

SEP and IYSSE public meetings in Australia

On the centenary of WWI: Socialism and the fight against war

25 July 2014

On Monday August 4, 2014, the Socialist Equality Party (Australia) and International Youth and Students for Social Equality will mark the 100th anniversary of the outbreak of World War I with speak-outs at university campuses and public meetings in major cities.

World War I was an imperialist war, fought on all sides on behalf of the capitalist elites for control of colonies, markets and profits. Just 20 years after its conclusion, following the Great Depression, mass unemployment and the rise of fascism, the Second World War erupted. Together these two catastrophes caused unspeakable suffering and devastation, and the death of more than 100 million people.

One hundred years on, amid the most severe global economic breakdown of the capitalist system since the 1930s, a new world war is in the making. Over the past three months international tensions have escalated to levels not seen since 1914 and 1939.

The downing of Malaysian Airlines Flight MH17 has been seized on by the United States and other major powers to whip up anti-Russian fervour, threatening a diplomatic crisis and military conflict. The Abbott Liberal government, with the support of Labor, the Greens and the entire political and media establishment, has played a leading role in this campaign.

The confrontation with Russia is just the latest development in an ongoing acceleration of intrigue and violence. In the past year, the US has sought to carry out regime change in Syria, orchestrated a fascist-led coup in Ukraine and heightened tensions in the Asia-Pacific region through its “pivot” to Asia against China. The Israeli regime, with the backing of the US and the major powers around the world, is carrying out

what amounts to genocide against the Palestinian people in Gaza. Libya and Iraq are wracked by chaos and civil war as a result of US wars.

The other imperialist powers are now on the march. The German government and mass media are asserting that, as the dominant European power, Germany must once again assume a global military role.

In June, the Abe government in Japan, which has provoked immense tensions with China, announced it was “reinterpreting” the post-war constitution to allow Japanese military forces to wage war alongside its allies.

These developments are clear warnings that workers and youth will ignore at their peril.

The opening of World War I was marked by the betrayal of all the social democratic and labour parties, which lined up behind their own ruling classes to support the slaughter.

Today, the political establishment in every country has aligned itself with the new imperialist war drive.

The International Committee of the Fourth International (ICFI) and its sections, including the Socialist Equality Party of Australia, is the only movement fighting to mobilise workers and youth in every country against war. Like World War I, the danger of a third world war arises from the deepening crisis of capitalism. It can only be prevented through the fight for an internationalist and socialist program, which is aimed at mobilising the working class to overthrow the profit system before it plunges humanity into a catastrophe.

As the resolution adopted by the ICFI on June 9 this year, “Socialism and the Fight Against Imperialist War”, declares: The building of the Fourth International, under the leadership of the International Committee, is

the central strategic question. It is the only conceivable means through which the working class can be unified internationally.”

As part of the critical struggle to carry out this task, we urge workers and young people to attend the SEP and IYSSE public meetings on August 4.

Sydney

Monday, August 4, 7.00 p.m.

University of Sydney

Carslaw Lecture Theatre 375

Tickets: \$3/\$2 concession

Melbourne

Monday, August 4, 7.00 p.m.

Arts House, Meat Market

5 Blackwood Street, North Melbourne

(Melway Reference: 2B A9)

Tickets: \$3/\$2 concession

University of Newcastle

Tuesday, August 5, 5.00 p.m.

Club House, under the Bar on the Hill



To contact the WSWs and the
Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact