Greetings to Australian congress from the Canadian SEP

Keith Jones
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Keith Jones, national secretary of the SEP (Canada) and a member of the WSWS International Editorial Board sent the following greetings to the Second National Congress of the Socialist Equality Party (Australia), which was held in Sydney from April 18–21, 2014.

Dear Comrades,

On behalf of the members and supporters of the Socialist Equality Party (Canada), I would like to extend warmest fraternal greetings to this Second Congress of the Australian SEP.

I have read the two draft resolutions that are the focus of your deliberations this weekend and strongly support their assessment of the explosive state of world class and geopolitical relations and of the urgency of the struggle to arm the working class with a revolutionary socialist program and perspective.

The 2008 financial crash and ensuing world slump announced—as the *World Socialist Web Site* and International Committee of the Fourth International insisted from the outset—the eruption of a systemic crisis of world capitalism.

In response, the bourgeoisie the world over is pursuing a program of social counter-revolution, seeking to level what remains of the social gains that the working class wrested through the massive social struggles of the last century.

Through bullying, regime-change campaigns, and war, the imperialist powers, spearheaded by the United States, are plundering resources, seizing strategic territories, and imposing capitalist restructuring so as to shore up their world position and intensify the exploitation of the working class.

As your resolutions outline, US imperialism is implementing a Eurasian "pivot" that has as its aim removing China and Russia as potential threats to unbridled US domination of the world and reinforcing and expanding US control over the Middle East and the Caspian Sea region, the world's two largest reservoirs of exportable oil.

In pursuit of these predatory objectives, Washington, as has been underscored by its recent drive to bring Ukraine under western imperialist domination, is quite ready to run the risk of unleashing war between nuclear-armed powers.

The US is also whetting the ambitions of German and Japanese imperialism, although, to be frank, their ruling classes are in little need of encouragement to revive their militarist and expansionist traditions. For the third time in a century, the German ruling class is seeking to transform Ukraine into a vassal state, a supplier of agricultural products, natural resources and cheap labor. Japan, even if currently acting in alliance with the US, is moving aggressively against China and reviving plans for reorganizing the Indo-Pacific region. Japanese Prime Minister Abe has repeatedly argued that Japan and India could forge the world's most important alliance and envisions India emerging under Japanese tutelage as both a military counterweight to China and the hub of an alternative cheap-labor supply network.

There are significant historical and contemporary parallels between the Canadian and Australian bourgeoisies. Although located at antipodes, they similarly asserted their control over vast resource-rich territories and began to assert their interests on the world stage as partners in the British Empire. They were thus ferocious enthusiasts for the first imperialist world war, sending, in Canada's case, some 55,000 youth and young men to their deaths on the battlefields of Europe.

In August 1940, just weeks after the fall of France, the Canadian bourgeoisie entered into a strategic

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partnership with its historic US rival—a partnership that was to grow exponentially during the remainder of the Second World War and in the decades to follow. The fall of Singapore was Australia's France.

And just as the Australian bourgeoisie is playing a leading role in US imperialism's "pivot to Asia," so the Canadian bourgeoisie, fearing both its own relative economic decline and that of its longtime partner to the south, calculates that it can best assert its global interests by supporting a resurgent US imperialism.

Under Liberal and Conservative governments alike, Canada has, since 1999, played a leading role in a series of US-led wars and regime-change operations, including the wars on Yugoslavia, Afghanistan and Libya. On Thursday, Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper, who has been playing an important and highly provocative role in rallying opposition to Russia, announced that Canada is deploying CF-18 fighter jets to Eastern Europe in support of the war-threats against Russia made by the US, Germany, and NATO.

There is very little support for this among the Canadian population, especially the working class. Indeed in Canada, as around the world, there is a vast and ever-widening gulf between working people and the traditional political parties, structures and organizations, especially the trade unions, all of which are utterly indifferent and hostile to their interests. The decades-long suppression of the class struggle only ensures that when the working class breaks the dam erected by "official society," its struggles will, from the get-go, take an explosive form, erupting outside, and developing in ever-more conscious political opposition to, the trade unions and bourgeois "left" parties.

In this context, your resolutions' insistence on the importance of the struggle against the pseudo-left, and characterization of it as a bourgeois tendency that articulates the interests of privileged middle class layers, utterly hostile to the working class and its striving for independent political mobilization, is pivotal. In Canada, as in Australia, the pseudo-left acts to uphold the authority of the unions and the social democrats, and to divide and politically suffocate the working class through the promotion of identity politics. Gauche Socialiste (Socialist Left), the Quebec group affiliated with the Mandelite international current, responded to the collapse in support for the Quebec independence movement—a crisis rooted in its role in imposing vicious austerity measures and open promotion of anti-immigrant chauvinism—by shutting down its own website and launching a new one in conjunction with a section of the union bureaucracy and dissident members of the big business Parti Quebecois, so as to resuscitate support for the discredited program of creating a capitalist Republique du Quebec.

We face immense challenges, but the Australian SEP and the ICFI can look to the future with great confidence because we incarnate the program of socialist internationalism—the necessity for the working class to mount a coordinated worldwide struggle against capitalism. This program corresponds to the objective logic of the class struggle and articulates the interests and revolutionary strivings of the most powerful and potentially creative force on the planet—the international working class.

Best wishes,
Keith Jones

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