

SMASH THE BICENTENARY

This is Australia's Bicentenary, sponsored by Amatil, Nissan and the Coca Cola company. As if anyone could avoid it. Every day, on the television, in the newspaper and on the street, we are being bombarded with propaganda about how great Australia is. Yet it's a paradox. Australia is being promoted as great precisely in a period when it is in a decline. The capitalist system is in decline and Australia is in decline with regard to other nations within the system. The ruling class are fully aware of the paradox. The Bicentenary is in fact an important political weapon in their bid to make the poor the exploited and the working class pay for the economic crisis of capitalism. They hope that by persuading us to be good Australians that we will accept lower wages, unemployment cuts in the public services (including the dole) and even our unions being smashed. The Bicentenary is an attack on the working class. It must be smashed.

Australia remains as it was 200 years ago. A British colony. The Constitution we received in 1902 is a certificate of imperialistic domination and not of independence. The Queen, through her proxy the Governor General, is head of state and head of the armed forces. The Constitution prohibits not just socialism, but even significant reforms or any interference with multinational profits. Any government which defies the Constitution will be dismissed irrespective of electoral popularity. Billions of dollars are made by the imperialists out of investment in mining and rural industries out of Australian soil. The Australian bosses work hand in glove with the imperialists.

Australia was established by the conquest of the Black people. As British imperialism expanded the Blacks have been forced on to less and less land, been given the worst paid jobs, suffered from malnutrition, high infant mortality and suffered from consistent white racist and state repression. Recently it has been discovered that hundreds of Blacks are being killed in custody. The Black people have little to celebrate by the Bicentenary and understandably they are angry. However, they alone are not enough to smash the Bicentenary.

The Bicentenary must be made a question also for the working class. It is only when the whole of the working class take direct action and not just the Blacks for the Bicentenary to be totally destroyed. This does not mean burying the Black question. On the contrary, if the white working class turn a blind eye to imperialist attacks and state repression of the Black people then it cannot fight the system when it attacks them. White workers have benefited from imperialism, but these privileges are negligible compared to their exploitation as wage slaves. This is why the Communist Tendency is in continuity with the Communist Left - the only tendency which has raised the question of self-determination for the Torres Strait Islanders. Their demand for the right to secede must be immediately backed by working class action now, Blacks have also had a record of working class militancy. Because of racism they have been ignored and have remained unorganised.

The main vehicle for reconciliation between white workers and imperialism is the Labor Party. It is no accident that the Labor Party is the main promoter of the Bicentenary. The Hawke government was elected on the basis of a Price and Incomes Accord. Since then we have had Accords Mark II and III. Now we have a two-tiered wages structure. Hawke no longer reckons that a Bicentenary can bring us consensus instead of an Accord. The Unsworth government is riding the Bicentenary bandwagon also. He hopes the Bicentenary will help win support for such reactionary measures as gun laws (which means guns for cops and not ordinary people), repressive legislation against train vandals and jail for graffiti. And by being patriotic he hopes we'll forget his massive spending cutbacks which

hurt the pockets of working people. Smashing the Bicentenary requires a political struggle against the Labor Party.

The Bicentenary must be smashed and smashing it requires a class perspective. Unfortunately, this is not the view of the Black Protest Committee. The B.P.C. has made it clear that the demos must be peaceful. Sometimes a premature clash with the cops can be adventurist and counterproductive. But the B.P.C. believes in peaceful protest as a matter of principle, so as to remain respectable. Gary Foley, Black leader, wants the protests to herald in a new era of reconciliation between Blacks and Australians. As long as White Australians accept finance capital (and the state which maintains its control) this remains a reactionary utopia. Keeping the protests peaceful means accepting the Bicentenary. Unity between Blacks and working class is the way to do it. Strike action is overdue. We must unite to smash this carnival of reaction which is part of the bosses offensive against the poor, exploited and working class people, as well as the Blacks.

Unfortunately, the Left has fallen in behind the Black Protest Committee. This includes the overtly popular Front and respectable Communist Party, as well as the International Socialists who claim to be militant and class conscious. Failure to mobilise workers to smash the Bicentenary, even through propaganda alone, shows up the bankruptcy not just of the IS and CPA but also SWP, SPA, CPA (ML) and Socialist Action. The Communist Tendency alone fights for the continuity of the Marxist Tradition, which breaks the working class from the shackles of bourgeois ideology and the political leadership of the Labor Party.

Working Class Action to Smash the Bicentenary!

Self Determination for Blacks and Torres Strait Islanders!

Communist Tendency 80 Angel Street Newtown