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Afghanistan: Howard sends more troops

On April 10, John Howard announced that another three hundred Australian troops will be fighting in Afghanistan Well, from an imperialist point of view, more troops are needed The operation is being bogged down Neither Australia nor its imperialist mentors, the United States of America have an exit strategy How many more years will pass until victory is a question they cannot answer

This is an extremely important war for the imperialists A defeat will mean a loss of face This will spur on liberation forces throughout the Middle East and across the world It is this loss of face that we communists want For this reason we give military support to the resistance, no matter how reactionary Of course to rationalize their invasion the imperialists point to the reactionary positions of the Taliban who are fundamentalist Moslems with reactionary positions on many issues notably women's rights But it was the imperialists who imposed the reactionary Taliban on the Afghan people in the first place

This war began because Osama Bin Laden was on Afghanistan soil and the US wanted him to be handed over as they claimed he was responsible for the September 11 atrocities against the World Trade Center Understandably and justifiably the Afghan government wanted proof But Bush didn't choose to negotiate Instead he sent the troops in There has been a war ever since A puppet government has been established in Kabul Like the one in Baghdad, it is doubtful whether it has the support of the majority of Afghans However, it gives the appearance that America and allies are concerned about democracy In reality they are concerned about imperialist control The American intervention in Afghanistan is thoroughly and as reactionary as Australia's

Labor for the imperialists!

A full supporter of this imperialist aggression is "Opposition" leader Kevin Rudd. Rudd is not an opponent of imperialism, rather he counsels the imperialists on how to do their job better He opposes the war in Iraq because he correctly perceives that it has nothing to do with fighting the war on terror But he wants them to fight the war in Afghanistan even harder

George Bush would clearly prefer Rudd Labor to be as gung-ho as Bush and go all the way with the USA But he could tolerate a pro-imperialist Labor Government in Australia with tactical differences Rupert Murdoch has expressed his approval for Rudd Labor We, the workers movement in Australia must not buy the Rudd agenda

The war in Afghanistan is an imperialist war and we must not be a party to it The victims of this war will not only be the Afghan people but the people of the whole Middle East The imperialists will use their friendly government to pressure the whole Middle East, to hand over oil at bargain basement rates and to defend their loyal ally-the state of Israel

They could use this state as a springboard to attack Iran Iran has been declared by Bush as part of his proclaimed "axis of evil" It is part of the axis even though the only thing it has in common with Saddam's Iraq and North Korea is that it hates the USA. The imperialists demand that Iran stop producing nuclear fuel which can be potentially used for weapons America doesn't oppose nuclear weapons It only opposes them in the hands of countries not under its control

We must be for Australia and America's defeat - unconditionally For us in Australia our opposition must be linked to action The only effective way to defeat imperialism is workers action We must demand working class direct action to smash Australia's participation in the war drive now! This means demonstrations! This means strike action!

Communist Left has no faith in the existing leaderships of the trade union movement to carry out such action This is especially true now that are on their knees to Rudd Whilst they are on their knees Rudd promises more attacks on workers rights Revolutionary leadership is urgently needed

Free all the Guantanamo Prisoners

Many are happy and relieved that David Hicks will be back in the country shortly. He has had a rough five years. He could have been given a longer term and be forced to remain in Guantanamo. We want him freed now! He has been in that hell hole too long. We are opposed to him serving any further time - even in Australia! In fact he should never have been there in the first place!

We were told that Guantanamo was supposedly for the "worst of the worst" namely hardcore terrorists who would be extremely dangerous if released. In no way did David Hicks fall into that category. Revolutionary communists give military support to the Taliban in this context which is defending Afghanistan against an unwarranted imperialist military invasion But even if we were to accept the American framework, Hicks would be, at worst an illegal combatant. In no way did he deserve Guantanamo!

Hicks was important to the US authorities. He was used to show that America was against terrorists and not those of Arab appearance. It was ideologically convenient to have a white guy present along with the Afghans.

Hicks will be free shortly. But what about the other prisoners? The case of Hicks shows that America lied about who would be dumped in Guantanamo. Perhaps they are just Afghan farmers wanting to defend their country and not as the US claims "hard core terrorists" Hicks finally got a trial due to political and diplomatic pressure. Other prisoners are not getting this support. They are just as much victims of a barbaric

situation When are the other prisoners going to get their day in court? Are they going to be free?

The campaign to defend David Hicks including groups such as GetUp! have gained sympathy because Hicks is a fair skinned Aussie. They have ignored the Afghan prisoners who are not. The reason is they are not campaigning for the others is that to do so would be less acceptable in the eyes of Aussie public opinion Essentially they are pandering to racism!

Also the slogan used by many activists "Bring David Home" suggest that it is ok for him to be in jail, so long that it is in Australia! Its not! David should not be in jail anywhere for anything to do with his involvement with the Afghan war. Free David Hicks!

