those who, seeing these phenomena of Russian social life, think, and say, that somebody or other is ‘recklessly’ calling upon the people to resort to ‘extreme measures’! One must

be, not reckless, but a poltroon, politically corrupt, to say such things in the face of events like the burning of the People’s House at Vologda (at the time of the opening of the Duma) or the pogrom in

Belostok (after the Duma had been in session a month). A single event like this will have more effect upon the people than millions of appeals. And to talk about ‘reckless’ appeals is just as hopelessly pedantic and as much a sin of a deadened civic conscience, as to condemn the wild cry for revenge that is going up from the battlefields of Vologda and Belostok.

“The Reaction is Taking to Arms”, V.I. Lenin, June 1906, *Collected Works*, Progress Publishers

The perspective of Lenin’s Bolsheviks to the Russian fascists of their time was thus very far from that of Peter Mac’s attitude to Australia’s Black Hundreds of today. Thus, while Mac speaks of the need to “persuade” Reclaim participants saying that it would be “a grave mistake to assume that Reclaim supporters are incapable of changing their minds,” Lenin’s attitude to those who were inciting and perpetrating physical attacks on ethnic communities and leftists can be summed up by the following call he made to

respond to the Black Hundreds. Lenin called for revolutionaries to:

... at once find out who organises the Black Hundreds and where and how they are organised, and then, without confining themselves to propaganda (which is useful, but inadequate) they must act with armed force, beat up and kill the members of the Black-Hundred gangs, blow up their headquarters, etc., etc.

*Tasks of Revolutionary Army Contingents*, V.I. Lenin, October 1905, *Lenin Collected Works*, Progress Publishers

Although that particular call was written during the height of the 1905 Revolution in Russia when the physical clash between opposing forces was at white heat and thus the specific tactical methods advocated are particular to such a period, the call nevertheless **expressed an overall political perspective completely relevant to “normal times”: that the fascists need to be shut down rather than merely debated.**

### THE CAPITALIST AUTHORITIES ARE NOT ALLIES IN THE STRUGGLE AGAINST FASCISM

Sydney, 19 July 2015: Police brutalise anti-racism activists counter-demonstrating against a rally by the extreme racist “Reclaim Australia” movement. Since police serve the same capitalist ruling class whom the fascists and their race-hate ideology truly serve, they are heavily biased towards supporting the fascists in any standoff with anti-fascists.





Since the CPA stance is representative of that of the whole liberal-pacifist wing of the anti-fascist movement it is worth analysing their strategy further. This strategy is outlined in a favourable assessment that Peter Mac makes of an Adelaide anti-Reclaim protest organiser:

Adelaide pastor Brad Chilcott observed with regard to the public's impression of events: 'Your audience is not the racists you're shouting at, but the people watching at home. ... [But] those watching at home ... couldn't tell the difference between the good guys and the bad. Then politicians have to condemn the violence on both sides, rather than [giving] an undiluted message condemning bigotry.'

"Lessons from Reclaim Australia protests", *The Guardian*, 22 April 2015

So we see that the strategy of the CPA and small-liberals like Chilcott is for anti-racist rallies to be tepid enough to encourage mainstream politicians to condemn bigotry. But it is precisely the policies and statements of the mainstream pro-capitalist politicians that are encouraging the bigots! Barely a week goes by without the right-wing Coalition government heaping a new insult upon Aboriginal and coloured ethnic communities. And barely a week goes by without the ALP Opposition signing onto or otherwise acquiescing to such insults.

How openly the ruling class politicians are contributing to the rise of the fascists was seen when government MP, George Christensen, actually spoke at the 19 July 2015 Reclaim demonstration in Mackay, Queensland. Furthermore, when asked about Christensen's decision to openly support the event, foreign minister Julia Bishop refused to make even the faintest condemnation of Christensen or the "Reclaim" movement, deviously claiming that, "I don't know

anything about the organisation. I certainly haven't been briefed on it." Even before this outrage, the mainstream politicians had already openly pumped up the "Reclaim Australia" forces. Barely a month after the first set of "Reclaim" rallies, the Senate decided to hold an inquiry into halal certification (under the guise of an inquiry into food certification) thereby giving credence to the looney premise of the "Reclaim" fascists that money paid for halal certification is being used to "finance terrorism."

Sorry, Mr Chilcott and the CPA: the mainstream politicians are a big part of the problem and are not and cannot in the future be part of the solution! Indeed, especially after the global capitalist recession that commenced in 2008, ruling politicians around the capitalist world have brought far-right forces more and more into the mainstream. They have done this through adoption of their ideas, through sanctioning of them as "legitimate" voices to be addressed and even – in the cases of Switzerland, Latvia and Ukraine – through their inclusion in coalition governments.

*Melbourne, 18 July 2015: Police viciously attack anti-racism protesters demonstrating against a rally by the far-right Reclaim Australia/United Patriots Front groups. Police did everything to facilitate the rally by the racist violence-inciting fascist groups.*



Here, the same trend is happening and it is driven by, more or less, the same economic reality. As the fall in the prices of iron ore and other commodities (from the exorbitant levels with which Australian mining bosses had previously been ripping off Asian neighbours with) reduces the profits of the Australian capitalist ruling class, they are seeking to make up for this by more viciously exploiting the masses. To enable them to achieve this, the ruling class is seeking to kill off the chance of working class resistance by poisoning mass sentiments with a large dose of nationalism.



*Showing which side they are on! A policeman publicly high-fives a member of the fascist United Patriots Front during their 18 July 2015 race-hate rally in Melbourne. As a core part of the capitalist state, the police in this current system cannot be allies in the anti-fascist struggle but are, instead, a major force impeding the fight against fascism.*

Reflecting worry amongst their working class base, a very small number of ALP politicians have spoken out – albeit mostly quite meekly – against the "Reclaim" movement. Yet, even in the highly unlikely event that mainstream politicians were to do a U-turn and formally stand *en masse* against the fascists that would not do all that much to stop actual violent racist attacks. Any legal measures instituted against the white supremacist thugs would have to be implemented by a police force and court system that has proven itself, time after time, to favour the far-right racists against anti-racists. This was seen all too clearly over the 18/19 July 2015 weekend. In Melbourne, police went all out to ensure that the Reclaim racists and their even more extreme United Patriots Front (UPF) breakaway group could hold their racist-violence manufacturing hate rallies. This included indiscriminately unleashing pepper spray against anti-fascist protesters. Police were so gung-ho about attacking anti-fascists with pepper spray that one of their capsicum spray barrages even hit street medics treating anti-racist protesters who had previously been overcome by the

spray as well as these same victims of the spray who were receiving treatment. A widely circulated photograph showing the police high-fiving a UPF fascist (!) at the Melbourne race-hate rally, quite neatly and horribly captured the essence of the police stance.

Yet, an Editorial in the CPA's *The Guardian* issue just after the July 18/19 events promoted the police as a force against the rise of the fascists. This Editorial stated:

Police, including NSW deputy commissioner Nick Kaldas, are worried about the proliferation of right-wing racist and white supremacist groups.... "The deputy commissioner is on the right track about incidents taking place overseas and those in Australia seeking to take advantage of them.

*The Guardian*, 22 July 2015

This same police force and police leadership that the CPA is praising in its Editorial just days before attacked the Sydney anti-"Reclaim" protest on July 19. Even before the official start time for the anti-fascist event was reached, the police physically and



aggressively dragged anti-racist protesters away from their planned rally point so that the fascists could rally there unimpeded. The NSW police arrested five anti-racist protesters. Meanwhile, they devoted many resources to organising protective escorts for extreme white supremacist groups entering and leaving the "Reclaim" rally. One group of anarchist, anti-racist protesters was, on the other hand, roughed up by police after they left the anti-racist demonstration with at least one anti-racist being hurled by police against a telephone booth.

