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Mass sackings in manufacturing, banking and retailing. Workers face the dole queue!

For a long time, the rate of unemployment has been hovering around the five percent mark. The government considers this to be zero. They reason that if the figure was any less, the government fears interest rates would probably rise. Well it means poverty for hundreds of thousands of people who not only are forced to live in poverty. They have to endure “mutual obligation” such as useless training and work for the dole.

Communist Left believes no-one should be unemployed. A job with a living wage should be a right.

In 2012 though it is expected that the number will rise, dramatically. In fact some pundits predict that the rate could reach six percent! Jobs are expected to be lost in banking retailing and manufacturing. The O’Farrell government is planning to layoff railway and other workers.

Partly this is due to the high Australian dollar which makes exports uncompetitive. Partly this is due to a restructuring in the economy away from manufacturing towards mining.. This has been going on for decades. Australian

manufacturing was mainly established after the second world war. It was established in a state of weakness and ripe for collapse. There has been a temporary stay in the collapse of Ford and Holden’s car production in this country. The government has made a deal with the companies which guarantees production for another four years. However Toyota plans to lay off three hundred and fifty workers. Unions point out that this will mean more than three thousand jobs to be lost in related industries in the Geelong district.

There are plenty of other manufacturing plants which will lay off workers. Mass layoffs are threatened in Aluminium smelters in the Hunter Valley.

.The unions, tied to a class collaborationist leadership have done nothing except beg and/or blame foreigners.

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Communists believe in unions. They are the basic defense organisations of class struggle. However what is needed is revolutionary leadership. The collapse of the unions exposes the bankruptcy of both reformism and stalinism. The old Communist Party led by Laurie Aarons was militant in the boom time. It had no answers to the economic crisis. So the militancy collapsed.

During the eighties when restructuring hit hard, the unions "solution" was to sell out class struggle and go begging to the government. This was called the Prices and Incomes Accord.

Through the Accord, unions sold out wages and conditions as well as jobs. Workers understandably lost faith in the union movement. These days, the unions are still begging to the government to "save manufacturing". Meanwhile, many thousands are forced onto the dole queue without even token resistance.

The solution for the car industry is not more protection. The car industry was established after the second world war. Under capitalised, poorly equipt and suffering from a poor local market. It was ripe for collapse.

There were once seven car manufacturers in Australia. Now there are four. How long will Ford and Holden hold on?

Protection divides us from our class comrades in other parts of the world. It defends Australian jobs at the expense of workers in Asia, the Pacific and elsewhere. The solution lies with an international struggle uniting Australian and Asian workers, to defend jobs everywhere. Bosses internationalism

must be met with workers internationalism!

It is extremely important that the shorter working week without loss of pay be fought for internationally. This means more jobs as well as more leisure time. It resolves the crisis at their (the boss's) expense as opposed to the worker's. If this is done in unity it will prevent the bosses playing us against each other along national lines.

It is important that workers organise on the shop floor, in shop committees.

Workers must occupy their factories to physically prevent all lay-offs. No-one out the factory gate!

Workers control tactics are important.

Workers must control the production line and fight boss's attempts to increase the rate of production.

Workers must expropriate the car industry and all industries which lay off workers. If they take our jobs, take their factories, under workers control.

Extremely essential is the forging of a revolutionary communist party. This must be part of a revolutionary communist international. A Fifth International!

There is no capitalist solution to the crisis of unemployment.

Unemployed face hardship and austerity.

There has finally been concern that unemployed, those on Newstart, have not received an increase for twenty years! Even the Chamber of Manufacturers agree that this is virtually impossible to live off. Welfare organisations are also lobbying the government to give unemployed an increase. They are not talking about a living wage which the unemployed certainly deserve!

The government resists this though. They want to appease chauvinist westies and others. They also want to save money in order to as promised “balance the budget by 2014” Whilst the unemployed are now getting some verbal backing, the government knows that this will not be backed up by force. So the government knows it will get away with ignoring the unemployed for some time yet.

Hundreds of thousands have been forced to live at a bare subsistence. This will increase. So more will suffer. Unemployment breaks up relationships. It often leads to homeless, mental illness .health problems and social discrimination..

