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Howard's troops invade Black Northern Territory

Little Children are Sacred is a report which exposes sexual abuse against young children in the Northern Territory. The Federal government has used this report to masquerade as saviour of black children. On June 21 the government has enforced control by imposing leases taking away control from the community without any negotiation or consent. Troops and cops have moved in to enforce control.

Communists reject the concept of paedophilia because we believe children technically below the age of consent can have meaningful coessential sexual relations and should have the right to do so. But it is clear that many of the attacks were either rape or with children too young to understand. In no way do we support this. But in no way is this invasion justified. The government is imposing a police state. This invasion will not solve the problem of paedophilia.

There is nothing new about the abuse of young children. Communities and the black bureaucrat's council known as FCAATSI (now disbanded) have been asking for assistance for a long time. The government offered nothing. There are, of course, far more significant dangers facing Black children and adults in the Territory. In May this year a report on Black health exposed the high rate of women dying at childbirth. Black people have a life expectancy of at least ten years below the expectancy of non indigenous Australians.

The conditions facing Black people in their communities are atrocious. It has been estimated that another 1.2 billion dollars needs to be spent to make Black housing up to scratch. Many communities do not have a resident doctor and it is often hundreds of kilometres to a community, town or city where there is one. Far more mothers die from child birth than compared to the non-indigenous population. The food that is available is often totally unhealthy. All this is of far more consequence to the lives of Black people than sexual abuse. But does Howard and his minister Brough want to deal with all this?

'Some token changes are promised but there is no indication that they have been budgeted for. Even if the promises offered are delivered and carried out, this would be only the tip of the iceberg. What Brough is delivering is a police state

It is noteworthy that when the report was delivered, Howard's Health Minister, Tony Abbott proclaimed that Aboriginal people would have to wait for decent health. Effectively he was throwing black lives in the too hard basket. Mal Brough, on the other hand, argues that the government has a 'duty of care' and goes in gung-ho, without any plan or consultation either with the communities or even with the Northern Territory Government.

Being a military man, his military solution is impose the army and place communities under military control. Howard believes that his right to invade “failed states” in the Pacific. He now thinks he has the right to invade failed communities in the northern Territory. For Howard, imperialism begins at home.

The Federal government has taken full control.. Some of the communities taken over have no record of paedophilia so there isn't even a fig leaf of a rationalisation for Howard's police state. Howard merely doesn't want these communities to run themselves. Philosophically he is opposed to even token control by Blacks over their societies.

The Howard -Brough agenda was, initially to force Black kids to undergo health checks, irrespective of parental consent. When they were informed that this might constitute assault, another strategy was needed. This strategy is withdrawing Centre Link payments if parents don't co-operate. This has been advocate by Cape York bureaucrat Noel Pearson.

Noel Pearson's proposal works hand and glove with the government's overall agenda for the smashing the welfare system. Howard has announced that single parents will only get money if their parental standards meet the Howard government's requirement. Yes there are many parents out there, black and white who have trouble looking after children. They receive a payment which supports a single person only with difficulty. They need assistance and not poverty. Child care should be considered a job and be paid for as such. Dysfunctional parents will not become better parents by more poverty.

Community destruction is not the way to defeat child abuse. There may be a few children saved and a few criminals arrested by Howard's racist takeover. But the price will be the destruction of many communities and this could lead to much more abuse than that currently exists. It is through strong community organisation that such anti-social practice can be defeated. It will be enhanced when the community is weakened.. The army cannot stay forever. Howard is having problems getting enough personnel to control the camps currently under occupation. He has to rely on police donated from the forces of the states.

Whilst we think ideological opposition to any form of Black control and welfare “reform”(meaning taking away people's money) are Howard's main motivations, this takeover will assist any mining company which wants to exploit any mineral wealth discovered The companies will no doubt pay less than they would had they had to negotiate with the people as opposed to the new lease-holder, the Federal Government. Howard is fully committed to the exploitation by imperialist mining companies. No doubt he will offer black labour at discount rates.

This invasion is an outrage and should be opposed by the left and workers movement. It should be opposed with action and not just words.

For organised workers opposition to Howard's invasion of Black Northern Territory!

Howard also hopes to use this invasion to expose the states. All of which are, at the moment controlled by Labor. The Federal Howard Government has the will and the means to act against paedophilia and the states cannot is the message he hopes to ram home. Howard has realised that thing run more efficient under Federal control.