To be sure, the CPA Editorial did also make some very good points about how the "leadership of this wave of intolerance can be found at the very 'top' of society, including in Australia's parliament" – correct arguments that actually undercut the perspective promoted by Brad Chilcott which was lauded in the earlier article by Peter Mac. However, to promote the police as a force against fascism not only flies in the face of police actions against anti-fascists on the 18/19 July 2015 weekend and the whole ongoing history of racist police terror against Aboriginal people but directly contradicts Lenin's teachings on

the nature of the state. Leninists understand that in a capitalist society, the state – which the police, courts, army and prisons are at the core of – consists of armed bodies of people whose job it is to enforce the rule of the capitalist class over the exploited masses. Thus, the capitalist state organs like the police serve the same class as the fascists do. The police do the daily work of maintaining capitalist rule. The fascists back that up by acting to poison working class unity and intimidating staunch anti-capitalists while the ruling class keeps them as an attack dog on a leash ready to be unleashed when serious threats to capitalist rule emerge. That is why **not only have the police been siding with the fascists in the standoffs with anti-racists over the last period but in the future the capitalists' police can never be an ally in the struggle against fascism. Defeating the growing threat from far-right extremists can only be accomplished through mass, direct action on the streets by the organised working class united with coloured ethnic communities, Aboriginal people and all the other intended victims of the fascists.**

## LEARNING LESSONS FROM THE PAST

**In basing their anti-fascist strategy on the hope that either mainstream capitalist politicians or the capitalist state organs themselves can be pushed into stopping the fascists, the CPA is aping the disastrous policy of the German Social Democratic Party (SPD) in the period leading up to Hitler's Nazis' seizure of power in the early 1930s. Then, as SPD workers and youth began to courageously fight Nazi forces on the streets, the leadership of the SPD, at the time the biggest party based on the German working class, quelled this struggle. They turned the Iron Front for Resistance against Fascism,**

**which the SPD had itself created, into an electoral machine for electing the monarchist capitalist politician Hindenburg whom they hoped would save them from Hitler. The curbing of the struggle to physically stop the fascist forces allowed the Nazis to grow stronger, take physical control of more and more streets and gain much in confidence. Meanwhile, far from saving the SPD from the Nazis, Hindenburg eventually appointed Hitler as chancellor as the mainstream of the ruling class realised that only fascism could save capitalist rule in Germany!**

Unfortunately, the German Communist Party (KPD), which had by then degenerated alongside the bureaucratic degeneration (but not destruction) of the Soviet workers state, also followed a bankrupt approach, albeit from more sincere intentions. The KPD first underestimated the danger of the Nazis and, partly in reaction to the very real anti-working class treachery of the SPD, refused to organise united-front actions with the SPD to oppose the Nazi threat to both their organisations. Later, as Hitler's forces grew stronger, KPD leaders became paralysed and came to see a Nazi triumph as inevitable.

However, Hitler could have been stopped! The murderous beheading of the German workers movement, the Holocaust of Jewish people and the brutality of the Nazi's war on the USSR could have been prevented! What was required at the time was what the Trotskyist Left Opposition was urgently calling for: a united-front of the working class to physically stop the fascists – something which the most conscious workers felt the need for but which was counterpoised to the reformist capitulations of the SPD leaders and which the zig-zagging KPD could not bring itself to fight for. Understanding that the pacifist SPD leaders would always resist and foot drag on such a strategy and that in the long-run fascism could not be defeated without breaking the rank and file supporters of the social democracy away from their sellout leaders and winning them to allegiance to the communist party – Trotsky (following

the program of Lenin's Bolsheviks) outlined that the basis of united front struggle is not only unity in action but complete political independence of the different components of such a front including full freedom to criticise each other's programs.

Right now, Australia is not in immediate danger of a Hitler-style takeover. However, the growing fascist forces are already doing harm to workers' unity and are already perpetrating and inciting the preliminary test-runs of the huge future pogroms that they would like to commit. We need united-front action of the working class right now to physically crush the fascists while they are still crawling out of their eggs.

And that is the point! To tell anti-racists to confine themselves to politely explaining what is wrong with racism in the face of a movement that perpetrates and incites violence is to disarm and damage the anti-racist struggle. It is following the road of the German social democratic leaders who in the lead up to Hitler's seizure of power were saying that so long as the Nazis do not quit the ground of legality, there is no room for an on the streets fight to physically stop them! That is why as part of the struggle to build a working class-based mass movement to sweep the racist filth off the streets, those activists who understand the need for such a perspective must explain to other anti-fascists why a strategy of seeking to pressure the capitalist authorities to act against the right-wing extremists is, as history itself proves, inevitably doomed to fail.

*Opposite page: In September 2010 racist police used the bogus pretext of a noise complaint to brutalise Aboriginal woman, Tisha Hickey, at the end of her own 21st birthday party. The violent police attack caused bruises and cuts to her leg, arms and abdomen. Tisha is a relative of TJ Hickey, the 17 year-old Aboriginal youth who was killed by racist police in Redfern in February 2004. Since TJ's murder, police have used violence and harassment to persecute his family and relatives for their refusal to give up the fight for justice for TJ. The official violence of the police, detention centre guards and spy agencies emboldens the violent far-right racist groups.*





TEN YEARS ON AFTER THE *FILTHY, VIOLENT WHITE SUPREMACIST RIOT*  
TRADE UNIONISTS, ETHNIC PEOPLE & ALL  
ANTI-RACISTS MUST UNITE TO  
**OPEN UP CRONULLA**  
**BEACH TO PEOPLE OF COLOUR!**  
**KICK THE RACISTS OUT!**



13 December 2015: Ten years ago, hordes of extreme white supremacists and garden-variety rednecks rampaged through the area around Cronulla Beach bashing any non-white person they could find. However yesterday, the loudest, most prominent demonstration in Cronulla was a 150-strong march of anti-racists. They opposed a gathering of extreme white supremacists who ended up having to confine their race-hate event to an isolated park out of sight of most people. Unlike ten years earlier in Cronulla, at least in the vicinity of the anti-racist demonstration, it was more dangerous to be an open racist than a coloured person. The few racist provocateurs who were foolish enough to infiltrate the space occupied by the anti-racists were surrounded and confronted by militant anti-fascists and at least one fascist was dealt with in a decisive fashion. The message for racists watching on television is that you had better be careful about openly acting on your prejudices or getting active with far-right groups because you could meet militant opposition.

Despite weaknesses, and the all too predictable hostility to the action by the capitalist media, the anti-racist mobilisation was overall a partial victory against far-right racists. Nevertheless, the fascist Party For Freedom were still able to get away with holding their racist gathering – an “anti-Halal BBQ.” The racist gathering was three times smaller than the anti-racist mobilisation. Despite being formally banned by the courts from holding a planned rally to celebrate the 2005 Cronulla riot, the event held by the Party For Freedom and their allies was protected by a massive mobilisation of heavily-armed riot police. In facilitating the extreme racists’ gathering, the police adopted heavy-handed tactics towards anti-racist demonstrators. They arrested two anti-racist activists, although neither of the arrestees was charged. One of those arrested was a one-

armed Aboriginal activist in his late 50s, who the police had earlier knocked to the ground when he tried to go around the police lines to get at the fascists. This underscores the need for the mobilisation of the working class in the struggle against fascism. It is the social power of the working class that can compel the police to stand aside so that the fascists can be swept off the streets.

Participating in yesterday’s anti-racist action were student activists from Sydney University, anarchists, supporters of Socialist Alternative, Aboriginal activists and Trotskyist Platform supporters. A weakness of the mobilisation was that it was not able to win many newer people into the anti-racist struggle – that is individuals not connected to any of the activists circles involved in organising the demonstration. Furthermore,



12 December 2015: Anti-fascists on the march at an anti-racist action on Cronulla on the tenth anniversary of the white supremacist riot there.

other than for several Aboriginal activists, the coloured people in our Trotskyist Platform contingent and a handful of other coloured people, there were not that many non-white people taking part in the anti-racist action. The combined effect of the intensely racist and repressive political climate in the wake of the Paris attacks and coloured peoples understandable fear of going to Cronulla in the absence of the guaranteed backing of a mass trade union mobilisation, kept coloured people from Sydney’s southwest largely away from the event.

In the lead up to yesterday’s rally, Trotskyist Platform emphasised the need to bring a large number of working class coloured people into Cronulla as part of a multi-racial action to challenge the defacto exclusion of most working class, coloured people from Cronulla Beach over the last ten years. The need for such an action was plainly obvious yesterday. Before the 2005 racist riot, Cronulla Beach had been Sydney’s most multi-racial beach.