Unemployed do not receive their pitiful allowance for nothing. They have to do “mutual obligation”. This requires them to register at private job network agencies. Like any other business they exist for profit as opposed to helping the unemployed. They decide who they are going to assist. It is bad luck if they decide not to support you. They decide your

“preparing for work agreement”. You have no right to appeal!

There are all sorts of Mickey Mouse schemes to keep unemployed people busy. Most of these only have a shelf life of six months. don't lead to meaning ful employment. But the government uses them to keep the unemployed busy and make the statistics look good.

Many are forced to do work for the dole. Basically, if your job network agency decides you will be forced to work for nothing. You do have some options. Work for the dole includes painting, gardening, light construction, bush regeneration, nurses and teachers aid work. Basically, unemployed people are forced to scab. These jobs should be carried out by full time workers paid for at full union rates!

Another serious attacked being introduced is quarantining. In the Northern Territory, Black unemployed have been quarantined. This means that their income is divided into two. Half is on the Basics card must be spent on essentials such as food and must be spent at Coles or Woolies. The other half you can spend as you please. It is bad luck if there is no Coles or Woolies in your area. This has been expanded throughout the Northern Territory. The next step is to expand the programme throughout Australia.

No-one, Black or white should be forced to endure quarantining. It discriminates against ethnic groups whose needs cannot be satisfied at a Coles or Woolies store.

If you refuse to accept the dictates of the system you get breached. This could mean eight weeks without any income. It The onus is on you to prove that you are worthy of your payment. .

Being unemployed is tough.. Unemployment puts pressure on relationships often leading to relationship break-up. Many unemployed face mental illness.

It is often extremely difficult to find adequate housing . Even with the rent allowance it is difficult to afford. Many real estate agents also discriminate, refusing to rent out their properties to unemployed people..

Unemployment must be fought. A shorter working week without loss of pay is a key demand which fights unemployment at the bosses expense.

Mumia Abu Jamal off death row!

Mumia Abu Jamal has a long history of fighting the racist imperialist US state machine. He has been campaigning ever since a teenager demanding the right of his high school be renamed Malcolm X High.

He has been a black Panther and a Move activist. The imperialists are trying to make an example of him. The message they were sending, loud and clear, to young black activists is that if you stand up and fight you face the prospect of being framed up and face the death penalty.

Well that is what happened to Mumia. It is only thanks to strong campaigning by left and Black organisations that he has his life. Mumia is still considered to be

The demand also give employees more leisure and more time to spend with families,

In short, unemployment is a disaster for hundreds of thousands in this country. It is especially important that unions take industrial action against work for the dole.

The unemployed must be organised to fight the many attacks such as work for the dole, breaching and quarantining. Militant, conscious and organised, the unemployed have the potential to be a detonator for revolutionary class struggle. They must though, be linked to the rest of the working class.

“guilty” and therefore faces life imprisonment without parole.. We believe that he is totally innocent and will not be satisfied until he is free and his name cleared. .

Communists oppose the death penalty outright. For a start many convicted and killed have been retrospectively cleared thanks to dna evidence. With the death penalty there is no going back. In America it is a weapon against blacks to maintain subordination. If you step out of line, a death sentence may be the price.

Communist Left salutes Mumia as a hero. He has consistently proclaimed his innocence. He has never flinched in his

exposure of the US imperialist racist

terrorist machine.

Sectarian divisions threaten Iraq

The USA has formally withdrawn its troops from Iraq leaving the Iraqis to clean up the mess. This year there have been at least 156 killed by terrorist bombings. Overwhelmingly the victims have been Shiite, a sect of Islam. They are the majority both in terms of Iraq's population and as represented in their government. The bombers were Sunni, their rival sect. who are the minority Sunnis hate the government which they accuse of undertaking an anti Sunni vendetta.

The government in Iraq is supposed to be a coalition which includes both Shiites and Sunnis This coalition ended when the government charged Sunni leader Tareq al-Hashemi with terrorism. The response of the Sunni members of parliament was to boycott parliament. The government responded by removing all Sunnis from cabinet. Al-Hashemi has escaped to Kurdistan. Whilst Kurdistan is still part of Iraq, the government has no control. The government is

Another Black Death in custody. The killing goes on!

John Pat, Eddy Murray, Lloyd Boney Mulrinji Doomagee. A whole list of Black people have been killed in custody, or in the case of TJ Hickie, killed in the context of a police chase. No cop has ever been charged with anything related to these killings. Yet it is clear that many were victims of manslaughter or even murder. Doomajee, for example had serious internal injuries which could only be inflicted by someone with

demanding return. This is up to the Kurds.

