

SEP candidates in Victoria interviewed by SBS Radio

Our reporters**24 June 2016**

Socialist Equality Party candidates in the Australian election, Will Fulgenzi and Peter Byrne, were interviewed by SBS Radio last Sunday, presenting the party's anti-war and socialist campaign before a broad audience of immigrant listeners across multiple language programs.

A government-funded network, SBS Radio broadcasts 74 different language programs, with around half a million podcasts downloaded by listeners in Australia and around the world monthly.

Fulgenzi and Byrne were interviewed in Melbourne's Federation Square as part of SBS's "election exchange" series, which involves broadcasts from public areas featuring candidates from a range of parties.

Byrne, one of the SEP's Senate candidates in Victoria, spoke with SBS Radio's Olga Klepova in an interview that was distributed to each of the broadcaster's language programs. Fulgenzi, the SEP candidate for the seat of Wills in Melbourne, spoke with broadcasters from SBS Radio's Italian, Arabic, Hindi and Greek programs.

In each interview, Byrne and Fulgenzi emphasised the SEP's fight for a new anti-war movement of the working class, in opposition to the entire political establishment—Labor, Liberal-National and Greens.

"There have been non-stop wars in the Middle East in the last period," Fulgenzi told the Arabic program. "The United States government as well as the Howard government here, with the full support of the Labor Party, used the fraudulent banner of the 'war on terror' to justify the bombing of the defenceless..."

"What's now appearing in these elections is a concerted attempt by all of the major parties to keep the issue of war out of the election. They all support the US and Australian military build up against China, and

they are determined to keep the population in the dark about it."

Fulgenzi also defended the rights of immigrants and refugees.

"We're totally opposed not only to the offshore detention system," he explained, "but the entire reactionary framework of border protection. We believe that workers from every country of the world should be able to live and work wherever they choose, with full citizenship rights."

"The system of border protection—which is supported by Labor, Liberal and the Greens—is thoroughly nationalist. It's aimed at whipping up divisions between workers in Australia and their counterparts in the Middle East and Asia in particular, and blaming immigrants and refugees for the social crisis, which capitalism itself is responsible for."

Fulgenzi spoke live-to-air on the Greek-language program, with each question and answer translated as the interview proceeded. The SEP candidate was asked about the party's attitude toward the Syriza government in Greece.

"Our party is intransigently opposed to Syriza," he replied. "We warned, if you read the *World Socialist Web Site*, at the beginning of 2015, before Syriza was elected, that it would inevitably betray its promises to end austerity. Yannis Varoufakis and Alexis Tsipras carried out the most monstrous political betrayal of workers and young people in the July referendum, which was called ostensibly in order to give the working class a choice as to whether to oppose or support austerity..."

"What this really demonstrates is that there is no way forward in the struggle against austerity within the framework of capitalism. What has happened in Greece is a warning to the working class around the world.

This is not just a Greek issue—in every country the agenda of finance capital is the same. They're seeking to bleed the working class dry to make us pay for the breakdown of world capitalism.”

Several of the interviews can be accessed online:

• *Fulgenzi's interview with the Hindi program is online here.*

• *Byrne's interview is online here.*

• *Fulgenzi's interview with SBS Radio's Greek program can be accessed here. (Under the 'Select Broadcast' tab, click on 'Sun, 19th Jun', and scroll to the 38-minute mark of the recording.)*

To contact the SEP and get involved, visit our website or Facebook page.

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