ICFI/WSWS public meeting in New Zealand

Five years since September 11: Causes and consequences of the “war on terror”

8 September 2006

This announcement is available as a leaflet in PDF *format. We encourage all WSWS readers in New Zealand to download and distribute it.*

The International Committee of the Fourth International and the *World Socialist Web Site* will be holding a public meeting in Wellington, New Zealand to discuss the driving forces behind the Bush administration’s “war on terror” and its international political ramifications. We warmly invite all WSWS readers and supporters to attend.

It has become a commonplace to declare that “everything changed” with the terrorist attacks in New York and Washington D.C. on September 11, 2001. But can the events of 9/11—which have yet to be adequately explained—account for world developments in the past five years? Or are there more fundamental historic, economic, and political factors at work?

The “war on terror”, or the “long war” as the Pentagon has labelled it, has nothing to do with protecting the lives and safety of ordinary citizens from terrorist attack. Instead, it has become the rubric under which the US ruling elite has advanced its imperialist interests abroad and torn up democratic rights at home.

For the Bush administration, 9/11 was viewed as an opportunity to advance its drive to subjugate the Middle East and secure US domination of the region’s vital oil and gas reserves. Despite the disasters created by Washington’s criminal wars on Iraq and Afghanistan, and Israel’s US-backed invasion of Lebanon, the Bush administration is preparing to strike against its next targets—Syria and Iran.

Under the auspices of the “war on terror”, torture, arbitrary arrest, and assassination have been openly embraced. The Bush administration has detained hundreds of people for years in Guantánamo Bay without trial, while an unknown number of other “enemy combatants” have been imprisoned and tortured in CIA-run “black sites” in Europe and the Middle East. Within the US itself, far-reaching “anti-terror laws” have created the scaffolding of a police state.

In like fashion, governments around the world have seized upon the “war on terror” to advance their own agendas. In New Zealand, Prime Minister Helen Clark’s Labour-led government is deeply implicated in the Bush administration’s crimes. It has dispatched elite SAS troops to assist in the occupation of Afghanistan, and sent engineering and naval personnel to Iraq. With the full support of the entire NZ political establishment—including the Greens—it has joined with the Howard government in Australia to prosecute neo-colonial interventions into East Timor, the Solomons and other Pacific states. Domestically, a series of anti-democratic and anti-immigrant measures implemented in the wake of September 11 have been augmented by the pernicious 2003 Counter-Terrorism Bill.

The *World Socialist Web Site* is establishing the political and programmatic foundations for a new, mass socialist movement of working people in New Zealand, Australia, the Asia-Pacific region and internationally dedicated to ending war and the capitalist profit system that gives rise to it. At the very heart of such a movement will be the fight for the international unity of working people around the globe, irrespective of nationality, ethnicity, colour or religion, to transform society to meet the interests of the vast majority, not the privileged few.

The Wellington public meeting will provide a forum for the discussion and clarification of these vital issues.

Nick Beams, Socialist Equality Party (Australia)

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national secretary and WSWS International Editorial Board member, will be the keynote speaker.

Wellington, Thursday September 28

Commencing 7 p.m.
Location: Victoria University Law School,
Old Government Buildings,
Lecture theatre 3,
Ground Floor, Bunny Street entrance
(opposite Wellington Railway station)

Tickets: $4 & $2 for students, pensioners and unemployed

For further information email: sep-nz@sep.org.au

To contact the WSWS and the Socialist Equality Party visit:

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