All prisoners in Guantanamo should be freed now! They should be freed irrespective of the US imperialist case against them. They should be freed because the US war against Afghanistan is wrong!

The main reason Communist Left wants freedom for the Guantanamo prisoners is that in the context of the Afghan war, they were fighting on the right side.-- the side fighting imperialism! This is how the workers movement should look at the David Hicks issue. He is only one of hundreds of victims of Guantanamo Bay barbarism

Working class direct action must take place now to free all the prisoners!

Military victory to the Taliban and those fighting imperialism!

Boris Yeltsin. The death of a counter revolutionary

With the death of Boris Yeltsin was announced, the bourgeois press honoured a man who they considered heroic but flawed. Even they can see that the new Russia is a long way off from being a decent society. But they honour a man whose intransigence meant that an uprising led to a counter-revolutionary conclusion and abolished the Soviet Union. This mobilisation was a response to the jailing of Mikhail Gorbachev by the army.

Mikhail Gorbachev was the Soviet leader who saw unpleasant bureaucratic characteristics within the Soviet Union and wanted change. His two main reforms were known as Glasnost meaning openness and Perestroika which meant a limited freeing up of the market place. Whilst Gorbachev did not himself aspire to overthrow the Soviet Union, his reforms promoted the very class forces whose interest was in doing so. These Yeltsin mobilised very effectively and the Soviet Union was destroyed.

The formation of the Soviet Union was the major social gain of the twentieth century. It was a beacon of progress throughout the world. It was the inspiration for social transformation throughout the world. It inspired socialist revolutions. It inspired progressive wars against imperialism. It inspired radical reform movements.

In Australia, the Australian Labor Party took up the socialist objective to head off the communist movement. History has shown how shallow their commitment to socialism has been.

Since the collapse of the Soviet Union everything has gone backwards (with the exception of South America where there have been some significant revolutionary movements). But there has been a general trend towards counter-revolution. For a start, there has been a counter-revolutionary flow-on. The whole of Eastern Europe. has gone capitalist. Post-capitalist states such as China and Vietnam have gone significantly to the right. Cuba is isolated. National liberation movements have abolished any commitment to socialism (real or rhetorical) For social democratic parties, socialism is a dead letter.

Throughout the world, as well as in the Soviet Union working and poor people have suffered. The movement has been set back decades.

The fall of the Soviet Union has led to a rise of religion. In the imperialist west the religious right is on the ascendancy. In the East, especially the Middle East, religion is seen as a bulwark against imperialism. Communists nor communist influenced national liberation movements are not fighting imperialism but El Quaida is!. Of course its terrorist methods won't work. But its heroic actions are looked upon as a beacon of struggle by victims of either Israel or the USA.

The ideological damage created or enhanced by the Yeltsin counter-revolution has been immense

Things are much worse in the Soviet Union today. Some will respond to this by glorifying the Soviet Union's yesterday. This we must not do! It is the mistakes of yesterday which led promoted the counter-revolutionary forces which were victorious in Russia. We must make a Marxist analysis.

The analysis of Lenin and Trotsky are the tools we must use to make this analysis. Lenin described the bureaucracy as being "the internal enemy". He was indeed correct. Trotsky in his book *The Revolution Betrayed* showed how the method of Stalin and Bukharin led to the promotion of bureaucracy and counter-revolution.

The collapse of the Soviet Union does not repudiate Marxism, it vindicates it. Class struggle does not end when the dictatorship of the proletariat has been established. The proletariat must establish hegemony over the non-proletarian groupings that remain after the revolution. Doing this requires the method of Marxism which was abandoned by the Stalinists.

Boris Yeltsin deserves to be remembered as the most significant counter-revolutionary of the twentieth century.

Rudd a reactionary on industrial relations

Julia Gillard is in trouble. She made a colourful statement stating that employers will be hurt if the campaign against Labor's industrial relations policy. For this she received the wrath of not just the reactionary bourgeois media but her colleagues. This shows just how much Rudd Labor is on its knees. before the capitalist class who are no doubt pleased that she has been brought into line

The colourful Sydney Morning Herald in its editorial called her statement a "jihad" against business. No Gillard does not have any serious on-going campaign against the boss class as the Herald suggests. But worse still there is a link made to the war on terror. This illustrates how the war on terror is used against working class struggles and not just the real terrorists. It indeed has a reactionary nature.

At the recent ALP Conference Kevin Rudd overwhelmingly had it his way. On the whole the union movement fell in behind his banner. On exception was the Electrical Trades Union. They promised to fight Rudd tooth and nail. Their opposition wits fully and totally justified.

