

New Zealand public meetings: The US Navy visit and the drive to war

Socialist Equality Group (New Zealand)
27 September 2016

The announcement that a US Navy ship will visit New Zealand in November for the first time in 33 years marks a significant milestone in the strengthening of military ties between the two countries. The Socialist Equality Group and International Youth and Students for Social Equality are holding public meetings to wage a political fight against Washington's war drive against China.

The National Party government, the opposition Labour Party and the Greens have welcomed the decision. Like other US allies, including Australia, Japan and South Korea, New Zealand's ruling class is dragging the country into Washington's aggressive military encirclement and provocations against China.

To counter its economic decline, the US has already waged brutal imperialist wars in Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya and Syria. It is now threatening Russia and China to ensure US dominance over every region of the globe. As the Union of Concerned Scientists warned in May, the US military build-up in Asia poses the very real danger of all-out war between nuclear-armed powers.

New Zealand's military alliance with the US has been fully restored. Successive Labour and National governments have sent troops to Afghanistan and Iraq. In recent years, US troops have been invited to train in New Zealand and the NZ Navy has joined major US-led exercises in Asia and the Pacific. Last year Edward Snowden revealed that New Zealand, as part of the Five Eyes alliance, has spied on China on behalf of the United States.

Supported by the opposition parties, the government has announced an extraordinary \$20 billion for new ships and other military upgrades over the next 15 years to improve "interoperability" with Australia and the US.

The vast majority of the world's population is

opposed to war. They have been kept in the dark about the extent of US war plans. The issue has been buried in the current US presidential contest, and by the entire political establishment in New Zealand. The pseudo-left organisations, which protested against the 2003 invasion of Iraq, are also silent; in the US many of these middle class groups promoted illusions in Obama, who has expanded the wars begun under Bush and launched new military interventions.

In New Zealand, Greenpeace, which protested against US warship visits in the 1980s, has hailed the resumption of such visits as a "victory for people power." Its endorsement reflects the sharp shift to the right by a middle class layer that has embraced imperialism and war.

The drive toward another catastrophic world war can be stopped only by the international working class, armed with a socialist program. We urge workers, students and young people to attend our public meetings in Wellington, Lower Hutt and Auckland to discuss the urgent need for a new anti-war movement, based on a socialist and internationalist perspective.

Wellington

Wednesday October 5, 4:00pm
Victoria University Wellington
Student Union Building, Room SU220

Lower Hutt

Saturday October 15, 4:00pm
Russell Keown House
Corner of Laings Road and Queens Drive
Meeting Room 1

Auckland:

Sunday November 27, 2:30pm
Grey Lynn Library Hall
474 Great North Road
Grey Lynn



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Socialist Equality Party visit:

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