Public meeting: New Zealand's COVID election, the breakdown of capitalism and the fight for socialism

Socialist Equality Group (New Zealand)
28 September 2020

The Socialist Equality Group (New Zealand) will hold a public online meeting, via Zoom, on **Saturday October 3 at 4:00 pm NZ time** to discuss the upcoming election, the breakdown of capitalism and the socialist and internationalist perspective that the working class must adopt.

The global COVID-19 pandemic, which looms over the election, has the character of a "trigger event" in world history: it has greatly accelerated the processes of widening social inequality, the drive by the ruling class towards dictatorship and world war. In the United States, Trump is threatening to disregard the November election result, stage a coup d'état and unleash fascist violence against the working class.

The unlivable conditions created by capitalism are driving millions into mass protests and strikes, further fuelled by anger over the criminal negligence of governments that has led to nearly a million coronavirus deaths worldwide.

New Zealand is not in any way an exception. Contrary to the global media adulation for Labour Party Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern, she leads a right-wing coalition government with the Greens and the extreme nationalist NZ First, which is overseeing soaring inequality and poverty. Workers have responded with a series of strikes including by teachers, nurses and healthcare workers, and mass protests against inaction on climate change and police killings.

The government's main response to the pandemic and the economic crisis has been an unprecedented transfer of tens of billions of dollars to the rich in the form of quantitative easing, bailouts, tax concessions and wage subsidies for businesses.

Billions continue to flow to the military to upgrade, expand and integrate into US-led war plans against China. Meanwhile, basic services, including hospitals, are being starved of funds, and unemployment is sky-rocketing to levels not seen in generations.

To divert anger over the social crisis, the government has scapegoated immigrants. Cabinet Ministers have spewed racist filth that echoes the manifesto of the fascist terrorist who killed 51 people in Christchurch—an atrocity fuelled by decades of demonisation of Muslims and other immigrants and participation by successive governments in the criminal US wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The election will resolve nothing. In their campaigns, the Labour Party and the opposition National Party, along with the minor parties, are seeking to cover up their real agenda with fraudulent platitudes about creating jobs and reviving the economy. Whoever wins, the next government will intensify the assault on workers' living standards, attack democratic rights and ramp up preparations for war.

Workers and young people will inevitably be driven into revolutionary struggles. But this movement must be guided by a new perspective and leadership, independent from, and opposed to, all the established parties. Its conscious aims must be the establishment of a workers' government, abolition of the profit system and the fight for international socialism.

The Socialist Equality Group, the New Zealand supporters of the International Committee of the Fourth International, urges workers, students, young people and readers of the WSWS to **register to attend** our public meeting to discuss these vitally important issues.

Meeting times:

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New Zealand time: 4:00pm Saturday October 3
Sydney time: 1:00pm Saturday October 3
Britain: 4:00am Saturday 3 October
India/Sri Lanka: 8:30am Saturday 3 October
New York (EDT): 11:00pm Friday October 2

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