However, when we were there yesterday, the area in and around the beach, including major restaurants in the area, were close to 95% white. Furthermore, when our multi-racial contingent got out of our cars in Cronulla to meet up with other anti-racist activists and when we at that stage looked like ordinary beachgoers, we received hostile stares from both people driving past and people looking out of their houses just because coloured people formed a major part of our crowd.

At one point yesterday, a sizeable minority of the anti-racist demonstration flooded onto a part of the beach to make a statement. However, most of the remainder of the rally had not yet been won to an understanding of the necessity of desegregating the beach. Furthermore, there was not a high enough proportion of coloured people in the anti-racist demonstration for its presence on the beach to represent a serious challenge to the defacto exclusion from the area of working class, coloured people from Sydney’s



southwest – who the recent ex-mayor of Sutherland Shire and racist rednecks alike refer to as “thugs from Lakemba.” To make an effective stance against the de-facto exclusion of most coloured youth from Cronulla Beach, we need an action in the future that brings in such a large number of working class, coloured people that it exceeds what is considered an acceptable token level by the conservative Shire Council and garden-variety racist locals. Such a “threatening” mobilisation of coloured people from Sydney’s southwest together with white anti-racist activists and the power of the trade union movement

would be a powerful statement against both the on-going segregation of Cronulla Beach and the wave of racist attacks that non-white people are facing throughout the country. If the working class movement was to play a major role in such a future mass action that opens up Cronulla Beach to people of all colours, it would boost working class inter-ethnic unity and strengthen the workers movement’s confidence in its own power.

*Below is the leaflet that Trotskyist Platform distributed at yesterday’s action which outlined this perspective.*



*Left, December 2005: Hordes of rednecks bash any coloured or other “ethnic” person they could find on Cronulla Beach and surrounding area. Ten years later (Right), it was militant anti-fascists who formed the loudest, most prominent demonstration in the area. The opposite of ten years earlier, it was any racist filth who were present near the Beach who would have felt the most intimidated, at least if they were within the area near the anti-racist march route.*

**12 December 2015** – Today, brave people of all colours will take a stand against racism on the shameful anniversary of the racist riot on Cronulla Beach. Ten years ago in Cronulla thousands of racists savagely rampaged against people of Middle Eastern and South Asian backgrounds and, indeed, against anyone *without white skin*. **An Aboriginal youth and many people of Afghan, Bangladeshi, Iranian and Lebanese background were amongst those brutally bashed.** The riot was always meant to target all coloured people: it was openly built as “L\_b and W\_g bashing day.” The disgusting radio shock jocks, like Alan Jones, who promoted the racist riot ranted *especially* against “Lebanese Muslims.” During the riot, at least one woman who was wearing Islamic head dress had her headscarf pulled off as she fled violent attackers. However, people from all religious backgrounds were attacked

if they did not appear White enough. **Thus, among those physically attacked was at least one boy of Jewish heritage and one girl of Greek background.**

The riot incited copy-cat attacks in the weeks and months that followed. From the Gold Coast to Melbourne there were individual attacks on coloured people at other beaches. At the time, one fascist website boasted: “The last two months have done more for Australian nationalism than the last ten years combined.” Six weeks after the riot, a middle-aged Sudanese man was brutally bashed by white racists at Seven Hills shopping centre in Sydney’s West. The following week another Sudanese man, this time in his 20s, was hospitalised after being attacked by racists in the same shopping centre. In Rockhampton, Queensland on “Australia Day” – just a month and a half after the Cronulla riot – a gang of rednecks went

around in two cars with air rifles shooting *specifically* at Aboriginal people (*Koori Mail*, 1 February 2006). Among those shot was a thirteen year-old boy. The Aboriginal youth had to be operated on to remove an air gun pellet just millimetres from one of his lungs. Further south in Toowoomba, the house where Sudanese refugee Khamisa Abui and her seven children were living was firebombed by neo-Nazis (*The Courier Mail*, 28 April 2006).

Nevertheless, today’s anti-racist mobilisation in Cronulla is not about the past – **it is about the present and the future.** Since the 2005 white supremacist riot, racist violence against people of colour in Australia has actually increased. In 2009, racist attacks on Indian, Chinese and other Asian students residing in Australia reached such a high level that it made media headlines and provoked international outrage. Such attacks continue today. Over the last 18 months the number of racist attacks has surged. Discriminatory government policies and draconian repression in the name of “fighting terrorism” have all helped to create a dangerous racist climate – a climate that nurtures racist violence and abuse on the streets.

Some people who sincerely do not like racism want to put their head in the sand and say we should just forget about Cronulla and “move on.” But the lasting effect of the riot in Cronulla is encouraging racist forces all over Australia *right at this very moment!* Although Cronulla is a heavily Anglo’ area by composition, prior to the riot the beach itself used to be a very multi-racial spot. It was Sydney’s only major beach with a train station near it and could easily be accessed by car from Sydney’s multi-racial Southwest without having to pass through city traffic. However, since the riot, the number of non-white people going to Cronulla Beach has greatly diminished. Especially given the heightened racism throughout Australian society, people of colour are, understandably, fearful of going there. Those who do venture there have sometimes copped hostile stares or verbal abuse. As a result many people from Middle Eastern, Asian and African backgrounds are forced to go either further south to beaches near or in Wollongong or north to beaches

like Brighton- Le-Sands. As the leader of the despicable fascist Party for Freedom, Nick Folkes, put it: “What happened 10 years ago protected [Cronulla] ... they haven’t had gangs [*read people of colour hanging out in groups with friends*] coming in.” That the riot has “achieved” such an on-going, de-facto “ethnic cleansing” of Cronulla Beach is a huge source of “inspiration” for neo-Nazis and other violent racist groups – outfits that have been increasingly active over the last year. The Cronulla riot is their ideal! That is why one fascist group, the Party for Freedom, has planned to hold a rally celebrating the riot while a rival neo-Nazi outfit, the Australia First Party (which actually helped incite the Cronulla riot itself) has vowed to effect flash mob provocations on the beach. More importantly, the fact that the riot’s effect has never been undone is one of the things that is giving confidence to bigots nationwide to harass and assault Asian and African people on public transport, bash coloured people on the streets and intimidate Muslim women wearing headscarves.

This is why Trotskyist Platform argues that today’s anti-racist mobilisation must have a perspective of not just opposing the far-right groups that plan to celebrate the riot but of *enforcing the right of coloured people to use the beach safely*. Our aim should be to bring a multiracial crowd of people, especially including a large number of people of colour, into the heart of Cronulla Beach and enforce their right to use it without intimidation or abuse. This was how black and white activists in the early 1960s Freedom Rides in the U.S.A sat together in bus terminal restrooms and waiting rooms (and later also restaurants and hotels) that were reserved exclusively for white people. We need a perspective of organising large numbers of coloured activists to unite with white activists and make a point of using Cronulla Beach together to *break open* the *de facto* restriction, effectively a system of apartheid in all but name, on the number of coloured people using the area. This will be the opposite of what happened ten years ago: it should be anyone who intimidates or makes people with dark skin feel unwelcome who should be kicked off the beach. **Violent white supremacists have no place on stolen Black land.**



If this perspective of de-segregating Cronulla Beach can be realised it will send a message to racists everywhere that their attacks will be defeated. Whether it is sensible to attempt to realise this perspective today will depend on how strong the forces are that have been mobilised for today's anti-racist gathering.

## RELY ON THE MULTIRACIAL WORKING CLASS MASSES NOT THE CAPITALIST STATE

The Greens and some small-l liberal anti-racists have opposed any anti-racist mobilisation in Cronulla today using the argument that such a mobilisation will incite the extreme racists. However, far-right racists have for a long time now planned an event in Cronulla to commemorate the riot's tenth anniversary, specifically with the hope of actually sparking a new riot. What is *actually igniting the flames of extreme racism* is the vilification of Muslims by the mainstream media, the brutality at the hands of sadistic detention centre guards against refugees imprisoned in the hellholes of Christmas Island and Nauru and the ongoing state repression against Muslims and Aboriginal people. The fascist inferno, once ignited, is then able to grow because the fascists and the government racist policies that fuel them have not been combated powerfully enough. Allowing the flames of fascism to burn unimpeded will only allow new fuel sources to combust in their turn and the racist bonfire will become larger and more menacing. Those who advocate a so-called 'pacifist' perspective, unfortunately regardless of their intentions, are actually assisting the spread of far-right extremism.

