

# Australian students speak about online May Day rally

Our reporters  
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*World Socialist Web Site* reporters spoke with students from Australia who were among those who participated in the International Committee of the Fourth International's (ICFI) online May Day rally, which began at 1.00 a.m. Eastern Australian Time on Monday.

The students responded enthusiastically to the event, commenting on the significance of its global character, the depth of the historical and political analysis presented by each speaker, and the importance of the Trotskyist movement's fight to unify the international working class against imperialist war.

**John**, a student at the University of Newcastle, about 160 kilometres north of Sydney, said the rally "was very inspiring and illustrated how the new communication technology provided by the Internet can bring the socialist political movement to masses of people internationally."

The historical analysis presented by the speakers, John said, "was very important and gives great clarification to events as they unfold. The material on the origins of May Day, which developed from the 1886 Haymarket Massacre during the fight for the eight-hour day, was also very clarifying and showed me the importance of reclaiming this revolutionary heritage.

"Peter Schwarz's report on the remilitarisation of Germany was quite shocking. What happened with the Nazi Party led by Adolf Hitler was a stain on world history. [For academics and the media] to glorify this is not only disgusting but also degrades the public's intelligence. It really illustrated to me the vicious role not only of the German government but all the associated governmental forces that are collaborating to support this campaign of remilitarisation.

"Peter Schwarz's explanation of the role being played by the Greens in Germany was also

illuminating. In Australia the Greens falsely portray themselves as some kind of alternative to Liberal and Labor but I've always seen them as just another form of those parties. The lessons from Germany highlight exactly what forces the Greens represent.

"It's incredibly important to tell people about socialism and flowing from this rally I'd like to actively participate in making people aware of socialism. I want to learn as much as I can about the history of the twentieth century."

**Elise**, 24, a student at Sydney's University of New South Wales, heard about the rally through the International Youth and Students of Socialist Equality club on campus.

"One thing that was particularly interesting, and an issue that the socialist movement brings, is the idea of internationalism," she said. "The speakers explained the international perspective of truly getting rid of national boundaries that are artificial and irrelevant to living as a human being... All wars are about having a national allegiance—prioritising your own nation over others—so war is an inevitable reflection of national separation.

"The idea of the working class has a democratising focus. It's a very equalising concept and one that's extended to the whole world. This is a very powerful and positive idea.

"The participation of people from 84 countries and six continents was really encouraging. It was not contained to any group or nationality but speaking to people across the world. It was really interesting to have that feeling of a global community coming together. The theory of Marxism has got such relevance for today."

Elise said she was concerned about the escalating war tensions in Ukraine. "We haven't seen such a critical

turning point as this for so long and that makes the socialist perspective even more pressing and relevant,” she commented. “I feel an increasing pressure to do something radical in response to failure of the current system.”

**James**, a University of Technology Sydney student, said the number of countries involved in the rally was “excellent.” It was “truly historic—the first time the ICFI has done anything like this” and “made clear the necessity for an independent movement and leadership of the working class to prevent war.”

James said the rally dealt with a wide range of issues, “from the fascist power in Ukraine, to the Obama administration’s provocations against China and the drive to war with the deployment of US military might. The speakers also highlighted the pseudo-left groups’ role as strong defenders of militarism and imperialism in the advanced countries and the fact that while they call themselves ‘left’, they are not left at all.”

Commenting on the US-led “pivot” against China, James said: “The US and Japan collaborate today but it may well end up that they oppose each other for control of the Pacific, as was the case in World War II. Although history doesn’t repeat itself, it’s as if they are in the same position.

“Nick Beams noted that 85 people control about 50 percent of the world’s wealth. This is a staggering polarisation of wealth and more than at any time in history. It’s unbelievable, and actually insane and irrational, that this sort of figure exists.”

**Ashley**, a Sydney high-school student, said she was “encouraged by the powerful demonstration of unity by the supporters of the ICFI all over the world.

“The ten speakers highlighted the failures of the world capitalist system and the sickening priorities of the ruling elite. While the severity of the crisis of global capitalism presents itself in mounting social inequality, the system is attempting to resolve its shortcomings with austerity measures, attacking democratic rights and the drive to war. This is very apparent with the US attempts to provoke a confrontation with Russia and China alike.

“The May Day online rally initiated an international comradeship and promoted strong anti-war sentiments. As a student, it brings me great confidence that the people are becoming increasingly conscious of the crisis of capitalism. The speakers provided exceptional

clarification of the failings of such a fundamentally destructive system, while encouraging a solution based on international socialism. This has truly inspired my need to commit myself and contribute to the success of the socialist perspective for the future of humanity.”



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