

Australian protests against Gaza genocide: “Everyone is waking up,” that’s why governments are cracking down

Our reporters
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Over the weekend, thousands turned out for mass protests across Australia opposing the genocide being inflicted on Gaza by the Israeli regime, backed by all the imperialist powers. The protests continue to receive little to no media coverage.

Speakers from the Greens and the pseudo-left promoted the Labor government’s recent vote for a ceasefire motion at the United Nations as a step forward. This is a fraud and a trap. The motion is non-binding. Even in voting for it, Labor emphasised its opposition to any immediate ceasefire, its support for the ongoing bombardment and for the surrender or complete defeat of Hamas.

The Socialist Equality Party is fighting these attempts to subordinate the mass movement to the pro-genocide Labor government. What is required is an international anti-war movement directed against the source of the atrocities, the capitalist system and all of the governments that defend it.

That perspective will be outlined and discussed at a public meeting tonight, Wednesday, 7pm at the Lakemba Senior Citizens Centre in Sydney and online via Zoom. Register now to attend.

Below are a series of interviews from workers and young people at the protests on Sunday, in addition to those posted yesterday.

In Melbourne, **Mohammad**, who is a builder, told WSWS reporters, “It’s been happening for 75 years in Palestine, it’s now that more people are starting to care. But I’m not so much dirty on the Israelis—the Zionists are doing what they’re doing—I’m more dirty on the Arab governments for letting them do what they’re doing.

“In Egypt, it is a dictatorship because they overthrew a democratically elected government... It didn’t fit the American and the Zionist agenda, so they organised a coup, just like in any other country where it doesn’t suit them.

“You’ve got the biggest terrorist country in the world, Israel, calling Hamas a terrorist organisation. Look at the double standards, look at Ukraine. If this happened in Ukraine, if they dropped 100 bombs in one night, like in Gaza, imagine the outrage.”

Mohammad dismissed the Labor government’s UN vote, stating, “The United Nations means nothing, because if it can’t stop countries like America and Israel, what is the use of having it? The UN spoke against America when they invaded Iraq, but did that help Iraq? It didn’t.”

Commenting on the global protests, he noted, “Everyone is waking up, everyone is seeing the truth. And why do you think they’re trying to silence the universities? Trying to stop chants like ‘Free Palestine’ and ‘From the River to the Sea?’ Because they can see people turning against them, they want to try and ban these protests if they can, these rallies. They don’t want people coming out in support, it makes them look bad.”

In Sydney, **Michele**, from Italy, said it was critical to “show much support to the Palestinian people. What Israel is doing is way too far. It is not how you would think a democracy, or a so-called democracy would react to anything. If their goal was really to get rid of Hamas, it is obvious that they will just create a new generation of fighters with this complete bombing.

“I think we should point the finger to the fact that in Israel there’s a very far right-wing government. Right-wing governments bring a mess wherever they come to

power. That was the case in Italy in the 1920s. Now we are seeing it again with Trump in America and the fascist who has just been elected president in Argentina. I think for sure there will be a change. There has to be a change because we cannot keep going along like this.”

Dado said he and his family had witnessed atrocities in the war that broke out with the breaking up of Yugoslavia in the 1990s. “Essentially, what is happening in Gaza right now is what we lived under then. We were under siege for two years in the capital city and no food, no water, constant bombardment, so we actually have a very first hand experience of what these poor Palestinians are going through.”

Commenting on the active involvement of the US and other imperialist powers in the Gaza genocide, he said: “It’s all profiteering. The rulers of these countries have an interest in war being prolonged and it doesn’t really matter how many people suffer.

“It was always in the imperial power’s interest to destabilize that region. And Iran, I think, was always on the cards as a potential target, even in the previous invasion of Iraq. But I think they just didn’t have the smoking gun or something that they could convince the public with enough to get that support behind them. And that’s why, when you saw this conflict begin, almost immediately, they were trying to pin it somehow on Iran being the culprit behind it.

“It’s clear, if you pay attention, that there is a wider agenda here to get more wars going, because at the end of the day for a lot of these multinational and arms companies their interest is not generally who wins the war, but as long as war is prolonged, that industry, that machine will continue to pump out weapons, clothes, rations, boots. This is all a business. We saw the same in Vietnam. We saw the same in the first desert storm. We saw the same in Iraq and Afghanistan. It was 20 years, all for what? 20 years in Afghanistan for trillions of dollars and they haven’t achieved anything.”

Pointing to the mass opposition, Dado added, “But I think what’s really good in this situation, I mean, the silver lining is that social media has opened people’s eyes. When what we went through in Yugoslavia took place, there was no such thing as social media. So, a lot of the atrocities and injustices that happened were not known until well after the conflict had ended.

“But with this one, we’re seeing almost live day by

day status updates and reporting on the situation there. That really helps open people’s eyes and rally people to come and support them. Otherwise, if there was a blackout on the media and social media, then who knows how long before we would find out what Israel has been doing.”

In Melbourne, **Ghawady**, a Palestinian IT worker, said, “I’m here to support Palestine, asking the government to stand with the Palestinian people and end this genocide that’s happening. It’s horrible. I’ve been coming to these rallies ever since it started, every week. We are asking just for the basic human rights, to have justice.

“The lack of media coverage is unfortunate, but it’s not going to stop anyone. We are going to keep coming. What matters nowadays is what people post on social media, so even if the official media is not covering this movement, everybody is covering it themselves.”

Ghawady explained that his family were made refugees in the 1967 war. “My grandparents were among those who got displaced, and they weren’t able to go back to Gaza. Because I was born outside, I have no right to go back. Unfortunately, my distant family are all in Gaza, I don’t know them.

“It’s really hard for me and every Palestinian to see what is happening in Gaza. It’s the same story, those people who got displaced, their generation—it’s going to continue. It’s not just those who were displaced but also their kids, their grandkids. It’s a ripple effect for everyone.”

He added, “I am not surprised by the US decision to go against a ceasefire and use their veto on the UN Security Council. That shows that the UN by design is broken. It is not a real democracy. It’s obvious, something needs to be fixed.”



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