

Australian Labor government pledges to collaborate with fascist Trump

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Like its counterparts in the imperialist centres of western Europe, the Australian Labor government responded to Tuesday's US presidential election by pledging to march in lockstep with the fascistic gangster Donald Trump when he is inaugurated in January.

With the election barely over, Prime Minister Anthony Albanese rushed to X/Twitter on Tuesday evening to extend his "congratulations" to Trump. "Working together, we can ensure the partnership between our nations and peoples remains strong into the future," Albanese wrote. Similar posts were issued by Foreign Minister Penny Wong and other senior members of the government.

On Wednesday morning, Albanese had a phone call with Trump. The Australian media approvingly noted that he was relatively high on the list of world leaders with whom Trump spoke.

Speaking to the press, Albanese touted his purported ability "to invest in relationships with world leaders." He had developed a close rapport with outgoing President Joe Biden, and would seek to do the same with Trump.

The reaction dovetails with that of Biden and the defeated Democratic Party in the US. Having advanced a right-wing campaign based on militarism, support for the Gaza genocide and no policies whatsoever to improve the social plight of working people, the Democrats rapidly declared that they would ensure a "smooth transition" to Trump and would collaborate with the incoming administration.

Like that response, the fawning of the Labor government over Trump is a deliberate effort to chloroform working people and prevent them from recognising the immense danger expressed in the election result.

A fascistic figure who staged a failed coup on January 6, 2021, Trump has pledged to do away with elections and install himself as a quasi-dictator. Whatever the immediate outcome, it is clear that his victory marks a new stage in the protracted breakdown of American democracy, presaging a massive assault on social and democratic rights.

The Laborites are well aware of this. In the most pathetic and unedifying element of their response, senior Labor

figures have been scrambling to walkback and delete from social media previous occasional comments noting Trump's authoritarian characteristics.

As the WSWs has explained, notwithstanding the complete militarism of the Democratic Party and its attacks on civil liberties, even more drastic police-state measures are required, as American imperialism deepens the drive to a third world war, including with aggression in the Middle East and confrontations with Russia and China.

That latter front of the developing global war has been the primary preoccupation of the Australian political and media establishment in relation to the election.

Over the past two years, Albanese's government has completed Australia's transformation into a frontline state for a US-led war against China, including with a vast expansion of American basing arrangements, and an unprecedented build-up of Australia's own military.

In his comments about his phone call with Trump, Albanese indicated that had been the central thrust of their discussion. "We talked about the importance of the Alliance, and the strength of the Australia-US relationship in security, AUKUS, trade and investment," he stated.

AUKUS is the militarist pact between the US, Australia and the UK. It includes Australia's acquisition of nuclear-powered submarines from the US, and the ever greater integration of the militaries of the three countries for offensive operations throughout the Indo-Pacific.

Referencing the call, an article in the *Australian Financial Review* was headlined "'We need you': PM presses Trump on AUKUS." It stated that there was "trepidation within government and security circles that the unpredictable Trump may revert to the isolationist approach he adopted when last in office," and indicated that Albanese and the Labor government would push for a continued US "engagement" with the Indo-Pacific.

Trump is a militarist figure, committed to war against US rivals no less than the Democrats. During his last administration, however, his transactional and personalist political maneuvers occasionally strained the framework of

various US-related alliances.

The immediate push by Labor to ensure the continuation and deepening of AUKUS is revealing. It shows that Australia is not a passive partner in the US confrontation with China, being dragged along by US administrations as is sometimes presented.

Instead, the dominant sections of the Australian ruling elite identify their own predatory interests, especially over the oppressed South Pacific nations and more broadly in Asia, with the ongoing domination of American imperialism. Labor's role also exposes the bogus claims of some of its apologists, that it has merely implemented AUKUS because the program was inherited from the previous Liberal-National Coalition government leaving it with no choice.

Instead, Labor is again demonstrating its character as the preeminent party of Australian imperialism and war.

At the same time, fears have been voiced over the potentially destabilising implications of the Trump presidency for the economy. China remains Australia's largest trading partner by far. While Biden has continued the trade war agenda initiated by the first Trump administration, a massive expansion of tariffs as Trump has foreshadowed could have vast trade implications.

In unusual comments the day before the US election, Western Australian Labor Premier Roger Cook warned that a Trump victory could be the beginning of a "dark path." It would threaten the state's economy, he said, and cost jobs. Western Australia is the centre of the mining industry, most of whose products are still exported to China.

While that threat remains, Cook showed the conditional character of his warning, motivated solely by concern for business interests, by joining in the "congratulations" to Trump over his victory on Wednesday.

A more general concern in ruling circles is the crisis of the existing political establishments revealed by the US election result. The collapse of support for the traditional parties of bourgeois rule amid capitalist breakdown, war and austerity is not an American but a global phenomenon.

Supporters of the Labor government have noted with alarm parallels between it and the Democratic Party administration, with an Australian election due by May. Labor has inflicted massive cuts to the living and social conditions of workers during the inflation crisis, with real wages being slashed by 4.8 percent since 2019, housing costs soaring and the prices of other essentials going through the roof.

At the same time, its militarist agenda, including AUKUS, have provoked widespread opposition. Labor's full support for the US-Israeli genocide of Palestinians in Gaza has been met by the most sustained anti-war movement in the country's history. There are fears that as the genocide had

an impact on Democratic Party votes in Michigan, which has a large Arab population, it could threaten the seats of key Labor leaders in the working-class suburbs of Sydney and Melbourne which similarly have major Middle Eastern and Muslim cohorts.

The US election result also underscored the reactionary role of upper middle-class identity politics, focused on race, gender and sexuality. They have been heavily promoted by the Democrats, along with Labor, as both have abandoned any even nominal pitch to the social interests of the working class.

Labor's referendum to enshrine the Voice, an advisory body of the Indigenous elite, into the Constitution failed massively in October last year. Broad layers of the population were hostile to the promotion of divisive racial politics, and correctly recognised that the elevation of wealthy Aboriginal layers further in the corridors of state and corporate power would not improve the lot of oppressed Indigenous people or workers more generally. Since the defeat of the Voice, Labor's crisis has continually deepened.

This morning, the *Australian* reported that the opposition Coalition and its leader Peter Dutton will consult with US Republican strategists in the lead-up to the Australian election. The *Australian* indicated that Dutton may develop a populist pitch to social discontent, mirroring Trump, along with an even greater intensification of the bipartisan attacks on immigrants and refugees.

The experience of the US election, and the response to it by the Labor government, again demonstrates that the threat of the far-right and of fascism cannot be fought through parties of the corporate elite and war such as the Democrats or Labor. Their right-wing program opens the door to such forces to posture as opponents of the status quo.

Instead, the defence of democracy requires an independent movement of the working class, directed against the source of the deepening global barbarism, the capitalist system itself.



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