

SEP to hold Brisbane meeting on new “foreign interference” laws: A move towards dictatorship and war

3 July 2018

The passage of “foreign interference” legislation last week by the Coalition government and the Labor Party marks a new stage in the decades-long assault on the democratic rights of the working class.

The new laws have been imposed amidst xenophobic hysteria in the parliament and the media over “Chinese influence” and “interference.” Their purpose is to justify the support of the entire Australian political establishment for the US preparations for war against China, which are aimed at preventing China from emerging as a direct challenge to the global dominance of American-based banks and corporations.

Washington, backed by Australia, is seeking to provoke a confrontation with Beijing by undermining its interests in the South China Sea, the Korean peninsula and Taiwan, and through a 1930s-style trade war against Chinese exports.

Unless prevented by the unified strength of the working class in the US, Australia and internationally, the trajectory of American and Australian foreign policy will lead to a catastrophic war between nuclear-armed powers.

The ruling elites and their political servants are terrified that, as workers and youth become increasingly aware of the war danger, mass opposition will erupt in both countries and around the world. That is why the new legislation features a raft of powers that the government can utilise to criminalise and suppress the development of an international anti-war movement. Moreover, the Australian legislation is currently being discussed as a model for similar laws in the US and other countries.

Anyone conducting an activity to “influence” a political or governmental process, such as organising a demonstration or holding a meeting, while failing to

reveal that the activity is being coordinated with an international or foreign organisation, could face charges that carry jail terms of 10 to 20 years.

Other provisions could be used to charge anyone cooperating with a “foreign political party” to purportedly “harm” Australia’s “national security.” “National security” is defined to include “the country’s political, military or economic relations with another country or other countries.” For example, initiating a campaign to develop opposition to the US-Australia military alliance, and its predatory imperialist intrigues, could attract severe penalties, including lengthy jail sentences.

Such laws have been introduced alongside sweeping attempts by governments and internet conglomerates to censor and silence oppositional media voices. The ongoing vendetta against WikiLeaks, and the international efforts to prosecute its editor Julian Assange for publishing whistleblower leaks, are only one sharp example. The new legislation also coincides with an escalating world-wide campaign to divide the working class through the persecution and vilification of immigrants and refugees.

The SEP and IYSSE meetings are raising the need for the working class and youth to develop a powerful political movement in defence of democratic rights and civil liberties, and to unify internationally against the descent toward war.

The first meeting, held in Sydney on July 15, was livestreamed via the SEP Facebook page to a world audience. We urge all SEP and IYSSE members and supporters, and all WSWs readers to attend the final meeting of the series, in Brisbane next Saturday.

Details:

Brisbane

Saturday, July 28, 2:30 p.m.

Woolloongabba, Senior Citizens Hall
22 Qualtrough Street, Woolloongabba

Tickets: \$5/\$3 concession

See the following articles for further information:

Anti-China “foreign interference” bills rammed
through Australian parliament

[29 June 2018]

Australian government unveils draconian “foreign
interference” bills—Part 1: Preparing for war against
China

[31 January 2018]



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