Rudd promises to outlaw strikes except those carried out by secret ballot. Of course, the main benefactor from this is the boss. No longer could workers simply walk off the job if the boss carries out a serious misdemeanor. Organising secret ballots takes time and money. The time needed to organise will be used to sabotage workers efforts. The fact that the strikes cost money . Therefore the number o strikes a union

can carry out will be very limited indeed. The unions are not entirely satisfied. But so politically weak are they that they will support any form of Labor government so long as it guarantees their existence. So they fall in behind Rudd

The bosses are organizing because Rudd promises to abandon AWA's Leading companies such as Rio Tinto Westpac are planning to counter the unions" campaign with one of their own. This is what prompted Gillard's contraversial comment for which she has apologized.

But sensible agents of the ruling class know better As reported in The Australian (May 3), one of Australia's largest legal firms cautions about going too hard on Rudd. "The end of AWA's will not bring an end to the world as we know it."

They point out that Rudd does not want to go back to the old fashioned centralized system which they despise so much. Freehills is happy about Rudd Labor "cutting unions out of action" They point out that Rudd's policies are more employer friendly than Kim Beazley.

Zimbabwe: Mugabe in crisis

Regularly there are horror stories in the media about atrocities carried out in Zimbabwe. ABC television shows such as Foreign Correspondent report these regularly. Overwhelmingly we believe them. This does not mean that the reports are fair or balanced. Indeed they are not! Their attempts to report Mugabe's side of the picture are very skimpy indeed. Mugabe claims atrocity by the opposition movement known as Movement for Democratic Change These are never given any scrutiny whatsoever.. MDC accusations are accepted. In fact they are reported as fact

But there is no denying that Mugabe is guilty of brutality, which goes beyond what is reasonable in a war time situation. It is thoroughly impermissible to burn civilian houses down on mass irrespective of whether they support the Opposition or not. This is outrageous!

In Australia the Communist Party of Australia claims that the Movement for Democratic Change is backed by the imperialists and this appears to be so. But their response is to whitewash Mugabe. In no way must we do this! For a start Mugabe's regime is a bourgeois regime which we must oppose unconditionally! But also Mugabe opposes the legitimate trade union movement and uses troops against working people also and not just against MDC.

The MDC is also not our friend.. Communists and working people should have nothing to do with it . Their social base is that of white settlers who were part of the old Rhodesian apartheid regime and who have exploited workers for decades. They want to continue on doing so. They are our enemy! MDC also wants to facilitate exploitation of Zimbabwe by the British and US imperialists.

Mugabe's situation goes back to the strategy of his bourgeois liberation force which is influenced by Stalinism, ZANU PF. After victory they pandered to the white settlers. Now those settlers have entrenched themselves. We in Australia must oppose any imperialist intervention. The proposed cricket tour must go ahead unless there is a serious and real safety issue

It goes without saying that unions should have nothing to do with this reactionary party if they are to be consistent in their basic traditional role of defending their members basic interests. Rudd's reactionary policies are not an accident. They flow from the logic of reformism. The only party which can fight for workers interests is a revolutionary communist party.

Venezuela: Armed cops and troops attack workers

From the point of view of the Democratic Socialist Party, the Communist Party of Australia and a large section of the Australian left without political affiliations, Chavez is a revolutionary hero. On the whole they acknowledge that Venezuela is still capitalist. Sure he is doing much in favour of working people and against the imperialists. An important example being the nationalization of the oil industry.

Internationally, Chavez is a friend of Castro and he has taken some anti-imperialist stands. One example where he didn't though was in the case of the Israeli invasion of Lebanon to fight Hezbollah. Militarily, all decent revolutionaries were unconditionally on the side of Hezbollah in their military struggle. Chavez remained silent. Effectively this means that he sold out. We do not consider this to be some sort of isolated mistake. We think this is a reflection of his regime.

Also a reflection on his regime is its response to the Sanitarious Maracay workers who have occupied their factory under workers control for five months. These workers have been met with state repression.

Whilst on their way to a rally organized by FRETECO. This rally was in defense of workers control in factories expropriated by the Chavez government.

They were stopped by police of Aragua state. The police were following orders of the state governor Didalco Bolivar.

Troops of the National Guard joined in, using buckshot against the workers. Fourteen workers were wounded.

These attacks show graphically that the role of the state in Venezuela is the same as everywhere - to attack the working class.

Chavez would no doubt denounce this as the work of counter-revolutionary sections of the state apparatus. Well perhaps so! But Chavez is a captive of these forces. Why doesn't he jail these potentially murderous cops and troops? Because the state apparatus will turn on him. He uses the term "revolution" loosely. In reality he has no serious perspective of smashing the Venezuelan state and mobilizing workers and peasants for soviet power. That is what is required.

We urge workers throughout the world to come to the defense of these workers. Their factory must be expropriated!

In Venezuela, a revolutionary leadership must be built which must go all the way. That is it must smash the state, whether led by Chavez or otherwise, and expropriate the bourgeoisie.

No doubt reaction is preparing to mobilise against Chavez and overthrow him as they did to Allende in Chile. Workers must act now and not wait for the counter-revolution. Of course we must fully defend Chavez and Venezuela from imperialism and counter-revolution