

Australia Post workers oppose US-led drive to World War III

Postal Workers Rank-and-File Committee

30 March 2022

The Postal Workers Rank-and-File Committee (PWRFC) opposes the US-NATO war drive and the Russian government's invasion of Ukraine. We call on workers at Australia Post (AP) and throughout the transport sector, as well as the broader Australian and international working class, to take up a fight against the escalating threat of global conflict between nuclear-armed powers.

Direct responsibility for the Ukraine-Russia war lies with US and European imperialist powers and the multi-decade expansion of NATO as part of a large-scale military buildup directed against Russia.

The US and NATO are seeking the dismemberment of Russia to exploit its natural resources and working class, in line with the geo-strategic aim of American imperialism to control the whole Eurasian landmass. This perspective of world domination is bringing the US into military conflict with both Russia and China, as well as anyone else that stands in its way.

Goaded by US-NATO aggression, including the massive supply of arms to Ukraine, the Russian government of Vladimir Putin ordered the invasion. This reactionary response, based on the interests of Russian capitalism, serves only to drive a wedge between Russian and Ukrainian workers and escalate the threat of world war.

Now it is the working class that will pay the price. Workers on both sides have been dragooned into a war they have no interest in fighting.

The primary victims of brutal economic sanctions designed to crush the Russian economy, launched by capitalist governments including Australia's, are workers in Russia and around the world who now face a further increase to already soaring prices for fuel, food and other essentials.

Russian and Ukrainian workers alike have been brutally exploited for decades, both by obscenely wealthy

oligarchs who made their fortunes by looting the nationalised industries of the former Soviet Union and by the major imperialist powers.

The utter hostility of the global ruling class to workers has been sharply expressed during the COVID-19 pandemic. Governments around the world, including in Australia, have refused to fight the pandemic and instead advanced the anti-scientific perspective of "herd immunity," causing millions of deaths.

According to Worldometer, around 108,000 Ukrainians, 368,000 Russians and 1,000,000 Americans have died needlessly.

In Australia, more than 3,700 have died in just the first three months of 2022, as a direct result of the "let it rip" policies of state, territory and federal governments, Labor and Liberal-National alike.

This murderous strategy has been enforced by the unions, including the Communications, Electrical and Plumbers Union (CEPU). In lockstep with management, the CEPU has forced AP workers to remain on the job, risking their health and lives, throughout the pandemic, and opposed any public health measures that would possibly interfere with profit making.

Employers have used the pandemic to accelerate their assault on workers conditions. The unions have loyally enforced management demands and systematically blocked all opposition from workers.

Now, trade unions around the world are openly lining up behind their own nation states' demands that workers sacrifice for imperialist war and plunder. This is a logical extension of decades of enforcement by unions of cuts to workers' jobs, pay and conditions in order to make their "own" capitalist class more competitive in the global market.

In a recent letter to Prime Minister Scott Morrison, the Maritime Union of Australia (MUA) called for heightened economic warfare against Russia, including "a national

embargo on all Russian ships and vessels.” This lines up completely with the propaganda and political aims of the ruling class to dismember Russia and turn it into a vassal state for imperialist exploitation.

The Labor Party is also in total agreement with the US-led war drive against Russia and China. In the lead-up to the federal election, Labor leader Anthony Albanese is positioning the party to play its traditional role as a wartime government, criticising Morrison’s recent announcements of massive increases to military expenditure only from the standpoint that they are too little, too late.

Imperialist war abroad means war on the working class at home. This is already on display in the stark contrast between the hundreds of millions of dollars in lethal military aid to Ukraine instantly made available by the Morrison government and the pittance afforded to workers and families who have lost everything in recent floods.

The federal budget handed down Tuesday night made clear that further massive increases to Australian military expenditure, along with tax cuts for the wealthy, will be paid for through harsh austerity measures directed at the working class. Funding for health, aged care, education, arts and culture will all be slashed, and nothing will be done to address public sector wages, which are declining rapidly in real terms.

The fight for workers’ jobs, pay and conditions is inseparable from the fight against war and its fundamental cause, capitalism and the nation-state system. This places such a struggle in direct conflict with the nationalist perspective of the trade unions and bourgeois political parties.

The Postal Workers Rank-and-File Committee calls on workers at AP and throughout the working class to join or form rank-and-file committees, independent of Labor and the unions, to fight for an international mobilisation of workers in a unified struggle against imperialism and war.



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