Small-l liberals, social democrats and Greens also say that we should leave it to the police, courts and governments to stop the extreme racists on the day of the Cronulla riot anniversary. But let's look at how the police and courts actually responded to the Cronulla riot itself and the racist attacks that it incited. Consider the amount of forces that the police mobilised for the expected mass white supremacist rally on that day in December 2005. Police knew very well in advance that the racist rally was going to be big and very likely turn violent. Yet, by their own admission, they only deployed 92 police

The intensity of the vilification of Muslims by right-wing politicians and the climate of repression since the Paris terror attacks does intimidate many *would be* anti-racist activists. But it is still possible that we may end up with sufficient forces today to open up Cronulla Beach to people of colour:

in Cronulla on the day of the riot (*Cronulla Riots, Review of the Police Response, Report and Recommendations* by Strike Force Neil). To put this in perspective, on 8 February 1990 when police raided the Aboriginal community on The Block in Redfern to bring eight minor charges against people – charges like unpaid fines, being drunk on a train six years earlier and alleged possession of small stolen goods – they deployed 135 cops. *Just think about it:* police mobilised one and a half times as many cops to arrest Aboriginal people for allegedly doing things like stealing an electric shaver and a pair of goggles as they did to stop an impending violent rampage by thousands of howling white supremacist thugs! This is not an issue of police incompetence or miscalculation. For the police and government, subjugating Aboriginal people is very important while stopping extreme racist violence is not a high priority at all. As for the courts in the hallowed halls of the bourgeoisie's much vaunted 'justice' system, in the aftermath of the riots those violent white supremacists who were arrested received relatively light sentences. This only served to encourage racist attacks throughout the country. Meanwhile, with great fanfare in the weeks following the riots, then NSW ALP premier Morris Iemma actually **legitimised the rednecks** by establishing the Middle Eastern Organised Crime Squad which, as its name makes no effort to hide, openly targets people based on their ethnicity – the same ethnic group that were, actually, the main victims of the horrific racist riot!

The behaviour of the police, courts and government during and after the Cronulla riot was no aberration. Police and prison guards throughout Australia have killed large numbers of Aboriginal people in and



On the day of the December 2005 Cronulla riot the police forces present were strikingly minimal even though the police's own intelligence made clear to them that a large, explosive rate hate mobilisation would occur. Yet when anti-racists mobilised ten years later, the police were unleashed in massive numbers to corral the anti-racist demonstrators (Left) and to protect the violent racists who had gathered to celebrate the December 2005 riot. The police even in a very cowardly manner arrested a one-armed Aboriginal man in his late 50s (Right) – one of two anti-racists that they arrested on the day.

out of state custody and are notorious for harassing coloured "ethnic" youth in Sydney's working class suburbs. The courts have legitimised and covered up for all these atrocities. Governments of all stripes have been brutally attacking refugees, demonizing Muslim people and seeking to forcibly close down Aboriginal communities. The right-wing Liberal/Nationals are the most unashamed about their racist policies but these policies – including the mandatory detention of refugees and racist anti-terror laws – have been upheld and even sometimes introduced by Labor and Labor-Greens coalition governments alike.

The racist nature of the Australian police and courts arises from these institutions' essence as central organs of a capitalist state that was created – and is maintained – for enforcing the rule of a capitalist exploiting class over working class people. The capitalist exploiters must continue to divide ordinary people with racism in order to continue to maintain their rule over a disunited populace. The state organs that enforce capitalist rule – like the police and courts – are, necessarily, in the forefront of this business of inciting and actually carrying out racist attacks. Governments under capitalist rule, no matter who its individual personnel are, administer this racist, rich people's state.

We should have absolutely no reliance on the government, police and other capitalist state organs to stop racist attacks. We should, instead, **seek to mobilise the masses** –

**and in particular the organised working class. The working class has a very real interest in opposing racist attacks because racism means division and division means not being able to stand united and strong against greedy bosses.** Today, the government, the police and the courts are trying to jail two CFMEU construction worker union officials for having stood up staunchly for workers' rights – all as a means to intimidate workers' struggle in general. So, today, building workers' unity through positively mobilising against racist attacks is *especially* imperative for the trade union movement. In fact, the potential for mobilising the working class against the extreme racist threat was seen in Brisbane on May 2 last year when a hundred rank and file construction worker trade unionists were at the forefront of an action that actually drove a rally by the openly fascist Australia First Party right off the streets of Brisbane. Such heroic, working class struggle is simply demobilised if anti-racist workers get conned into believing that they can leave it up to the organs of the capitalist state to oppose racism. On the other hand, to witness the power of a group of multiethnic workers standing united together against a common racist enemy and succeeding in their struggle, as happened on that day in Brisbane, is a truly remarkable, powerful and inspirational experience.

True opponents of racism should also not be fooled by the moves of the Sutherland Shire



Council and the NSW police to try and stop the Party for Freedom (PFF) from rallying in Cronulla today. For starters, even without a permit the PFF may well go ahead and hold their demonstration anyway. After all, the white supremacists didn't need a permit to perpetrate the Cronulla riot in the first place. Furthermore, it's clear that the police and government *usually* have no objection to fascists holding rallies. In fact, the cops have recently excelled themselves in actively facilitating rallies organised by the hardline racist Reclaim Australia movement, right up to the extent of violently attacking anti-fascist counter-demonstrators. If, through the actions of the courts, the state does stop this particular fascist demonstration, it will only be a hollow victory for the anti-racist movement. One far-right racist provocation may be to some extent thwarted, and of course we do not oppose this, but it will, in the long run, sow dangerous illusions in the state and demobilise the mass action needed to stop the fascists for good. A determined, mass action of anti-racist people of all colours, led by the united and proud, multiracial organised working class of Australia, is what really has the potential to truly land decisive blows against the fascist thugs.

Therefore, it is important we understand why in this particular case the government, local council and police are, ostensibly, reluctant to see a far-right rally commemorate the anniversary of the Cronulla riot. The main reason is that such a demonstration would give Cronulla and Australia a bad name. Yet, these state organs are equally intent on stopping any anti-racist protest in Cronulla for that would, too, draw attention to the ongoing intense racism in Cronulla and Australia more generally. The Sutherland Shire Council doesn't want such attention since it would mean that businesses in the area would lose potential customers. Australia's capitalist rulers, meanwhile, want to maintain a "good image" internationally because that helps them, under the guise of "human rights," to politically and militarily meddle in other countries' affairs – all the better to advance the interests of greedy, Australian-owned "multinational" corporations. We must not assist them in their predatory ambitions. Let

the world know the truth about the intense racism suffered here in capitalist Australia!

Even while the local government wants a better reputation and, hence, more visitors and business for Cronulla, still they want to keep the number of coloured youth from working class suburbs visiting the area down to a minimum token level. This hostility to working class, coloured youth can be seen in the recent ex-Mayor of Sutherland Shire Kent Johns' comments where, alongside correctly pointing the finger at the neo-Nazis, he put the blame for the Cronulla riot, in the first place, upon "heaps of thugs from Lakemba" (*The Australian*, 12 August 2015). This is a complete re-writing of history that quite disgustingly blames the victims of the racist violence – the so-called "thugs" [i.e. coloured working class youth] from Lakemba – for the riot. It is apparent that Sutherland Shire Council just want to keep the status quo that has existed since December 2005: neo-Nazis kept on the leash and forced to drag their feet somewhat as anything else would bring too much attention upon the racism inherent in Cronulla while, at the same time, non-white "ethnic" and, especially, young people from Sydney's working class Southwest are, for the most part, kept away from the area. This all stinks of the purely racist and upper class prejudice wafting from the chambers of the largely Liberal Party- controlled local council. However, it also reflects councillors' connections to property developers and property holders in general. Due to the racist and class prejudice of many of Australia's upper middle class home buyers and investors, higher property prices can be obtained if an area does not have coloured working class youth wandering around, enjoying the sun. In fact, the current mayor of Sutherland Shire Council, Carmelo Pesce, himself owns four homes and two shops in the shire as well as a business connected to the building trades – i.e. connected to property developers. Both his property investments and his business thus stand to gain higher value by ensuring that Cronulla limits the amount of working class, coloured youth in the area. Similarly, deputy mayor Hassan Awada has a property development background. The fact that he is of Lebanese Muslim background is of little consequence – this capitalist, Liberal party councillor is

guided first and foremost by the interests of his class which are, naturally, also his direct material interests.