There is talk of Sunni autonomy. We think that such an autonomy would be a step backwards. Communists support self-determination for nationalities such as the Kurds. We don't support it for religious groupings. There is a real fear of Iraq tearing itself apart.

When the US and allies (Coalition of the Willing) invaded Iraq they claimed to fighting for democracy. They thought that if they charged in, overthrew Hussein the Iraqi people would rally behind their banner and hail them as saviors. It hasn't turned out that way. The invasion has led to devastation and destruction and the loss of hundreds of thousands of lives.. Iraq is now dividing on sectarian lines.

considerable physical strength. The only people with access to the police cells at the time were the coppers.. The latest victim is Terrence Daniel Briscoe who died in an Alice Springs police cell. The police are claiming he died of a "lung complication". The family want to know the truth. There suspicion that he might have been belted to death.

We support a full enquiry into the death of Briscoe. The facts must be exposed!

Well there has been a Royal Commission into Black Deaths in Custody. Its recommendations were totally unsatisfactory. But none of them have been implemented! In no way is this surprising. The Australian state is a racist state committed to maintaining a white dominated capitalist power elite. The cops are their bully boys. This will remain so as long as the capitalists rule this country. The cops cannot be reformed. The call for “community control of the police” (Freedom Socialist Party) is dangerous and utopian.

There are also calls to “Jail Killer Cops” (Trotskyist Platform). Yes it would be good if killer cops were jailed.. But is this the demand revolutionaries should be making? It is possible that the odd

cop might be jailed (though this hasn't happened yet) The bourgeois system will only carry it out if there is mass pressure and then inconsistently. The problem is that it doesn't oppose the state in its totality. Bourgeois apologists acknowledge that there are bad cops who they are even prepared to jail. But what they don't accept is that the capitalist state in its totality is an instrument of racist terror and must be opposed —root and branch.

Our strategy must not be based on jailing individuals but fighting the state. This means workers defense!

Workers have an obligation to stand up against the racist attacks on the Black nations of Australia. All police intervention must be opposed, physically. This applies to the Northern Territory intervention.

Free Bradley Manning.

WikiLeaks has done the world a service by publishing secret documents concerning the operations of the US terror machine. It is believed that the source of many of these documents is Bradley Manning a US serviceman. He has been court marshaled and faces serious charges including “assisting the enemy.” Communist Left salutes Bradley Manning if he did what he is charged with. Proletarians of the world have an interest in knowing and understanding what this terror machine

is up to. We think all this treachery should be outed.

Of course, the imperialists don't like what he is doing. They have a vested interest in keeping things secret and the penalties are immense – especially for a serviceman. He faces a long stint in prison Currently he is being detained under barbaric conditions.

The workers movement throughout the world has an obligation to do our utmost to secure his release. He should be saluted as a hero.

Auckland Dockers strike

Since late last year Auckland dockers have held a series of strikes against the plans of their bosses. Ports of Auckland Limited. The plans of POAL are to outsource work, bring in private contractors and sack workers. The Maritime Union of New Zealand expects about 360 jobs to go. Auckland port workers have every right to be concerned. For the sacked workers it will mean hardship.

The bringing in of contractors will mean more “flexible work practices”. Translated this means undermining workers conditions and entitlements. The bosses have offered concessions and sweeteners to placate the workers. Correctly these have been rejected. Workers know that the stakes are high.

Of course contracting means the effective smashing of union organization vital for the basic defense of workers. As in Australia, Auckland wharfies have a tradition of militancy

Communist Left fully supports their strike action. However it is pretty clear

that they have a leadership which is prepared to conciliation. In fact they have been prepared to give up action for this to happen. This shows their weakness. Force is the only language bosses understand.

Workers should by-pass this leadership through the formation of factory committees. These are essential if workers are to actively resist sackings.

Essential for the success of the struggle is revolutionary leadership. A revolutionary communist party must be built or the conciliation will continue.

In Auckland the occupy movement is organizing community pickets. We hope the spirit of occupation spreads to the waterfront.

Essential for the success of struggle is workers solidarity. This means not just from workers in New Zealand but international solidarity. Australian wharfies must tack action in support of their New Zealand class comrades.

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