

# Support Australian school strikes! Build a socialist anti-war movement to stop the genocide and war!

International Youth and Students for Social Equality (Australia)  
6 December 2023

School students in Australia are walking out of classrooms on Thursday to protest Israel's onslaught against the Palestinian people. The International Youth and Students for Social Equality (IYSSE), the youth wing of the Socialist Equality Party, fully supports the students. They are taking a stand against the worst crime of the century, and together with millions of ordinary people around the world, are seeking to halt the slaughter.

It is a fortnight since the last student strikes were held. Even in that short time, the utterly criminal character of Israel's actions, and of all the governments supporting it, have been further exposed.

It is now undeniable that what is unfolding is a genocide. Israel is waging a "war" against defenceless civilians. Of the 20,000 known victims of the Zionist regime's bombardment in Gaza, 10,000 are babies and children, 5,000 are women. Countless more lie beneath the bombed rubble of the residential buildings, schools, universities and hospitals that have been targeted.

The "truce" late last month was a fraud, aimed solely at providing the Israeli mass killing machine with time to reload. Since it was ended, the bombing has resumed with even greater intensity.

Israel depopulated Northern Gaza, forcing its residents to the south of the tiny strip. Now that is where the bombs are falling. The Palestinians have nowhere to go.

All of the pretexts used to justify this assault have been exposed as lies. As was reported in the *New York Times* last week, the Israeli military and intelligence had Hamas's document, outlining its battle plan for the October 7 attack, for more than a year. Israel also received warnings from Egypt of an imminent Hamas operation in the days leading up to October 7.

The Israeli government responded with a security stand-down. It has since also been revealed that many of the Israeli citizens who died on that day were killed by shelling and helicopter gunfire by the Israeli military itself.

In other words, the Israeli government facilitated the killing of its own citizens. It did so to enact longstanding plans for the

ethnic cleansing of Gaza and a genocide of the Palestinians.

This is a crime, involving the deliberate destruction of an entire people by an advanced industrial state, that has not been witnessed since the Nazi Holocaust.

Every bit as significant as the actions of the Zionist regime is the full support for the genocide by all the imperialist powers. That includes the Labor government in Australia. They defend Israel because it is a beachhead of imperialism in the Middle East and a linchpin of the entire reactionary nation-state system.

They are backing the Zionist regime because its onslaught against the Palestinians is bound up with preparations for broader wars, including threats against Iran, a US-NATO proxy war against Russia in Ukraine and plans for a catastrophic conflict with China in this region.

The fight against the genocide is therefore a struggle against all the governments and the system they defend. The mass slaughter in Gaza is the true face of capitalism and of imperialism. It is what this crisis-ridden and bankrupt social order has in store for workers and young people all over the world.

The IYSSE insists that the task we face is not to pressure governments, but to build a mass movement of the working class against them. The genocide can only be halted by mobilising the power of the working class, including through strikes and industrial action to block military supplies to Israel.

Above all, what is required is a new perspective, the program of world socialist revolution. The aim must be to bring the working class to power, reorganise society to meet social needs, not private profit, unify humanity and create the foundations for a world of peace and equality.

Claims that the struggle for socialism is a far-off perspective that may be valid in the distant future, but not now, or that things are not bad enough for a revolution, are being refuted by events. A system that orchestrates and condones a genocide is one that is an imminent threat to the entire world's population and has to be done away with.

If governments will back the annihilation of an entire oppressed people, who can seriously claim they would stop

short of using nuclear weapons as they explicitly prepare for war with nuclear-armed powers such as Russia and China?

The situation itself demonstrates that we are living in a period of capitalist breakdown, like that which erupted in World War II. That is shown, not only by what is taking place in Gaza, but in the onslaught against democratic rights that is accompanying it in every country, including here.

The last school strikes, two weeks ago, were subjected to an extraordinary campaign of vilification and intimidation by the political establishment. The Labor governments in New South Wales and Victoria demanded that the strikes not take place, and threatened students with disciplinary action if they participated.

Leaders of pro-Israel Zionist organisations launched frenzied attacks on striking students, with one describing them as “human shields” being manipulated by “activists,” and another calling them a modern-day Hitler Youth. These comments were uncritically promoted by the media, which also slandered the strike.

This is part of a broader crackdown on protests defending the Palestinians. The pretext, that opposition to Israel’s war crimes is equivalent to antisemitism, is an infamous lie. In fact, the attempt to identify Judaism with the genocide in Gaza is itself antisemitic. The Israeli state and its crimes do not represent the interests of ordinary Jewish people.

The lies are being used to justify a turn towards dictatorial methods. While they support a genocide, governments are declaring that ordinary people are not even allowed to protest the mass murder.

This shows that appealing to governments is a dead end. The Greens and pseudo-left parties—Socialist Alternative, Solidarity and Socialist Alliance—claim the way forward is to put pressure on governments. But what this means in practice is bowing down before the very governments that are enabling the genocide and blocking a real struggle against it.

After eight weeks of protests, it is clear enough that the governments are not listening. Instead, the more opposition is expressed, the more they double down on their support for the slaughter.

The orientation of students should not be to governments but to the working class, the revolutionary force in society that has the power to put an end to war and to capitalism. That includes turning to teachers, who have also been under attack for opposing the genocide.

The Committee for Public Education, a rank-and-file teachers’ organisation, recently passed a resolution, declaring:

The CFPE stands in solidarity with the world-wide protests, including strikes, blockades and actions such as the school strike of students in Melbourne, Sydney, and Adelaide last week. Teachers must oppose any attempt by schools to discipline students who have

participated in or are planning further strikes.

The unity of teachers and students must be built upon through joint meetings, protests and other activities. This cannot take place through the teacher unions, which, like all the unions, support the Labor government as it greenlights mass murder. Instead, it has to come from the rank-and-file in opposition to the union bureaucrats.

Such initiatives, including protests, are important and must be expanded. But in and of themselves, they do not solve the issue. They only pose more sharply the question of perspective, i.e., what is the way forward?

Your generation is growing up at a turning point in world history. The alternatives, as shown in Gaza, are capitalist barbarism, threatening the annihilation of humanity, or socialism. The genocide is being carried out amid a climate catastrophe, a massive cost-of-living and social crisis and an eruption of militarism.

But the basis for a struggle against this also exists, in the developing struggles of the working class all over the world. These struggles need a revolutionary leadership that is based on all the lessons of history, and advances the socialist and internationalist perspective that can put an end to war, inequality and authoritarianism. Contact the IYSSE to discuss this perspective and to get involved!

**Email:** [iysseaus@gmail.com](mailto:iysseaus@gmail.com)

**Facebook:** [facebook.com/IYSSEaustralia](https://www.facebook.com/IYSSEaustralia)

**Twitter:** @IysseA

**Instagram:** @iysse.aus

Details of the strikes:

**Melbourne**

1:30 p.m. Thursday, 7 December

Flinders Street Station

**Sydney**

12:30 p.m. Thursday, 7 December

Sydney Town Hall

**Wollongong**

12:30 p.m. Thursday, 7 December

Wollongong Town Hall

**Canberra**

1 p.m. Thursday, 7 December

Garema Place



To contact the WSWs and the Socialist Equality Party visit:

**[wsws.org/contact](https://www.wsws.org/contact)**