That is why only stopping the planned Cronulla action by the fascist PFF, while it would be a useful victory, is far from sufficient unless it is melded together with a wider perspective of ending, once and for all,

## THE STRUGGLE TO DEFEAT FASCISM IS THE STRUGGLE TO DEFEAT CAPITALISM

Of course, the threat from fascists is indeed a serious one. As the capitalist system continues its inevitable process of decay and dissolution, while it produces hardships and insecurity for many, the capitalist rulers use racism to divide and divert the attention of the masses of people from the real culprits responsible for their troubles. Mainstream racist policies, in turn, fuel the growth of the fascists. Terror attacks by reactionary fundamentalist groups falsely taking up the mantle of Islam (and which were themselves at one time built up by the Western capitalist powers) have aided capitalist governments and their fascist compadres to whip up racist fears. The horrific actions of ISIS and Al Qaeda then provide a pretext for further intervention by capitalist powers in the oil-rich Middle East as well as in Asia and Africa – intervention that is ultimately not aimed at fighting terrorism but, as in time immemorial, at advancing imperialist exploitation. To justify such intervention, the imperialist rulers need to further engender nationalist arrogance. The nationalist *hoopla* that the Australian capitalist rulers have created to accompany their participation in the imperialist bombing of Syria and Iraq has made the racist climate here even more severe and incendiary.

Such is the cycle of capitalist decay, racism, imperialist intervention, terror attacks and yet more imperialist intervention and racism that the capitalist world is now swirling and seemingly stuck in. Right now, in every world power where Muslims are in a minority – with the exception of socialistic China – we are seeing the mainstream media and politicians engage in racist vilification of Muslims. And in every world power – again with the important exception of socialistic China – far-right racist

the *de facto* exclusion of most working class, coloured youth from the area. Let's not play into hands of the mainstream right-wing forces who don't want to be embarrassed by uncouth, far-right groups but, nevertheless, are entirely wedded to the "ethnic cleansing" effects of the racist riot that these far-right groups incited.

forces are gaining in strength. In the recent French regional elections, the fascist National Front topped the vote count. And throughout Europe and America, the number of violent attacks by white supremacist gangs has increased. In Australia, where the mainstream is already itself so racist, the far-right forces are not yet as strong as they are elsewhere but have, nevertheless, grown noticeably in the last 18 months.

Some pacifist Left groups that oppose the idea of an action committed to physically stopping the fascists argue that we need to defeat the far-right *indirectly*, that is by combating the racist government policies that encourage the growth of fascism rather than by confronting the fascists themselves directly on the streets. However, does there need to be a choice to make between these two approaches. We need to mobilise against racist government policies *and* we also need to physically stop dangerous fascist provocations. Every time the extreme white supremacists get away with openly inciting racist hatred on the very streets of our cities and towns, it encourages every garden-variety redneck who is watching from the sidelines or out there in TV and radio land to, likewise, radicalise their racist stance. That means more racist attacks on people of colour on the streets, in public transport, in school yards and in nightspots. We need consistent and consolidated mass mobilisations of trade unionists united with Aboriginal people, coloured "ethnic" communities and anti-racists of all backgrounds *right now* to drive the fascists off the streets and shut down all the "Reclaim Australia" race-hate rallies. The same united forces – proud workers standing shoulder to shoulder with their even prouder Aboriginal sisters and brothers and all of the





*Taking the Beach: A chunk of the demonstrators at the 12 December 2015 anti-racist action in Cronulla jumped down rocks to symbolically stand on part of the beach where ten years earlier it was racist hordes who violently rampaged and where since the riot the number of coloured people using the beach has drastically diminished. A task remains for the workers movement and Left to build a mass convoy of trade unionists, coloured people and anti-racists to go from Sydney's multiracial, working class southwest to Cronulla Beach to assert the right of people of all colours to safely use this public space and to finally re-open the beach to coloured people. One of the Trotskyist Platform banners carried at the December 2015 demonstration (Left) advocated this perspective.*

oppressed – need to mobilise *now* to oppose racist anti-terror laws, to demand freedom for the refugees and full rights of citizenship for all asylum seekers, immigrants, international students and “guest workers.” **The struggle against racist attacks must be connected to a struggle to unleash a class struggle fight against the unemployment, casualization of jobs and cuts to social services that cause some all too misguided souls to seek salvation in radical racist so-called “solutions.”** As part of building such a class-struggle fightback we must also put shoulders to the wheel within our unions and replace the current pro-ALP politics that leads the union movement with a militant class struggle and internationalist perspective.

Let's decisively defeat the ever looming threat of fascism and liberate so many of our sisters and brothers in Australia who daily face racist attacks and humiliations. And let's finally begin the great work of overturning the capitalist system itself that stirs the racist pot for the sake of profit. The working class leading all of the oppressed must sweep away the capitalist state. It is a thieving, brutal and murderous state that raised its flag of *terra nullius* over this land during the British colonial takeover and which some two hundred years later continues to crack its whip over the backs of workers, immigrant communities of Asian and Middle Eastern background and indigenous people alike. In the capitalist state one class of people – the relatively small number of *bourgeoise* – have the license to amass a fortune and build their pyramids of power using the surplus labour of so many. This *privilege to exploit* is, ultimately,

enforced by the power of the gun hanging off the hip of the police officer and the grenade in the bloody hands of the soldier. The workers state that we will one day build will ruthlessly crush the neo-Nazi threat in the process of tearing up the very roots of the capitalist state from which their foul fascist kind has grown. Moreover, in a socialist economy based on collective ownership, all of those machines and computerized systems of communication, all the big banks and mighty industries, all of the incredible *means of production* wrought by the common effort of the many hands and minds of 21st century humanity, all of this extraordinary productive power will be held in trust by the working class and used for the benefit of everyone in society. An Australian workers state will unite people together, not tear them apart like the capitalist state does today, as all will share a common economic interest, an interest in steering *their* ship of state into the calmer waters of a world free of racism, unemployment, poverty and war. A world which will one day only need to follow, as Karl Marx famously suggested, one simple rule: “From each according to their ability, to each according to their need.” (*Critique of the Gotha Program*, Marx K., 1875) Let's fight for this future world *now* by relying on the unassailable power of the working class and its allies in every progressive struggle that we are forced to face. Let's advance working class people's confidence in their own power by building a joint action of trade unionists, Aboriginal people, “ethnic” people and all antiracists to make Cronulla Beach safe again for people of all colours. The more we struggle together the stronger we will become.

