

Australian protesters oppose Gaza genocide: Imperialist powers are “not just complicit, but directly responsible”

Our reporters
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Protests continue to be held every week in most of Australia’s capital cities, opposing Israel’s ongoing ethnic cleansing of Palestinians in Gaza.

Last weekend, several thousand turned out, including at demonstrations in Sydney and Melbourne. The continuing falls in attendance do not express disinterest or disengagement, but the bankruptcy of the perspective advanced by rally organisers.

Their calls for endless protests appealing to the governments responsible for the genocide have been proven a dead end. The Labor government in Australia, along with all of the imperialist powers, has not deviated from its support for the Zionist onslaught.

Strikingly, the threat of a wider Middle Eastern war has not featured prominently at the protests, with speakers scarcely mentioning the danger. That reflects the attempt of the Greens, the fake-left and other middle-class tendencies to falsely present the genocide as a single issue, unconnected to the broader eruption of militarism and war.

Israeli strikes on Iran that threaten a region-wide conflagration have underscored the perspective advanced by Socialist Equality Party campaigners at the protests. They have raised the need for a turn to the working class, aimed at building an international anti-war movement based on a socialist program directed against the source of conflict, capitalism. That perspective will be elaborated in a lecture in Sydney and online on Sunday, April 28.

It is also at the centre of the SEP’s fight for formal registration, which will enable it to stand in the next election under its own party name. Find out more and sign-up here.

WSWS reporters spoke to several rally participants

last weekend.

Tara, a medical student, told the WSW: “I think what is happening in Gaza at the moment is absolutely awful and it’s unforgivable. It went beyond self-defence, at the very start of it. Over 30,000 dead, women, children—every time you look at the news it’s just a new atrocity, and hospitals, universities, it’s all gone.”

On US backing for Israel, she said: “The Biden administration, I wouldn’t even say it’s just complicit, it’s directly responsible. The US obviously has an interest, with Israel as its watchdog in the Middle East. So anything that Israel does, they’re just going to go along with. They vetoed the ceasefire in the UN security council, I think it was twice, and now finally they are abstaining; that’s the best we can hope for from the US government, it will never be on the side of justice.

“Even if Joe Biden on the surface might seem to be wary about what Netanyahu’s doing, the administration has never stopped the military aid contracts, the weapons that are being funnelled to Israel. Israel would not have been able to wage this genocide without all the US weapons and funds they are getting. If the US were to stop that, the war could not continue, so the US is directly responsible for the continuation of the genocide.”

Speaking about the Australian government’s role, Tara added: “I think the Albanese Labor government is the same, they are going along with what the US is doing. As an imperialist government, they also have an interest in allowing this war to continue, they also have an interest in Israel’s continued presence in the Middle East.

“The cowardice in the government has just been incredible. It’s just shocking, and it really shatters this idea that there’s some sort of historical progress being made. When we look at, for example, the Holocaust, we always thought that, ‘no we would not allow something like this to happen again.’ But it is happening and you see what the government is doing, and there’s no progress, it’s all just going to keep going.”

Tara discussed the question of a new perspective required to develop the antiwar movement, one based not on futile appeals or attempts to pressure the Labor government. She explained that she is currently reading Marx’s *Communist Manifesto* and is seeking to develop her understanding of socialist politics.

“I’ve always thought that an organised political movement is very important,” she said. “We need a party that sticks to a revolutionary line and doesn’t just advocate for reform, because whenever you talk about reform, it essentially means you end up capitulating to those in power. I think it’s important what you’re doing, that there’s an uncompromising fight for justice.”

Deepak told WSWs reporters: “I am here to express my solidarity for the people of Gaza, Palestine. I have been following the conflict for many years and what has been happening since October 7 is appalling. It’s horrific, and what is even more appalling is how the western governments have responded, how Australia seems to wag its tail and follow the US.

“There are so many forces at play. It is a vast military-industrial complex that keeps US politics and the economy going, and that in turn has governments in Australia, the UK and even Canada just tagging along with the US in whatever they want to do. Israel as a state is based on some imaginary nation that was created in some imaginary land of no people, and a people with no land. It was all based on fiction and in a way, Australia is very similar, it’s again a colonised place.”

He added: “The media plays its own role. We’ve been lied to about what’s happened in Israel, about Gaza. I am very politically conscious but it’s only now that I am understanding deeply what’s been happening and how this hegemony needs to be broken up, dismantled. We need to keep informing the world, we need to keep telling the stories—the western media is not

going to do it for us. Thankfully, the barriers no longer exist, with social media, and more and more people have the power to understand the truth and have the truth out there. I think each one of us has a responsibility to educate the world about oppression in any form, anywhere in the world and there are such strong parallels when it comes to Australia’s own indigenous people.”

Deepak concluded: “The power of the people is very strong, we’ve got to keep trying—change happens, things happen. I grew up in the apartheid era of South Africa, when the whole world was with South Africa, and my own country of origin in India was one of the few countries in the world which stood steadfast against apartheid and South Africa. But when this system ended, it happened very quickly, so change can happen.”



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