

Public meetings to be held in Australia

Military intervention in East Timor: What are the real motives?

9 October 1999

The Socialist Equality Party (Australia) has issued an invitation to all those who wish to understand and discuss the driving forces behind recent events in East Timor to attend public meetings in Sydney and Melbourne, in late October and early November. Under the title "Military intervention in East Timor: What are the real motives?" the meetings will explain the economic, political and strategic interests at stake and advance an alternative socialist and internationalist strategy.

For 24 years Australia, the United States, Portugal and the United Nations stood by as silent accomplices, while the Indonesian regime invaded, then systematically brutalised, the East Timorese population.

Yet, according to an alliance of the mass media, the entire official political establishment and the anti-war protesters of yesteryear, these same Western powers have suddenly undergone a miraculous metamorphosis, now motivated by "humanitarian concerns" for the masses of East Timor.

To establish what the real purpose of the Australian-led UN military intervention is, the working class—and all those concerned with historical truth—must begin to probe beneath the propaganda headlines and self-serving rhetoric.

The historical record demonstrates that the tragedy now befalling the East Timorese people is a product of decades of manoeuvres and intrigue on the part of the very nations now claiming to "save" them.

One of the key factors is Timor Gap gas and oil, worth between \$11 and \$19 billion. All the interested parties—with Australia in the lead—are intent on securing their own share of these resources. The enormous wealth will flow, not to the Timorese people, but, via the establishment of a UN protectorate, to the

transnational companies whether of American, Portuguese or Australian origin.

For Australia, East Timor has also become the launching pad for a new foreign policy: the prosecution of its economic and geo-political interests, backed by military force, throughout the Asia-Pacific region. Prime Minister Howard has already foreshadowed a review of the country's defence forces and a major boost to military spending. His stated aim is to prepare further East Timor-style campaigns in the region, and to place the full financial burden onto the backs of working people.

The working class must oppose Australia's military campaign and begin advancing its own, independent solution to the crisis facing the oppressed masses of East Timor, Indonesia and the entire region.

The WSWs urges readers in Australia to make plans to attend the meetings.

Sydney

Sunday, October 31, 2:30pm

Liverpool Senior Citizens

185 Bigge St

Liverpool

Melbourne

Sunday, November 14, 2:30pm

Richmond Library

415 Church St

near cnr of Church St and Swan St

Tickets \$3/\$2 concession

For further information, please contact:

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To contact the WSWS and the
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