## Notes & References:

1. <http://www.trotskyistplatform.com/?p=600> (accessed 14 March 2016.) Also available as an archived copy on the National Library of Australia's website at <http://pandora.nla.gov.au/pan/142298/20150914-0805/www.trotskyistplatform.com/index2b8b.html?p=600> (accessed 14 March 2016).
2. <http://dfat.gov.au/trade/topics/investment/Pages/which-countries-invest-in-australia.aspx> (accessed 14 March 2016).
3. <http://www.abc.net.au/4corners/stories/2015/08/30/4301164.htm> (accessed 17 March 2016).
4. See NZ's National Business Review rich list – <http://www.nbr.co.nz/rich-list-2014> (accessed 17 March 2016).
5. See, for example, <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2016-02-22/aus-should-challenge-claims-in-south-china-sea-says-admiral/7189598> (accessed 14 March 2016).
6. In his article addressed to the soldiers of the new Soviet state, “The Sacred Task of the Red Army”, Russian Revolutionary leader and founder of the Red Army, Leon Trotsky, writes of how, in the midst of the Russian Civil War (when the displaced Russian bourgeoisie and landlords attempted to roll back the gains of the 1917 workers and peasants revolution with the support of military intervention by several Western capitalist countries) he is visited in his Moscow office of the Commissariat of Military Affairs by an old Tatar (moslem) peasant, sent by his fellow villagers to thank the Soviet power for liberating their province from the counter-revolutionary Tsarist General Dutov and his bands. He tells Trotsky:
 

*‘When the Cossacks were stationed in our village we suffered many misfortunes. The Cossack officers not only took from us horses, cattle and grain without paying anything, especially where poor peasants were concerned, but, worse still, they mocked us, persecuted us, beat and shot at us. We Tatars had it worse than anyone else. We heard that the Red Army was advancing into Samara province, but we didn't know whether that would mean better times for us, or worse. When the Cossacks had left our village and the Red Army men came in, we saw at once that these were a different sort of people. We were not insulted any more. The soldiers talked with us in a brotherly way, and order was established in the village and all around. We breathed freely, and blessed the Red Army.’*

Trotsky goes on to write:

*That is what I was told by the old Tatar, father of a numerous family. And when, comrade soldiers, I heard these words. I felt proud of our workers' and peasants' Red Army. In this little example the true character of the revolutionary forces was revealed, together with the significance of this war which we have been forced to wage. On the one hand, the bourgeois-landlord troops restore in practice, everywhere that they go, the black injustice that prevailed under the Tsars, the oppression of the poor, especially of all those who speak a different language or belong to a different nation or religion. In Avdat village the inhabitants are Moslems, so – at them, chase them, crush them, rob them and cut them up! That is the principle of action of the dishonourable counter-revolutionary bands. The conscious revolutionary Red forces are not like that. They know that the working people, whatever nation they belong to, are their brothers. They know that people must be divided not by nation but by class. All honest working people form one family, whatever language they may speak and in whatever place of worship their fathers may have prayed. All oppressors, exploiters, parasites, aggressors, regardless of nationality, are enemies of the working people. The task of the soldiers of the Red Army, their sacred task, is to defend the poor against the rich. This is what distinguishes our army from all other armies in the world.*

From *The Military Writings and Speeches of Leon Trotsky Vol.3: 1920 How the Revolution Armed*, first published in 1924 as Book Two of Volume II of *Kak Vooruzhala Revolyutsiya*, by the Supreme Council for Military Publications, Moscow. English translation by Brian Pearce. Online version: Leon Trotsky Internet Archive, 2002 at <https://www.marxists.org/archive/trotsky/1920/military/>, the quoted article can be found at <https://www.marxists.org/archive/trotsky/1920/military/ch106.htm> (both accessed 14 March 2016)
7. [http://www.thestar.com/news/world/2012/10/13/why\\_the\\_roma\\_are\\_fleeing\\_hungary\\_and\\_why\\_canada\\_is\\_shunning\\_them.html](http://www.thestar.com/news/world/2012/10/13/why_the_roma_are_fleeing_hungary_and_why_canada_is_shunning_them.html) (accessed 14 March 2016).



8. Amongst many other outrages committed by the French imperialist state it is worth noting France's complicity in the dark history of the 1994 Rwandan Genocide Against the Tutsis which, over the course of just 100 days, saw 800,000 unarmed civilians slaughtered, mainly by machetes. In 2008, a two year investigation conducted by the Rwandan government found that France helped the extremists who carried out the genocide and that a French force sent to establish a "humanitarian safe zone" took part in killing and raping Tutsis. "French soldiers themselves directly were involved in assassinations of Tutsis and Hutus accused of hiding Tutsis," the special commission report stated. "French soldiers committed many rapes, forced sexual intercourse specifically with surviving Tutsi women. They clearly requested Interahamwe [Hutu militia] ... to kill Tutsis," it said. "They also clearly requested to have Tutsi who had infiltrated in displaced population camps brought to them and have Interahamwe kill at least some of them. They let Interahamwe kill Tutsis under their eyes." See "French leaders accused of complicity in Rwanda genocide", *The Telegraph*, 5 August 2008 (located online at <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/2506150/France-accused-of-complicity-in-Rwanda-genocide.html> - accessed 14 March 2016). The *Telegraph* article continues to say:

*French military advisers worked closely with the Rwandan government in the years leading up to 1994.*

*Those advisors helped draw up battle plans and military strategy for the Rwandan armed forces, including elite units which are accused of being among the first to start the killings, the report said.*

*The French suggested a program to arm civilians to protect against opposition rebels, and then went on to train volunteers. These militia formed the core of the later genocidal infrastructure.*

*Training and funding was also given to a department of Rwanda's national intelligence services on how to establish a computerised database of people's tribes, which was later used to draw up a "kill list" of Tutsis.*

*Once the genocide had started, on April 6, 1994, France sent arms to support the genocidal government, according to the report, which heard from 120 witnesses since it was set up by President Kagame in 2006.*

9. See article on Australian Human Rights Commission website: <http://www.humanrights.gov.au/publications/aboriginal-police-relations-redfern-special-reference-police-raid-8-february-1990> (accessed 14 March 2016).

10. For more on the kind of company Spotless is, read "The Suffering of a Public Housing Tenant. Fight for Proper Maintenance of Public Housing. Stop the Neglect and Stop the Sell-offs." at <http://www.trotskyistplatform.com/?p=534> (accessed 14 March 2016).

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17. See <http://apps.who.int/gho/data/node.main.MHSUICIDE?lang=en> (accessed 14 March 2016).

18. See <http://www.bwint.org/default.asp?Index=6474&Language=EN> (accessed 15 March 2016).

19. See <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/asia-pacific/2015/01/dissolved-s-korean-party-vows-fight-back-20151594616644986.html> (accessed 15 March 2016).

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23. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/752055.stm> (accessed 15 March 2016). On the 2000 figure quoted, see: <http://www.villagevoice.com/news/carter-hounded-by-kwangju-massacre-6412340> (accessed 15 March 2016). Also see [http://www.democracynow.org/2005/5/18/25\\_years\\_ago\\_the\\_kwangju\\_massacre](http://www.democracynow.org/2005/5/18/25_years_ago_the_kwangju_massacre) (accessed 15 March 2016).

24. See [http://articles.chicagotribune.com/2014-07-11/news/sns-rt-us-southkorea-usa-military-20140711\\_1-u-s-forces-u-s-troops-human-trafficking](http://articles.chicagotribune.com/2014-07-11/news/sns-rt-us-southkorea-usa-military-20140711_1-u-s-forces-u-s-troops-human-trafficking) (accessed 15 March 2016).

25. <http://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2014/nov/24/-sp-us-drone-strikes-kill-1147> (accessed 15 March 2016).

26. See "Australian Capitalists Throw a Tantrum after Rio Tinto Get Caught Out. China Is Cracking Down on Corporate Greed & Corruption - When Will That Start to Happen Here?" in *Trotskyist Platform*, Issue 13 (<http://trotskyistplatform.com/Cracking.pdf> - accessed 17 March 2016)

27. See [http://www.prisonstudies.org/highest-to-lowest/prison\\_population\\_rate?field\\_region\\_taxonomy\\_tid=All&=Apply](http://www.prisonstudies.org/highest-to-lowest/prison_population_rate?field_region_taxonomy_tid=All&=Apply) (accessed 15 March 2016).

