

# David North to address WSWS/SEP Sydney public meeting on Bush's Iraq escalation

17 January 2007

The *World Socialist Web Site* and Socialist Equality Party (Australia) will hold a public meeting in Sydney on Wednesday January 31, 2007 to oppose the illegal US-led occupation of Iraq, to discuss the escalating social and political crisis wracking both the US and Australia, and to outline a socialist perspective against militarism and war.

The Bush administration's recently announced escalation of the Iraq war—involving the deployment of an additional 21,000 troops and stepped up threats against Syria and Iran—defies the express will of the American people to end the occupation. While Washington cynically claims to be introducing democracy to the Middle East, the Iraq war has revealed the thorough disintegration of American democracy and the determination of the US ruling elite to press ahead with its agenda irrespective of the demands of the vast majority of the population.

All the official pretexts for the illegal invasion in 2003—including Iraq's alleged weapons of mass destruction and the Hussein regime's Al Qaeda connections—stand exposed as lies. Washington aimed to utilise military force as a means of offsetting America's economic decline in relation to its European and Asian rivals. Iraq's oil resources—the second largest in the world—are to be monopolised by US corporations, while the country's territory is being used as a springboard for further military interventions in the Middle East.

According to a study published last year in the British medical journal the *Lancet*, the US-led occupation has led to the deaths of 655,000 Iraqis since March 2003. This toll is set to escalate with the implementation of Bush's new plan, which is primarily focussed on subjugating the 2.5 million impoverished Shiites living in Baghdad's Sadr City. War against Syria or Iran would lead to a regional conflagration, inevitably

involving the deployment of nuclear weapons.

The Australian government has been an active accomplice in the Bush administration's crimes. Howard has backed Washington's bogus "war on terror" and endorsed its invasions of both Iraq and Afghanistan. In return for Canberra's support, the US has backed the Howard government's own neo-colonial operations in East Timor, the Solomon Islands, and throughout the South Pacific.

The essential economic and political factors behind the eruption of militarism and war must be critically assessed. Why is it taking place? What is motivating the re-emergence of colonial-style occupations? Why have the Democrats in the US and the Labor Party in Australia accommodated themselves to Bush and Howard despite mass antiwar sentiment in both countries? On what basis can the struggle against war and militarism be advanced?

These are some of the vital questions that will be discussed at the public meeting, as part of the *World Socialist Web Site's* efforts to develop a new international socialist movement of the working class against the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq and the plans already being drawn up for even bloodier military operations.

The featured speaker will be David North, chairman of the WSWS International Editorial Board and national secretary of the Socialist Equality Party in the US. We warmly encourage all readers of the WSWS and supporters of the SEP to attend.

Wednesday January 31, 7 p.m.  
Lakemba Senior Citizen's Centre  
Corner of The Boulevard & Croydon Street  
Lakemba

Tickets: \$2.00

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