

union officials. When we create facts on the ground, the officials will be forced to either lead the struggle against Abbott or be bypassed.

Take Back Our Unions, Take Back Our World

The organised rank and file necessary to build the general strike against the Abbott Government is also necessary to fight subsequent attacks on the working class by Australian capitalists. The union bureaucracy must be shattered and those genuine elements within it must dissolve into the rank and file movement. By its nature, capitalism continually attacks workers and siphons off ever more wealth and power to those already rich and powerful. To end the attacks for good, our rank and file movement must link up with similar movements overseas and rise up in worldwide revolution against capitalism.

To contact the Campaign for a General Strike to Stop Tony Abbott, look for that name on Facebook, or E-mail: generalstriketostopabbott@gmail.com.



What is Anarchism?

Anarchism is a social philosophy based upon the principles of liberty, equality and solidarity. It is the political dimension of a free society.

What is Communism?

Communism is the principle of “from each according to their ability, to each according to their need”. It is the economic dimension of a free society.

What is the Melbourne Anarchist Communist Group?

The MACG is an organisation of class struggle revolutionary anarchists who share political positions, articulated in theory, strategy and tactics.

We aim to encourage struggle by the working class for its own interests and, within that struggle, we aim to advance Anarchist ideas as its necessary philosophical basis.



Melbourne Anarchist Communist Group
PO Box 5108, Brunswick North VIC 3056
<http://melbacg.wordpress.com/>
macg1984@yahoo.com.au



THE ANVIL



NEWSLETTER OF THE MELBOURNE ANARCHIST COMMUNIST GROUP

Vol 4, No 1

Feb 2015

Free

STRIKE TO STOP ABORIGINAL DEATHS IN CUSTODY

The movement against Aboriginal deaths in custody is growing. It is growing because the deaths just keep happening, and that’s criminal. We’re not just talking about deaths from natural causes. Many of these deaths are far from natural.

Racism, Impunity and Genocide

We’re talking about:

(a) Eddie Murray. The coppers said he “committed suicide” in 1981 by hanging himself – when he was so drunk he couldn’t even stand properly.

(b) T.J. Hickey. In 2004, he was on his push-bike and chased by a cop car when he impaled himself on a fence. The coppers turned away a police rescue van. TJ died in hospital that night.

(c) Mulrunji Doomadgee. Also in 2004, Mulrunji was killed by a copper who “accidentally” fell on him in a Palm Island watch house and cleaved his liver in two.

(d) Mr Ward. He was cooked alive in the back of a prison van in 2008, while being transported across the West Australian desert in a heat wave.

(e) Ms Dhu. She died in police custody last year, with serious and unexplained injuries after twice being denied admission to hospital.

And these cases are only the tip of the iceberg. There’s pattern here and the pattern is racism, the pattern is police impunity and the pattern is genocide. No copper and no police officer in Australia has ever been convicted for causing the death of an indigenous person in custody. The 1987-91 Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody investigated 99 deaths and concluded that not one was due to police violence.

How Can Deaths in Custody End?

The movement against deaths in custody is growing, but so far it is nowhere near strong enough. Australia’s original sin, the Aboriginal Genocide and the theft of Aboriginal land, means that anti-Aboriginal racism is an integral part of the Australian State. Even if an enlightened reforming government were elected, Aboriginal people would still be arrested in numbers vastly disproportional to the non-Aboriginal population and Aborigines would still die unnatural deaths in custody. The problem is too deep-rooted for mere parliamentary change to be effective.

Aboriginal deaths in custody will only stop when the capitalist class as a whole, regardless of the governing party, becomes serious about stopping them. And that will only happen if the working

class as a whole mobilises to demand that the deaths cease. The clearest and most emphatic way for both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal workers to mobilise is through strike action.