28. Lenin writes in *The State*:

*But there was a time when there was no state, when general ties, the community itself, discipline and the ordering of work were maintained by force of custom and tradition, by the authority or the respect enjoyed by the elders of the clan or by women—who in those times not only frequently enjoyed a status equal to that of men, but not infrequently enjoyed an even higher status—and when there was no special category of persons who were specialists in ruling. History shows that the state as a special apparatus for coercing people arose wherever and whenever there appeared a division of society into classes, that is, a division into groups of people some of which were permanently in a position to appropriate the labour of others, where some people exploited others.*

*“And this division of society into classes must always be clearly borne in mind as a fundamental fact of history. The development of all human societies for thousands of years, in all countries without exception, reveals a general conformity to law, a regularity and consistency; so that at first we had a society without classes—the original patriarchal, primitive society, in which there were no aristocrats; then we had a society based on slavery—a slaveowning society. The whole of modern, civilised Europe has passed through this stage—slavery ruled supreme two thousand years ago. The vast majority of peoples of the other parts of the world also passed through this stage. Traces of slavery survive to this day among the less developed peoples; you will find the institution of slavery in Africa, for example, at the present time. The division into slaveowners and slaves was the first important class division. The former group not only owned all the means of production—the land and the implements, however poor and primitive they may have been in those times—but also owned people. This group was known as slave-owners, while those who laboured and supplied labour for others were known as slaves.*

*This form was followed in history by another—feudalism. In the great majority of countries slavery in the course of its development evolved into serfdom. The fundamental division of society was now into feudal lords and peasant serfs. The form of relations between people changed. The slave-owners had regarded the slaves as their property; the law had confirmed this view and regarded the slave as a chattel completely owned by the slave-owner. As far as the peasant serf was concerned, class oppression and dependence remained, but it was not considered that the feudal lord owned the peasants as chattels, but that he was only entitled to their labour, to the obligatory performance of certain services. In practice, as you know, serfdom, especially in Russia where it survived longest of all and assumed the crudest forms, in no way differed from slavery.*

*Further, with the development of trade, the appearance of the world market and the development of money circulation, a new class arose within feudal society—the capitalist class. From the commodity, the exchange of commodities and the rise of the power of money, there derived the power of capital. During the eighteenth century, or rather, from the end of the eighteenth century and during the nineteenth century, revolutions took place all over the world. Feudalism was abolished in all the countries of Western Europe. Russia was the last country in which this took place. In 1861 a radical change took place in Russia as well; as a consequence of this one form of society was replaced by another—feudalism was replaced by capitalism, under which division into classes remained, as well as various traces and remnants of serfdom, but fundamentally the division into classes assumed a different form.*

*The owners of capital, the owners of the land and the owners of the factories in all capitalist countries constituted and still constitute an insignificant minority of the population who have*



*complete command of the labour of the whole people, and, consequently, command, oppress and exploit the whole mass of labourers, the majority of whom are proletarians, wage-workers, who procure their livelihood in the process of production only by the sale of their own worker's hands, their labour-power. With the transition to capitalism, the peasants, who had been disunited and downtrodden in feudal times, were converted partly (the majority) into proletarians, and partly (the minority) into wealthy peasants who themselves hired labourers and who constituted a rural bourgeoisie.*

*This fundamental fact—the transition of society from primitive forms of slavery to serfdom and finally to capitalism—you must always bear in mind, for only by remembering this fundamental fact, only by examining all political doctrines placed in this fundamental scheme, will you be able properly to appraise these doctrines and understand what they refer to; for each of these great periods in the history of mankind, slave-owning, feudal and capitalist, embraces scores and hundreds of centuries and presents such a mass of political forms, such a variety of political doctrines, opinions and revolutions, that this extreme diversity and immense variety (especially in connection with the political, philosophical and other doctrines of bourgeois scholars and politicians) can be understood only by firmly holding, as to a guiding thread, to this division of society into classes, this change in the forms of class rule, and from this standpoint examining all social questions—economic, political, spiritual, religious, etc.*

From *The State: A Lecture Delivered at the Sverdlov University*. Lecture written by V.I. Lenin & delivered on 11 July 1919. First published: *Pravda* No. 15, 18 January 1929. Source: Lenin's *Collected Works*, 4th English Edition, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1972 Volume 29, pages 470-488. Translated: George Hanna. Copyleft: V. I. Lenin Internet Archive ([www.marx.org](http://www.marx.org)) 2002. <https://www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1919/jul/11.htm>.

29. The proletariat originally arose from many sources. Some were freed serfs. Others were journeymen and apprentices - an oppressed class of artisans oppressed by the guild masters - who went into the new manufacturing and industrial enterprises in search of better pay and often simply employment as the new industries were then undercutting the guilds. Later the guild masters - who were a small-scale exploiting class - found that they too had to join the proletariat as their operations were ruined by competition from the more efficient large industries. Of course, there were classic petit bourgeois who became proletarians - tradesmen, shopkeepers, peasants. Some who joined were also former members of the landowning nobility. With the breakdown of feudalism and the bourgeois revolution these nobles no longer had serfs and peasants to provide for them and ended up having to work as exploited workers to make a living.

There are many national variations to this. In the South of the U.S.A, for example, a good part of the proletariat were/are liberated former black slaves. In Australia, the proletariat has a particularly diverse background. Ironically, until they were granted equal pay as white workers, Aboriginal workers - that is, members of an egalitarian so-called "hunter-gatherer" society who were brutally denied access to the land that they had for millennia occupied (not "owned" as the concept of ownership was foreign to their society) - were the backbone of the rural proletariat working as stockmen, shearers, pickers, cotton chippers etc. This rural proletariat was supplemented by "Kanaks," people from places like Vanuatu, Solomon Islands, PNG and New Caledonia who were kidnapped ("blackbirded") by Australian slave hunters and brought to work as indentured plantation workers in Australia - especially in the sugar plantations of Queensland. Later these workers became "free" labour. Then there were the ex-convicts who became workers - that is, we can say ex-members of the lumpenproletariat. There were, of course, petit bourgeoisie who were driven into the proletariat class - for example, gold prospectors once the gold rush was over. Australia's working class - especially the industrial proletariat - is disproportionately made up of migrants and their descendants - that is, of European and later Middle Eastern migrants arriving after WWII and then coloured migrants after the formal relaxation of the White Australia Party. All these migrants came from different backgrounds. Some were workers in their original countries, others were farmers and shopkeepers. Some were former members of the exploiting class. These included people fleeing countries where the former ruling bourgeois faction has been deposed by a rival bourgeois faction - such as in Iran and Iraq. It also includes former members of the landlord and capitalist class running away from anti-capitalist revolutions in places like China, Laos and Vietnam. Former members of the deposed exploiting class in Vietnam and their henchmen are heavily concentrated as workers in the manufacturing and warehouse sectors of Sydney and Melbourne. Then there are the many henchmen of the capitalists who after WWII fled - from the Baltic states, Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Ukraine, Russia and Croatia - the victorious Red Army or the Yugoslav Revolution. The highest ranked of these anti-communists got well-paid positions assisting ASIO but most ended up becoming ordinary workers. So there we have the Australian working class' diverse class background: former members of an egalitarian hunter-gatherer society, former "blackbirded" slaves, petit bourgeois farmers and gold prospectors, lumpenproletarian ex-convicts, overthrown capitalist exploiters and their die-hard anti-communist henchmen fleeing socialistic revolutions.

The latter includes, in the case of some of the East European and Baltic migrant workers, former members of

outright fascist armies and police forces. All this underscores that there is nothing per se morally more worthy about an individual proletarian over an individual petit-bourgeois person. That is hardly the point. The point is that by its relationship to the relations of production the proletariat as a whole uniquely has the power, interest and potential consciousness to lead the struggle against capitalism and for socialism. Furthermore, the proletariat's position in the relations of production and its means of deriving an income give it the opportunity to break free from attachment to private property and to develop a consciousness of solidarity with fellow toilers regardless of which class the proletarian or her/his ancestors may have derived from. Ironically, to see this question from a standpoint that puts the overall struggle for the liberation of humanity at the forefront rather than an individual judgemental type analysis itself requires a proletarian outlook as opposed to the individualistic bourgeois/petty bourgeois analysis that our whole upbringing in capitalist society conditions us to examine political questions with (in a similar way that our conditioning in capitalist society drives us to, when we analyse political events, excessively focus on the personalities and policies of individual political leaders/activists rather than the conflicts between classes and the struggles/contradictions between sections of classes).

30. In checking the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) figures there are grey areas in how the figures are presented and also some grey areas about where to classify certain people. Nevertheless, it is apparent that the petit bourgeois make up from 15% to 23% of the Australian workforce. (The small-scale capitalist exploiters make up 3% to 4% of the workforce.) Comrades may find how these figures can be calculated interesting:

Firstly, looking at the petit bourgeois, from <http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/ProductsbyTopic/A8CAED8E5F9FB2E1CA257F1F00044E8C?OpenDocument> (accessed 21 March 2016), it is apparent that there are 307,100 + 951,800 self-employed people, i.e. 1,258,900 self-employed people.

