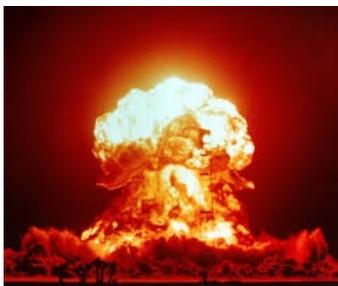


Build a Socialist Anti-war Movement!

“The present crisis is characterized by a terrible chasm between the scale of the danger of war and the absence of any organized movement against it. There is no way to stop the drive toward war outside of the politically conscious intervention of the working class within the United States and internationally.” – [World Socialist Website 18/4/2017](#)

The Growing Danger of World War

Each day it becomes clearer that the U.S. is pushing the world closer to a potential nuclear conflagration that could lead to the deaths of millions. Over the last twenty-five years, the United States has attempted to reverse its relative economic decline through the use of military force. In order to secure control over the resource rich regions of the Middle East and Central Asia, the United States and its allies have launched wars that have led to the destruction of entire countries including Iraq, Libya, Syria, Yemen and Afghanistan. These wars have been launched on bogus “humanitarian” grounds, under the unending “War on Terror” or the perennial favourite of stopping “WMD’s”.



“In the period of crisis the hegemony of the United States will operate more completely, more openly, and more ruthlessly than in the period of boom.”

– Leon Trotsky, 1928

It is now evident that the United States is prepared to use military force to subordinate its two major nuclear armed rivals Russia and China. During Obama's Presidency, tensions with both the U.S. and China increased as the United States and its allies militarily encircled both countries.

Under the "pivot to Asia", announced in 2011, the United States has increased its military forces in the Asia Pacific and deliberately inflamed the regional tensions over the South China Sea to justify its build up.

Under Obama, the United States and Germany supported a far right coup in the Ukraine in order to remove Russian influence in the country. NATO has moved its troops into Poland and the Baltic States right along Russia's borders. The United States also stoked the bloody Syrian conflict by supporting Islamicist forces to overthrow the Russian aligned Assad regime.

This process has been escalated under Trump, who heads the most right-wing regime in United States history. Wheeling out the same "Weapons of Mass Destruction" lies that were used in justify the 2003 Iraq War, Trump and the Generals are threatening even more devastating wars.



U.S. Missiles being launched on 7th April 2017

In early April, Trump reversed his policy of temporary detente with Russia by directly striking the Assad regime directly for the first time, after unproven allegations that Assad used

chemical weapons. These strikes greatly increase the chance of direct conflict between Russia and the United States in Syria.

In the case of North Korea, the United States is using the nuclear program of the impoverished and isolated North Korean regime as a justification for threatening military action. He declared that "strategic patience" was over and that the United States will "solve the problem" of North Korea. The small nuclear arsenal of North Korea is being conflated into an existential threat to international peace and security.

The real aim of the American war drive on the Korean peninsula is to further justify its military build up against China and remove North Korea's role as a buffer state protecting China's north eastern border. The strategic interests involved in North Korea are not fundamentally different to those that drove China and the U.S. to fight each other directly in the Korean War seventy years ago, a war that killed an estimated 3 million Koreans.

Hypothetical "possible" North Korean nuclear strikes are being used to justify pre-emptive military action on North Korea. Even if such an action led to "only" an exchange of conventional weapons, tens of thousands of citizens of Seoul could be killed by North Korean artillery and countless civilians in North Korea. A nuclear exchange between the U.S. and North Korea would obviously be more catastrophic. The media and the United States government are also deliberately downplaying that any conflict could also escalate into a clash with Russia and China that both border North Korea.

Both the recent use of the MOAB device in Afghanistan, the largest bomb used in a conflict since the bombing of Hiroshima and the missile strikes were designed as unmistakable threats to both China and Russia that there are no limits on the reckless violence that the U.S. will use in pursuing its aims of global domination.



U.S. capitalism is up against the same problems that pushed Germany in 1914 on the path of war. The world is divided? It must be redivided. For Germany it was a question of 'organizing Europe.' The United States must 'organize' the world. History is bringing mankind face to face with the volcanic eruption of American imperialism."— Leon Trotsky, 1934

After decrying Trump as a virtual Russian agent, the entire political elite has now swung behind Trump. This was most dramatically demonstrated by the recent prostration of the entire U.S. Senate who were bussed to the Whitehouse for a "briefing" on the war plans against North Korea. In Australia both major parties have swung fully behind the U.S. war drive. Other parties such as the Greens have only offered limited criticisms based on the nationalistic position that Australia should follow a more "independant" foreign policy.

Where is the anti-War Movement?

Given the dire state of the threat to world, why have we not seen a large scale anti-war protest movement as we did in the build up to the invasion of Iraq in 2003? In Australia hundreds of thousands marched in Sydney and Melbourne alone. It is certainly not because the millions of people who marched or that young people have become pro-war. A deep



strain of anti-war sentiment still exists in the global working class.

The major change is that in the last fourteen years, is that many of the groups that helped organise the anti-war coalitions of 2003, have drastically moved to the right and embraced imperialism. Characterised by the ICFI as “pseudoleftist” political groups such as the International Socialist Organisation and Socialist Alliance in Australia, under the guise of backing “humanitarian wars” have backed U.S. military action both in Libya and Syria. These groups represent the class interests of the upper middle class whose material interests have become intertwined with the interests of Wall St. The evolution of these groups into open supporters of Imperialism is detailed in the following recent article [World Socialist Website article ; Pseudoleft endorses Syrian onslaught](#) If not openly endorsing U.S. actions these groups are downplaying or remaining silent on the growing dangers of World War Three. Nearly the entirety of the organised middle class protest movement of 2003 including various anarchist, pacifist, clerical and Trade Union backed groups are also in support of or silent on the growing threat of war.

An International socialist anti-war movement

Opposition to war can be carried forward only as an explicitly working class movement, one that sees militarism and the war on the working class as two sides of the same class policy, two products of the bankruptcy of the capitalist system.

– wsws.org – [“Ten years since the global protests against war in Iraq”](#)

What is needed urgently is the development of an explicitly socialist anti-war movement that does not seek to sow illusions that peace can be achieved by supporting or pressuring one capitalist party or another. This was the ultimate source of the failure of the 2003 anti-war movement.

What is driving the major powers ever closer to conflict is not the particular policies or pathologies of individual politicians or even parties. If Hillary Clinton had won the 2016 election, the world would still be on the path to war. In Australia, the major parties are united in their support for U.S. Imperialism whilst the Greens only offer strategic differences in how best to advance the interests of Australian “national interests”.

Instead what is driving the dynamic is the contradiction between a globalised capitalist system of production and the division of the world into competing nation states. As long as this archaic system continues, the various major powers will seek to advance “their” corporations and profit interests at the expense of their rivals. The competition for resources, areas of influence and markets cannot be resolved peacefully. This competition has been worsened in the nine years since the GFC as the sources of profit have continue to shrink.

The threat of war is inseparable from other attacks on the working class. The same forces that drive competition between rival capitalist states drives them to attack the living conditions of working class in their own countries, endless austerity is the result.



Trillions of dollars of resources are channelled away from public services and into the war machine. The agenda of war and austerity cannot be advanced ultimately through democratic means so the capitalist states build up ever more oppressive laws and surveillance to crush any future resistance. Therefore the struggle against war and militarism is not separate from the broader struggle for the rights of the working class.

Therefore the only progressive answer to the current crisis is an international socialist anti-war movement that seeks to unite the global working class against war and against it

ultimate source, the nation state and profit system itself. The global economy needs to be taken under the democratic control of the international working class and harnessed for the needs of all, not just a tiny oligarchic elite.

Capitalism as Marx explained, creates its own grave diggers. The only social force that can bring about this change is the hundreds of millions indeed billions of workers globally. The workers of Australia need to unite with their class brothers and sisters in the North and South America, China, Russia, India and across the globe to defend their common class interests and to prevent a new world war.

Principles of a Socialist Anti-War Movement

In 2016, the ICFI published the important document *“Socialism and the Fight Against War”* which outlined the theoretical foundations of a socialist anti-war movement and the principles upon it should be built :

- *The new antiwar movement must be anti-capitalist and socialist, since there can be serious struggle against war except in the fight to end the dictatorship of finance capital and put an end to the economic system that is the fundamental cause of militarism and war.*
- *The new antiwar movement must therefore, of necessity, be completely and unequivocally independent of, and hostile to, all political parties and organizations of the capitalist class.*
 - *The new antiwar movement must, above all, be international, mobilizing the vast power of the working class in a unified global struggle against imperialism.*

The Anti-War Movement in Australia

The Australian ruling class has thrown itself behind U.S. imperialism for the last seventy years to advance its own interests in the Asia Pacific region. The ADF has fought

alongside the U.S. in every major conflict since World War 2. The ADF is now completely integrated into the U.S. War Machine. Any decision by the U.S. to begin a war against China or Russia would automatically involve the Australian military. Thousands of marines are based in Darwin, the Pine Gap Spy Base near Alice Springs is integral to guiding U.S. military strikes including nuclear weapons and drones. The 2016 Defence White Paper committed to a massive increase in the defence budget, raising it from \$32 billion in 2015–2016 to \$59 billion by 2025–26 as part of Australia's commitment to advancing its own and America's interests. The reactionary militarist agenda of the ruling class is advanced through the relentless promotion of the "ANZAC legend" centred around the "celebration" of the centenary of World War One. This was demonstrated once again as Turnbull visited troops in Iraq and Afghanistan to mark this year's ANZAC Day.



The demands of the Australia working class anti-war movement should include:

- Tearing up of the U.S. Australia alliance and the ending of all basing arrangements.
- The withdrawal of all Australian troops and police from Iraq, Afghanistan and Asian Pacific countries.
- The billions wasted on war should be redirected away from the military and towards socially useful spending on health, education, infrastructure and the environment.

None of these demands can be advanced within the current political set up. The Australian ruling class is fully committed to the U.S. alliance and the U.S. state has deep links within the major parties, media, military and security services.

All nationalist arguments advanced for moving further away from the U.S. alliance “strategic national grounds” must also be rejected. Any move towards a more “independant” Australian foreign policy within the context of the continuation of the global capitalist order would entail the massive build up of the Australian military in order for the Australian ruling class to be able to prosecute its own predatory aims separate to the United States. It would also do nothing to remove the fundamental causes of global war.

CALL OUT FOR PROTESTS

On April 18th 2017 the ICFI made the following call:

The Socialist Equality Party and the International Committee of the Fourth International (ICFI) are fighting for a new international anti-war, anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist movement of the working class based on socialist policies. The fight for the development of this movement includes the organization of demonstrations at workplaces, universities and in working class neighborhoods against war.”

As yet in Australia, there is very little if any organised anti-war demonstrations being called. Although we are not affiliated with the SEP or the ICFI, this website would like to contribute in any way possible to the creation of organised protests in Australia based on the principles outlined above.

To faciliate this process we created a [Class-Conscious Facebook Page](#) and a [No Imperialist War! Fight for Socialism! Facebook page](#) where socialist perspectives against war can be shared and protests shared and organised.

We would also continue to encourage readers to follow the World Socialist Website Daily and participate in their events such as the [International May Day rallies](#) and [lectures on the Russian Revolution](#).