

Australian workers and youth speak about the danger of war

Our reporters
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Workers, students and youth attending SEP meetings in Melbourne and Sydney spoke with *World Socialist Web Site* reporters about the political issues discussed.

Sam, a third-year science student, said the two most important aspects of the SEP meeting were the discussion on Greece and the analysis of the US-led drive to war against China.

“Syriza is completely for the capitalist classes and has created a lose-lose situation for the working class... If I could speak to the Greek working class I would say break from Syriza, vote ‘no’ and rip your ties from the capitalist system. It is not working. This can be seen in the fact that you are in poverty and suffering.”

Commenting on the US and Australian military build-up against China, Sam said that the danger of war against China and Russia was “due to the aggression of the US and its allies, specifically coming from the ‘pivot to Asia’... Just because the American military think they can win, doesn’t mean they will. It is linearly focused on beating its enemies and doesn’t care about the results.”

Sam said the war drive could only be opposed by “calling on the working class internationally to reject capitalism and to rise up and decide that it is going to make the calls, instead of the bourgeoisie. We need to call on each other and become one international system, instead of separate nations fighting and discriminating. There is no need for war.”

Sam said he decided to apply to join the SEP following the meeting “because I believe there is a means for the working class to solve these problems, to work together in order to overcome the issues of capitalism, war and poverty. The night is always darkest before the dawn, as they say, and I think it is time for the dawn to come. The party is that dawn.”

Jean, from Bankstown in southwest Sydney, attended the meeting after being handed a leaflet about the US-Australia war moves against China.

“I’m Chinese and am very concerned about war. This is very dangerous. People in China and all around the world don’t want this to happen because it will lead to the death of many, many people. The US and the Australian government don’t care about what we think, all they’re concerned about is profits. This is why they are in the Middle East and it’s the reason for all this surveillance against China and the military exercises.

“The SEP’s leaflet has a headline say ‘provocations against China’ and this is completely right. I follow this situation but the Australian people don’t know anything about it. Your party is the only one explaining what is really going on and I think this is important. I took a lot of notes in the meeting today and will let people know about your party. We have to tell many people to oppose this,” she said.

Attending his first SEP meeting, **Dan**, 22 and unemployed, said: “I’m really concerned about the South China Sea issue and the SEP is the only organisation raising questions and trying to do anything about it.

“I didn’t know about the specific strikes planned against China [in the AirSea Battle Plan] and how they think China will just sit back and let America invade them. It just seems like they think they can do anything they want and get away with it! Vietnam, Iraq, it’s all the same.

“China is not Vietnam, it has a bigger population and they control a major part of the world’s economy. You can’t just cut them off and say no more for you. That will create another crisis and the working class is just supposed to sit back and accept what the higher ups have done. Movements like this are the only way to do something about this if we push for it and make a change.

Asked about the socialist perspective advanced by the SEP, Dan said: “That was probably the most important point raised [in the meeting]. There’s no way around the corporations or banks. You have to unite in a party.

Protests and individuals aren't going to cut it, we have to do it as a group, as a party. Instead of other people in higher positions making decisions for the working class, we need to make decisions for ourselves."

Wilfredo, originally from Nicaragua, said the meeting clarified him "about the problems that are affecting the working class around the world and about the potential of a world war.

"I'm now more aware about how NATO has allocated troops all over the border of Russia in order to provoke Russia militarily and that the US is doing the same in the Asia Pacific against China. US troops are in Darwin because they are carrying out military exercises in the area to provoke war with China. It's a staged provocation and is aimed at militarising the area with the Philippines, Japan and Australia.

"I also learnt about the economic situation in Greece. Some people argue that if Greece creates its own currency and gets out of the euro it will be the end of the problem. It's not that simple. Others have said Greece could turn to the BRIC bloc but that's not the solution either because it is part of the capitalist system. The solution is the workers should take power, not just in one country but all over the world because otherwise it will be defeated.

Fernanda, who has been unemployed for 14 months, said she came to the meeting because she was "intrigued" to find a socialist party campaigning against war.

"I had no idea there was a socialist party. All you see are Liberal, Labor and Greens." The daughter of a political activist who was imprisoned and tortured by the US-backed military junta in Chile, Fernanda said she learned a lot from the meeting.

"What I learnt today was that the US was behind the removal of Kevin Rudd. I had no idea. I thought it was just an inner party issue. That's been kept in the dark because the US was behind the dictatorship of Pinochet.

"I also learnt about the US military being in Darwin and the plans to station B1 bombers in northern Australia. That caught me off guard. I had no idea at all that the US is planning a war with China."

Fernanda has been unemployed since being made redundant by the New South Wales transport department last year, where she worked for three years as an administrative assistant and receptionist. She said she understood the poverty and mass unemployment imposed on workers and young people in Greece.

"We went through restructure after restructure, which I survived. Then I was offered a redundancy and I took it because there were no other admin roles that I could apply

for. I was in a corner.

"It's very competitive looking for work. I have applied for over a thousand jobs. Out of that I got 30 interviews, and only had one call for my references... I just stay home and apply for jobs. Being unemployed is boring. I don't like it. I really need to do something.

"There is no future here or anywhere else. It is not just about Greece. People in Greece should find another way. They should vote no to the European Union's demands."

In Melbourne, **Joseph**, a boilermaker originally from Chile, said: "The meeting illustrated things you don't normally consider—the idea of how capitalism works. That's why I'm here, to better understand what's going on. The idea of an international party and an international movement is good, that's what we have to have."

Danesh, who is studying mechanical engineering at the University of Melbourne, said: "The ruling class has decided that they want war. This meeting showed clearly that this will occur unless they are stopped. History will repeat, unless people stand up for themselves. The masses need more information and need to learn about history.

"I learnt from the meeting today that the core purpose of the SEP is to educate the working class. Once people are educated nothing will be able to stop them. The media just want to show what's in their commercial interest—they mask all of the issues covered in this meeting..."

"We need to understand history, economics, and how the media works. Trotsky and others understood how things worked in the interests of different classes. An individual cannot do this by themselves; universities will not do it, that's why we need meetings like these."



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