Additionally, some of the people who are employees are still part of the petit-bourgeois. Unfortunately and rather strangely, the ABS when breaking down occupations lumps in employees and owner-managers of incorporated enterprises into one group rather than listing them separately. But looking at the ABS spreadsheet for the breakdown of occupations in incorporated enterprises, we find that there are 584,000 people working as business, human resource and marketing professionals. Due to the closeness of many of these employees to the bosses and the nature of their work which, rather than the production of goods and services, often involves strategizing on helping the bosses maximise profits, many should be classed as petit-bourgeois rather than proletarian. Of course, not all these employees would fit such a description - lower level employees collating market research data should be counted as part of the proletariat. So we can at a very rough guess count 60% of these employees as petit bourgeois. But given that there are, additionally, professionals in other occupation types that we are not counting as petit bourgeois who should be, then if we take all these 584,000 as petit bourgeois then that would make up for all these others. These would include highly skilled professionals working in the public sector who, because society compels the government to provide certain basic services, the government is compelled to pay high salaries in order to ensure that the services are provided. Therefore, these people are not denied the fruits of their labour - but neither are they bourgeois exploiters. In this category would include town planners, senior civil engineers working for state and local government, staff specialist doctors at hospitals etc.

So, in total, taking 584,000 of those among the employees and owner-managers of incorporated enterprises as petit bourgeois we now have to deal with the issue of double counting since some of these may have already been included in the 307,100 people working as self-employed owners of incorporated enterprises. Therefore, we should scale this number by the ratio of the people in the employees and incorporated enterprises category who are not self employed divided by the total number of people in the employees and incorporated enterprises category. This ratio is 97%, i.e.  $(9,585,100 + 499,900)/(9,585,100 + 806,600)$ . That means our estimate for the number of employees that should be added to the petit bourgeois category is  $97\% \times 584,100 = 566,577$ .

Another group of people given in the ABS breakdown of occupations for people listed as being either employees or owner-managers of incorporated enterprises that should be classed as petit bourgeois is a proportion of the 1,257,800 people listed as managers. Most of the managers should be classed in the category of henchmen/enforcers of the capitalists. However, some of the people classed as managers are really leading hands without the power to fire or to deny workers leave and others are managers of *things* rather than people. We can estimate that say 25% of people listed as managers fall in this category. So, therefore, the number of managers who can be counted as petit bourgeois is  $25\% \times 1,257,800 = 314,450$ . Now, some of these people may already have been counted in the self-employed category and we would expect the proportion of managers to be higher than the 3% (i.e.  $100\% - 3\%$ ) average for people in the employees or owner-managers of incorporated enterprises category. So we assume that 20% are double counted, i.e. 80% of the 314,450 managers (i.e. 251,560) considered petit bourgeois rather than bourgeois henchmen should be added to the petit bourgeois category.

There is one other group that should, perhaps, be added to the petit bourgeois category. This comes about due to a certain grey area among a small percentage of the people who are small scale employers. Most of the people employing one to four people are in fact small scale capitalist exploiters who derive their income from a combination of business conducted that's based on their own labour as well as that of their workers. These include restaurant/café owners hiring chefs/service staff, plumbers and electricians with their own business hiring a couple of (always



terribly paid) apprentices, auto repair shop owners with a couple of hired workers etc. In all these cases, the hired workers contribute much to directly producing the goods or services that are being sold. The bosses deny the workers the full fruit of their labour (and when this is not the case it is not because the boss does not intend to but because there is not enough business for the boss to get full use out of the workers). Additionally, these bosses often treat their workers arrogantly and rudely. However, there is also a category of small-scale employers where the hired workers are not directly engaged in producing the goods/services being sold. These would include architects, dentists, doctors, accountants and solicitors with their own private practice and hiring an office manager/receptionist or two. Unlike, say, with the café owner hiring a service worker, in this case making the receptionist work longer hours for the same pay will not necessarily increase the owner's profits. The profits and often high income of the business owner depends largely on the architect/doctor etc being able to get away with charging the client/patient high fees. So, in this sense, these type of business owners are petit-bourgeois rather than small-scale capitalists. On the other hand the work that the receptionist/office manager performs is crucial to the successful operation of the business and the often massive disparity in income between the business-owning professional and the receptionist/office manager shows that there is some degree of the worker being denied the fruits of their labour and thus not being adequately paid. So these business-owning professionals are really in a grey area between being petit bourgeois and being small-scale capitalist exploiters. However, many of them are probably closer to being petit bourgeois than small scale capitalists so for classification purposes could probably be classed as petit bourgeois.

So now for our numbers, we need to estimate what percentage of all the small-scale employers are business owning professionals hiring only one or two office staff (who are the only people working in the business in addition to themselves and possibly other professionals in a partnership). A guess would be 25%. We then need to know the total number of people owning businesses with only a very small number of hired workers. This page from the ABS - <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/8165.0> (accessed 21 March 2016) - indicates that 27% of all businesses have one to four employees (note: ignore the total number of businesses from this page as many business owners own more than one business). So, knowing that there are  $806,900 + 1,191,200 = 1,998,100$  business owners and assuming that this 27% ratio applies roughly to business owners in addition to applying to the total number of businesses, the number of business owners hiring from one to four employees is  $27\% \times 1,998,100 = 539,487$ . Then, taking our estimate of 25% as the percentage of these business owners who are in a grey area where they probably should be categorised more as petit-bourgeois than small-scale capitalists, the number of these petit-bourgeois business owners =  $25\% \times 539,487 = 134,872$ .

Therefore the total number of petit bourgeois =  $1,258,900 + 566,577 + 251,560 + 134,872 = 2,211,909$ . This represents a  $2,211,909/11,583,900$  ratio, i.e. 19% of the workforce.

As for the small-scale capitalist exploiters, they would make up the remaining 75% of the bosses hiring between one to four workers who cannot be classed as petit bourgeois, i.e. they number  $75\% \times 539,487 = 404,615$ . That is, they make up  $404,615/11,583,900$  ratio, i.e. 3.5% of the workforce.

Now the medium and large scale capitalist business owners would be the total number of business owners minus those that have no employees less those that employ from one to four workers. That would be  $1,998,100 - 1,258,900 - 539,487 = 199,713$ . This is  $199,713/11,583,900$  ratio, i.e. 1.7% of the workforce. Many managers are also substantial shareholders of businesses where they are not necessarily the main owners. However, it is hard to estimate this. It is easier to simply lump in the big and medium bourgeois and their henchmen as one.

So the managers who could be counted as bourgeois henchmen or straight bourgeois are those who cannot be counted as simply petit bourgeois, i.e. we have estimated that 25% can be counted as petit bourgeois so 75% of the managers can be estimated to be bourgeois or bourgeois henchmen. Thus,  $75\% \times 1,257,800 = 943,350$ . As many of these managers, however, already have been counted as owner managers - at an estimate 30% - so 70% of the managers not considered petit bourgeois should be added to the bourgeois class and its henchmen, i.e.  $70\% \times 943,350 = 660,450$ .

Now an additional group of henchmen are cops, prison guards, secret police, volunteer army soldiers, private security, prosecutors, judges and magistrates. Judges, magistrates and prosecutors together make up a very small number. So a good estimate of the total for this category of henchmen is given under the listing in the ABS spreadsheet for "Protective Service Workers," of which there are 140,300.

Therefore, the total for the big and medium size capitalists and their armed and unarmed henchmen/enforcers is  $199,713 + 660,450 + 140,300 = 1,000,463$ . This is a ratio of  $1,000,463/11,583,900 = \text{approx. } 8.5\%$  of the workforce.

So, in summary the estimates are: big and medium size capitalist exploiters and their henchmen form 8.5% of the workforce, small-size capitalist exploiters 3.5%, petit bourgeois 19%; proletariat and semi-proletariat (including the better paid highly skilled/educated workers) make up the rest, which is 69% of the workforce.

To put it in easy to remember terms: in Australia roughly seven in ten people in the workforce are the proletariat/semi-proletariat, one in five are the petit-bourgeois and one in eight are the capitalist exploiters and their henchmen/enforcers.



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