He also wants to expose the Labor Party. What he wants to show is by acting decisively, he can show that state and territory Labor Governments are not, and therefore complicit in protecting paedophilia.

lie also hopes that these raids will galvanise support from chauvinist Australia and help bring home his electoral bacon. Public opinion polls have shown that a majority do support these terror raids. But they don't support

Historically, the states have played an important role containing Federal Labor, preventing such a Labor government to carry out any form of radical reform programme. Now that Labor has abandoned any commitment to such a reform programme, the states are merely an obstacle to having a sensible centralised water planning scheme needed to

It is no surprise however that Labor leader Kevin Rudd is giving the invasion in-principle support. He has minor and tactical difference. One main one is that he wants the government to recruit more Federal police as opposed to enlisting state police officers. Rudd, a true blue pc supporter realises that the state forces are stretched to the limit. This hardly constitutes principled opposition! R is a party to Howard's racism!

The Black communities must be defended unconditionally! What is needed is a programme of public works. Millions, in fact billions should be spent on the education, health transport and jobs. It is clear that neither of the major parties offer this

To the indigenous people of this country, capitalism only offers power and state repression. The only way forward is socialist revolution, a revolutionary workers and farmers government .This is the only way which Black people can be free of state repression, have the right to work (as opposed to slave labour) decent community amenities, health and education and the right to self- determination.

The opposition from the left has been minimal and atrocious. Even more disgraceful has been the silence of the trade union movement. At the main demo held in Sydney several hundred attended, mainly from the radical left. But there was no trade union contingent.

The workers movement must act now! Those who are party to Howard's racist attacks cannot fight Howard's agenda when it is attacking unions!

Reactionary Rudd prepares to govern!

The Liberal party s running scared Every opinion poll is predicting a comfortable Labor victory with Rudd as the preferred prime minister. In the past gimmicks, manipulation and lies. pandering to backward racist chauvinism of Australian electorate has won support from those who were influenced by the likes of Pauline Hanson.

These days' people are not interested in their chauvinist gimmicks. Their hard line in relation to Mahomed Haneef didn't win them any support. It just exposed them as sneaky and dishonest which they are. The flimsy case against the doctor, eventually abandoned, also exposed the blatant injustice of the anti-terrorist legislation and the injustice of Kevin Andrews not allowing an innocent doctor to stay in Australia where he was working.

People are more convinced by Howard's Northern Territory raid but not convinced enough to support the Liberals. Essentially their chauvinist bag of tricks is not working. Many chauvinists are more concerned about the economy. They feel the squeeze in relation to house prices and feel that Howard has betrayed his promise not to raise interest rates. Although if you listened closely, Howard didn't promise to maintain interest rates (he only promised that they would be less than under Labor) that is what he was perceived to have promised. While Howard and Costello crow about their economic prowess, Rudd is more in tune with home buying battlers.

Of course a big factor favouring Rudd is the overwhelming opposition to Work Choices. Howard has been so embarrassed that he has dropped the name. No one has been fooled. Everyone realises that holiday, overtime and penalty rates are under attack. We also know that with Australian Workplace Agreements it is the bosses who have the upper hand. Howard's promise that no workers would be worse off has been exposed in action as a lie. Howard had no mandate for Work Choices. People are angry!

Rudd's alternative has been accurately called by many unionists, "Work Choices light". Why? Because it maintains key elements of Work Choices. All of which attack the working class. Rudd has assured us, and the ruling class that "there is no going back to the industrial culture of an earlier age."

To this end he has therefore made it illegal to strike except during a bargaining period. All strikes must be voted upon through a court controlled secret ballot. Unions "will not be able to strike in support of an industry wide agenda" Unions will be prohibited from striking around political issues. Unfair dismissal laws will still apply to companies who employ less than fifteen workers. Rudd considers that strike pay ought to be made illegal Rudd is committed to maintain the reactionary Australian Building and Construction Commission.

Those who defy Rudd's dictates within the Labor Party, such as Joe MacDonald and Dean Mighel, get expelled. Kid gloves for the bosses. An iron fist for the unions: that is the Rudd philosophy!

Rudd openly considers himself an "economic conservative". But it is hard to find an issue on which he isn't a conservative. He is fully aligned with US imperialism despite being an opponent of the invasion of Iraq. He supports the invasion of Afghanistan. Make no mistake: unionists will be jailed under Rudd for carrying out their basic duties, defending their rights for members. The question is: why are union members' dues being spent on such a reactionary party. The answer is that the politics of their leaders are bankrupt when it comes to fighting Howard. Workers should demand their unions disaffiliate from the ALP. The building of a revolutionary party is a matter of life or death for the workers movement.

North Korean bureaucrats betray!

In 2001, along with Saddam Hussein's Iraq and Iran, North Korea was named as a component of George Bush's "axis of evil" Understandably, the bureaucracy of Kim Jong Il panicked. Bush was preparing to invade Iraq, so they figured that their country was threatened by the USA also. So North Korea expanded their nuclear weapons programme. The west panicked also threatening all sorts of economic boycotts. But North Korea did not budge.

North Korea is threatening no-one. It certainly has no ties with El Qaida. But the imperialists don't trust anyone who is not part of their axis. Israel, armed to the teeth with nuclear weapons has a long record of invading neighbours such as Lebanon, Palestine and Egypt. But Israel is an ally of the USA. US imperialism is not antinuclear. It wants nuclear weapons but only in the hands of countries it trusts. The imperialist's campaign to disarm must therefore be totally and categorically opposed.

The bargaining and power games seem to have worked. North Korea has agreed to close down its nuclear weapon plants. However what the bureaucrats have gained from this is grotesque and reactionary. Basically they are selling off North Korean labour to international capitalism and bargain rates. The bureaucrats will no doubt reap the benefits and make billions for disciplining the proletariat for the capitalist benefit.

Once again the North Korean bureaucracy is exposed as reactionary. It also exposes their reactionary concept of socialism in one country, the brainchild of Joseph Stalin. This was the start of the demise of the Soviet Union. The Korean bureaucrats want to go down the same road though perhaps at a slower pace. These bureaucrats must be overthrown through political revolution. Any measures to impose capitalism on the North Korean people must be categorically opposed. North Korea must become a revolutionary workers state.

Eighty thousand more unemployed to Work for the Dole.

When Work for the dole was introduced by the Howard Government in 2002, many of the projects involved light community programmes such as assisting a food co-op or working on a history of migrants in the Marrickville area. Many supposedly progressive organizations took advantage of the scheme and were coopted. These schemes, incidentally should have been carried out by paid community workers. Since then, though the work has got tougher and the hours of work longer. Older unemployed have also been forced to do it if they are classified as "shirkers".

Work for the Dole has meant slave labour doing tasks such as concreting, teachers and nurses aid work, light construction, bush regeneration and other tasks. For this unemployed are paid a mere fifteen dollars per week on top of their dole payment. In some extreme circumstances the extra money may not even cover transport to the project. Whilst the supervising Department, namely the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations has clamped down a bit, initially and maybe even now safety and amenities on many projects have been totally inadequate.

All this is a serious attack on the employed workforce as the jobs done under work the dole should be carried out by workers paid award rates and with award conditions. Work for the Dole as well as "mutual obligation" provisions are part and parcel of the government's programme to undermine awards. From the employers point of view there is no reason to employ when there is a pool

of unemployed, forced to work for nothing. Work for the Dole is therefore a job destruction project and not a job creation project. If unemployed refuse to comply they are breached and this may mean eight weeks without any income.

On the whole it is the public and community sector which has been taking advantage of this free labour. Churches have also benefited with unemployed working on Church schools and community

centres. Farmers suffering from the drought also benefit from free unemployed labour. Farmers are crying poor but they are getting plenty of money from government hand outs.

The current “reform” is based on Howard’s belief that the official level of unemployment is effectively full employment. He therefore believes that everyone on Newstart for any length of time is a bludger. From now on all long term unemployed, “shirkers” or otherwise, will be forced to do it.

For a start, the figures are wrong. They do not include those who live off savings and don’t register. They don’t include underemployed who work for eighteen hours a week. They don’t include those who choose not to register or illegal immigrants. But also, just because there are plenty of jobs doesn’t mean employers will employ many unemployed. Discrimination against older unemployed is rife. Many who were unemployed before this new boom do not have the skills to get a job in the current environment. Many are understandably demoralised. The jobs are not necessarily in an area where unemployed live. The jobs boom is linked to a boom in mining so those communities which need workers are in parts of Queensland and Western Australia. It is extremely difficult for those in the Hunter Valley (where there is a jobs shortage) to move the thousands of kilometres to where the jobs are. Often in the new growth areas there is a shortage of housing.

