

# Australian workers and youth voice concerns over downing of Russian jet

Our correspondents  
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Workers and youth in Melbourne and Sydney spoke with *World Socialist Web Site* correspondents last weekend about Turkey's November 24 downing of a Russian jet over Syria and the escalating conflict in the Middle East.

Most pointed to US involvement in the increasing global geo-strategic tensions and the danger of another world war. Many rejected government and media claims about the "war on terror" and raised suspicions about the agenda behind the recent terror attacks in Paris.

**Tezera**, a factory process worker, originally from Ethiopia and now living in Lakemba, a southwest Sydney working-class suburb, was concerned about the implications of Turkey, a NATO member, shooting down a Russian military jet. "I'm not sure how far it will go, but some people are afraid that a third world war may break loose sometime in the future," he said.

"I don't think human beings can be so stupid to do those kinds of things again, but we have to do something to tackle the root causes of the conflicts. The basic cause is the lack of social justice and international justice. Some people want control of the economy of the world—maybe that's the real cause..."

"The government leaders may know the secrets behind the moves they are making but the people don't know what will happen to their countries. Things are going from bad to worse. In the name of patriotism, the leaders may be doing something else."

Asked about the drive to war, he asked rhetorically: "Why is America afraid of peace? Because it's losing its grip economically. Everybody is aware of the economic situation but unless there is true justice, there will be no peace."

Tezera distrusted the mainstream media. "The media is controlled by big, big people," he said. "I don't believe most of the media. I trust my own instincts. What's behind the news? I make my own interpretations. If they

tell you something, they are hiding something. You have to read between the lines."

**Sayed**, a postal worker from Bangladesh, commented on the downing of the Russian jet. "To me the whole thing is a kind of developing war," he said. "Russia and Turkey should sit down and talk and try to resolve this matter... They don't need to drag us to a world war situation... I think the main thing is the natural resources—that's the main factor. Who is going to control the resources and who is going to benefit?"

"It's like in a jungle. One lion wants to rule the jungle. He doesn't want two lions in the one place. Right now there are three lions—the US, Russia and China. The US doesn't want the European powers rising either. It wants to go back 20 years when it was the number one financial institution and the number one power."

"The US wants to recapture that power, in any way. But it's not like a game—you win or I win. You have to look at the consequences. What happens to the people and what happens to the country? It's also affecting us. Australia is a strong ally of the US, so if the US goes to war, it will involve Australia."

Sayed was sceptical about the official and media response to the Paris terror attacks. "The Paris attacks are not clear. It cannot be just 10 or 12 people making an attack. The main scenario is about something else. There is just one word from the Paris incident: retaliate, retaliate! There's nothing about what went before that."

"What are ISIS's sources? Where do their finances and resources come from? They are selling oil. Who is buying it? ISIS forces are well-trained. Who trains them? I don't believe the media."

At Coburg in Melbourne's north, **Rasheed**, a La Trobe University student, said people had to "look behind the curtain" of the government and media propaganda. "When you say underlying motive, the first word that comes to mind is America," he said. "The US was behind

Turkey's shooting down the Russian plane." The US went into Iraq, Afghanistan and Syria, but this was "plotted in advance."

Rasheed purchased three tickets to the forthcoming SEP meeting on 75th anniversary of the assassination of Leon Trotsky and drew parallels between contemporary political developments and the imperialist wars last century.

"Before World War I and II, there was a prelude of events and asymmetrical warfare before the actual world war began," Rasheed said. "Today there are a number of asymmetrical wars that are most likely going to accumulate and cause a world war. If it happened before WWI and WWII, how is there not going to be a WWIII?"

**A nother worker**, originally from Algeria and now living in Lakemba, said events in Syria were "all about business and power ... The United States, Russia, Britain and Australia, they all want it. They want to divide the country. Before the US wanted to get Syria but now that it can't get it alone, they want to divide it."

Commenting on the Paris terror attacks and the response of the French political establishment, he said: "They use these things to be able to say 'We will defend the French nation.' France killed millions of people in North Africa but no one judges France and it's the same thing with England, and the United States. How would people feel if someone came to Australia with their army?"

"France has always been behind the government and army in my country. France has very big economic problems and so it wants to get the riches from Mali and Algeria, the Ivory Coast and the rest of North Africa."

Asked about the 2003 invasion of Iraq, he replied: "It was just about the petrol. They killed a million people, but what for? Tony Blair said he 'regrets' the invasion. Why now? Why not 15 years before? The West needs to change, and try to help the Muslim countries, not destroy them. It's very dangerous. If one country uses nuclear weapons, the world will be gone. These people, they play with fire."

**Adam**, an unemployed social worker from Footscray in Melbourne's western suburbs, blamed the US for Turkey's downing of the Russian jet. "I think Obama gave the order to shoot down the plane," he said. "I don't think the Russian plane was over Turkey. It is a big lie—they just fabricate it, because the US wants war with Russia.

"After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the US has tried to take over the whole world. Russia has a strategic position in Syria and the US is really worried. They want

a proxy war between Turkey and Russia. The US are warmongers and if a war happens, it will benefit them.

"It is very complicated in the Middle East. ISIS was created when the US invaded Iraq. All the people in the region led by Saddam Hussein lost everything, they lost all their jobs ...

"Al Qaeda was created by the CIA, funded by Saudi Arabia, Qatar and the sheikhs, and ISIS is the same. Al-Nusra, and so on, are supported by the US. It's exactly like what happened in Libya.

"I think governments everywhere are using the Paris tragedy to implement long-standing plans for more war and to build up police-state powers. They have been looking for a chance... They're looking for support of the people for their war plans so they use a provocation. [Australian Prime Minister] John Howard did this with Afghanistan and Iraq and it seems like history is repeating itself.

"Whether it is Tony Abbott or Malcolm Turnbull, it is the same and Labor is no different. I don't trust any of them and I don't think the Greens are honest either.

"The government works for the rich. It's cutting services for family violence, mental illness and homelessness, and young people are being punished for no reason. The government should create jobs for them, but instead they want youth to wait six months to get the dole. How can they live if they don't have income?..

"Young people have to understand that revolution is the only solution. The working class is the majority of people and it has to stick together. There has to be an international anti-war movement. In 2003 the protests failed because they appealed to the UN. The UN is one of the tools of imperialism. What is their job?.. What have they done in Serbia, Rwanda, Iraq and Gaza? The UN is part of the disaster."



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