A 24-hour protest strike on the day of the funeral (or other appropriate date) by all workers in that State, or possibly across Australia, called with the agreement of the victim's family, would speak to the bosses in the only language they understand. If we cut off the flow of profits whenever an Aboriginal person died an unnatural death in custody, the capitalists would soon get the message and find some way to pull their thugs into line. They'd be falling over themselves to implement the recommendations of the Royal Commission. Those recommendations were part of a deal which denied justice for past deaths, in return for hope that future ones might be avoided.

Why Would Workers Strike for Aboriginal Rights?

An injury to one is an injury to all. It might not be easy to get workers in Australia to strike against deaths in custody, but it would be in their interests. The working class can only defend itself by defending the interests of each and every worker. Any oppression hurts the working class by

sowing divisions which bind some workers to their exploiters through illusions or reactionary ideology. Divisions hurt workers' ability to fight back as a united force.

By campaigning throughout the working class, we can raise awareness of Aboriginal deaths in custody and show why workers must stop them. And when we campaign for workers to answer each unnatural death in custody with a protest strike, workers will find one more reason to re-build our unions and seize control from the Laborite officials. Our unions would become more effective weapons in the class struggle.

Revolution

The oppression of indigenous people in Australia will not end before capitalism does. We can fight some aspects effectively, like Aboriginal deaths in custody, but the wider issues of genocide and dispossession demand a workers' revolution. On Invasion Day 2015, the Melbourne Anarchist Communist Group takes a stand against racism, against genocide, against dispossession and against Aboriginal deaths in custody. Does this make us un-Australian? Yes, and proudly so.

TOUCH ONE TOUCH ALL



THE NEED FOR A RANK AND FILE MOVEMENT

The Campaign for a General Strike to Stop Tony Abbott is developing, but needs to go a lot further and a lot faster. Each day that goes by without an organised working class response is a day that Liberals harm working class people and democratic rights in Australia further, a day to destroy the environment, torture refugees, wage imperialist war in West Asia, stoke reactionary social forces and stack public offices with Right wing zealots. To wait till the next election is to concede Tony Abbott the right to commit any crime, no matter how appalling.

The Senate Won't Save Us

Firstly, many of the atrocious measures contained in last May's Budget were waved through because they were part of the appropriation bills which give the government authority to spend public money. This is how cuts to school and hospital funding for the States, cuts to higher education and many program cuts have gone ahead uncontested.

Secondly, relying on the Senate allows the Government to wangle deals with Right wing independents and minor parties if they have to – neither Labor nor the Greens can be trusted to oppose government attacks consistently. The Government got the abolition of the mining tax and its anti-refugee legislation through, so placing faith in the Senate is a recipe for disappointment.

The Labor Party Won't Save Us

The ALP, whatever its previous philosophy, is now a thoroughly neo-liberal party. Many members continue to fight the good fight inside it, but decades of rule changes

have ensured that the leadership always wins. Labor's differences with the Liberals are marginal and, left to their own devices, when in power they would implement most of the attacks they now profess to oppose. We have seen it already under Hawke, Keating, Rudd and Gillard. Now the ALP serves Big Business even more slavishly. Anybody who thinks Bill Shorten would chart a substantially different course from Abbott, let alone reverse his attacks on workers, has rocks in their head.

The Union Officials Won't Save Us

Virtually the entire union bureaucracy is loyal to the Labor Party (most of the exceptions having thrown in their lot with the Greens – good luck with that!). The limit of their ambitions is a return to a Labor government, with the more photogenic of their number landing plum parliamentary seats for themselves.

The officials will not challenge the neo-liberal consensus unless their own positions are threatened – and not necessarily even then. They quake in fear before the State apparatus and have no faith in their rank and file members. They cannot even defend the institutions over which they preside, let alone mobilise a movement that can stop broader government attacks on the working class.

We Have to Save Ourselves

Only by organising a movement at the base of our unions can we fight back. We have to mobilise a rank and file groundswell in favour of a general strike to stop all of Tony Abbott's attacks. Once the movement is strong enough, we must be prepared to act independently of the