

COMMUNIST LEFT MAY DAY STATEMENT

FREE THE REFUGEES DOWN WITH THE DETENTION CENTRES SMASH ALL IMMIGRATION CONTROLS!

For the past ten days, the refugees of Villawood have shown heroic militancy. There has also been heroic militancy at Christmas Island and Curtin in Western Australia. This militancy has our full support. They have been in custody for month's even years. How much longer will it take ASIO to establish that they are genuine? Of course if you are a refugee you are considered guilty until proven innocent. Of course ASIO no doubt believes the Sri Lankan government guilty of human rights abuses. We say all refugees should be welcome and free, unconditionally.

The refugees come here because of justified fears for their lives. Tamils suspected of being Tamil Tigers get tortured or even killed. The Hazara people get persecuted in Afghanistan as do the Kurds in Iran. Some are victims of the war against Iraq. In the case of Afghans and Iraqis, the Australian government is responsible for the situation which made them refugees. Yet when they arrive in Australia, they are forced to live in prison camps. This was the policy of Howard, The record of the Labor Gillard Government is virtually no different. Even children are forced to live in cl e t e n t i o n.

As communists we are concerned about people being forced to suffer, We want them free immediately. However the issues go way beyond the lives of a few thousand people, important though this is. The refugee issue is being used by the ruling class to win support for their reactionary agenda. This means smashing unions, attacks on unemployed, social welfare and all working people. Tony Abbott did not succeed in winning the last election. But he did succeed in wedging ALP support in the western suburbs of Sydney and forcing Gillard Labor to right.

The question is: do we want to party to this agenda? Well woe betides if we do. If you think Howard was bad just wait till we see what Abbott has to offer. Of course the Gillard government is tailing Abbott on virtually every issue. Recently Abbott some "tough love" meaning serious attacks on those who are disabled. So Gillard says "me too" and announces her own attacks. People will suffer. The refugee issue is being used to sell to working people a right wing agenda.

The fight against Abbott means standing up for the refugees. Workers and unions must state clearly that they are unconditionally welcome here. Policy statements must be backed up by action. When the Refugees Action coalition organised a march in solidarity with the Villawood refugees, only two unions were visible. Unions must organise their own demos. These must be backed by strike action and direct action. This must begin now!

Communist Left believes in a working class movement to free the refugees. The protest outside Villawood and outside Bowen's office are a modest beginning. It is force that the ruling class listens too and not peaceful polite protest. It is when their interests are threatened that they will make concessions.

It is no surprise that Labor is party to these barbaric centres. Labor believes in the capitalist state protecting "Australia's interest" For this it is prepared to sacrifice working class supporters and the refugees. We need a party based on working people which rejects the capitalist system. Build a revolutionary communist party!

Working people in this country have an interest in backing the refugees and rejecting the ruling class offensive. We need a movement which wins workers to their class interest. It is this type of movement Communist Left is committed. We urge all workers to stand up for the refugees, reject the detention centres and all to be allowed to live here, unconditionally!

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