Howard’s reforms will not create jobs. They will create suffering. It is difficult to live on the dole at the moment. It is tougher when you have to work for it

What should be crystal clear is that the “welfare reform” programme is not merely aimed at the unemployed. It is part and parcel of their overall programme to undermine the wages, conditions and union organization of all workers. It is therefore disgraceful that “welfare reform” or Work for the Dole hardly rates a mention at massive rallies against Work Choices. The unions including the supposedly “left” CFMEU (covering miners and building workers) and the Australian Manufacturers Union have dumped it in the too hard basket.

Especially treacherous is the Labor Party. When Work for the dole “Left” leader Anthony Albanese made strong statements. The problem is though one institution taking advantage of free unemployed labour is the NSW Labor Government led by Morris Iemma. The state government uses unemployed labour to maintain gardens at Lidcombe TAFE as well as state schools. Albanese’s political ally Carmel Tebbutt state member for Marrickville explained that Work for the Dole was part of the scenery” and was “ok when it was working well” She explained that this was the case at Lidcombe TAFE.

Slave labour is never justified. If Lidcombe TAFE wants labour to maintain its’ gardens then the state government should pay for the labour at full rates!

Work for the Dole is one issue on which ALP Federal leader, Kevin Rudd maintains his silence. He has actively support Howard’s reactionary ‘reform” to make single parents and those with disabilities be work tested and, if required do work for the dole.

Work for the Dole must be smashed. Here we don’t object to unemployed people doing work. But all work must be full time work with proper conditions, paid at proper award rates.

REAL JOBS FOR REAL WAGES!

The attack on unemployed people not only forces them to suffer it is part and parcel of Howard's offensive against the workers movement. It is therefore a disgrace that the workers movement refuses to act. It is not surprising though. It is a product of the reformist and Stalinist politics which dominate the union leaderships and the degeneration of their politics

Venezuela: Chavez disowns Marxism

We reprint, below a letter from Earl Gilman to the Argentine solidarity e-mail group. This group has extensive contacts throughout Central and South America. Currently in Australia there are many illusions in the Venezuelan Revolution and its leadership. These have been sown by the Democratic Perspective which is part of the Socialist Alliance. DSP claims to be a Marxist tendency within the Alliance. The statements of Chavez, quoted Gilman, clearly expose his abandonment of Marxism. This is a blow to the Venezuelan revolution. Without a Marxist method, consciously applied, the revolution will be deformed, if not defeated. The failings of the Russian revolution lie not in its proclaimed adherence to Marxist method but in its betrayal of Marxism. Yes, Marxism is just as relevant today as it was in Lenin's time

By e-mail to Argentina Solidarity

it was in the Nineteenth century. And even if the practice of Chavez is better than his rhetoric, his anti-Marxist statements are a blow as Marxism must not only be practiced, it must be consciously understood.

We will not answer the challenges Chavez poses except to point out that they have been raised many times by far more sophisticated theoretician such as Andre Gory and have been answered. No Marx did not have a "deterministic vision of socialism". Chavez either doesn't understand Marxism or is being dishonest. We challenge all the apologists for Chavez to confront the letter. We have both limited access to Chavez speeches and also understanding of Spanish. We will happily apologize, if E Gillman is misrepresenting or selectively quoting.

Chavez is quoted in Aporrea (7/29/07) that in recent speeches he has said the new party, the PSUV will not be Marxist-Leninist because Marxism is a dogmatic thesis that is now over and is not in accord with today's reality. In addition, the working class, he says, is not the motor of socialism. Chavez says: 'Work today is something else, it is different, it is information and it is televised y Carlo Marx couldn't dream about such things.' He added: "I am a socialist, Bolvarno, revolutionary. In respect to the Marxist road, I am not a Marxist. I do not share this thesis because it is a deterministic vision of socialism." He then attacked Marx for supporting the invasion of Mexico by the US and by Britain. (I believe Marx later modified his position E.G.)

One day after Chavez's speech, the Minister of Peoples Power and Planning and Development, Jorge Giordani stated that: "There does not exist any contradiction between private enterprise and Venezuelan socialism." Apparently, he doesn't see the contradiction between being a "Minister" and Peoples Power. . people who never chose him to lead them. Apparently, Chavez is taking a turn to the right. If the working class is not the motor of revolution, then apparently the officer corp. are that motor. Though he may make justified criticisms of Marx, by rejecting the Marxist method he is following the footsteps of such figures of General Velasco of Peru and General Juan Peron of Argentina.

EARL GILMAN