

Majority of Australians oppose Trump, while political leaders pledge to work with the fascist president

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In the federal election called last Friday, Labor Prime Minister Anthony Albanese and Coalition leader Peter Dutton are desperately trying to prevent any discussion of the enormous geopolitical, military, social and economic upheavals occurring globally.

Both are absurdly presenting Australia as an exception to the international instability, even though it is heavily dependent on the world economy, and is directly involved in all the wars taking place around the globe.

As the Socialist Equality Party and its candidates are warning, Albanese and Dutton, together with the entire political and media establishment, are engaged in a conspiracy against the population. They know that every aspect of life, from the already dire social conditions facing workers, to the prospect of their involvement in a catastrophic war, will be shaped by global shocks.

However much the ruling elite tries to peddle the sham of “Australian exceptionalism,” reality is breaking through.

That was demonstrated by Resolve polling, reported by the *Sydney Morning Herald* today. Some 60 percent of respondents indicated a negative attitude towards US President Donald Trump and agreed that his election had been “bad for Australia.” That was up from 40 percent in November.

The figure was even higher among self-described Labor voters, at 70 percent. It was almost 50 percent among Coalition supporters and 63 percent in the “other voters” category.

Respondents were also asked: “Which do you think is the greatest threat to Australia in the next few years?” They appear to have been given the options of Russia, China and Trump’s America.

A negligible portion, 5 percent or less across all voter categories, nominated Russia. That is despite relentless propaganda demonizing Russia and its President Putin, aimed at legitimising the US-NATO proxy war in Ukraine. Australia has been one of the largest non-NATO

contributors to that war, stoked and waged by Washington and the European powers with the aim of inflicting a massive defeat on Russia.

China has been the subject of an even greater propaganda offensive by the establishment, including endless unsubstantiated claims of Chinese “interference” in Australian politics and society. The purpose of the barrage has been to justify Australia’s frontline role in advanced preparations for a US-led war against China, which Washington views as the chief threat to American global hegemony.

The impact of this fraudulent campaign found some expression in the poll results, with between 22 and 43 percent across the various voter demographics labelling China as a primary threat. Many respondents stated that they were unsure, or that all three designated countries were “equally” a threat.

But most remarkable were the high number of people who labelled the US under Trump as the principal threat. That was 17 percent across all cohorts. Among Labor voters, 26 percent labelled the US as a threat, as against just 22 percent who named China.

Some of the popular concerns motivating those results were pointed to in other responses. Some 50 percent of all respondents agreed that “Australia should avoid taking sides in any conflict between the US and China,” against just 18 percent who supported Australian participation.

In other responses: 42 percent agreed that “Australia should rethink its plans to host US nuclear powered submarines at Australian naval bases,” against 24 percent who disagreed. “Australia should pause or withdraw from its alliance with the US to buy nuclear powered submarines,” 34 percent said, compared with 25 percent who signalled support for that arrangement under the AUKUS pact.

Polling is inherently limited. The nature of the questions, openly posing the issue of great power “conflict,” does point to the era of war that we are living through.

The references to “Australia,” as an undifferentiated entity, serve to cover up the fundamental class divide. In reality, there are two Australias—one of the working people, being battered by the cost-of-living crisis and the assault on social conditions, the other of the billionaires, the banks and their political representatives in Labor, the Coalition and the Greens. These two Australias not only do not have the same interests, they have diametrically opposed interests.

Despite all that, certain realities come through the poll results.

Masses of ordinary people are deeply fearful of Trump’s ascension. They have a sense that this is not just a development of US significance, but of global significance.

There are clearly deep-going concerns that Trump’s trade war policies will exacerbate the economic crisis, leading to job losses and even greater attacks on wages and working conditions.

There is also a correct sense that Trump’s rule will escalate militarism and war. People have been shocked by his open support for the ethnic cleansing and take-over of Gaza and his threats to seize Panama, Greenland and Canada. The centrepiece of Trump’s foreign policy is confrontation with China, which has huge implications for Australia and its population.

The pollsters did not ask about Trump’s attempt to erect a fascistic dictatorship. But there is no doubt deep-going hostility to his persecution of anti-war students, his mass roundups of immigrants and his attempts to overturn the Constitution.

Those are the popular sentiments. But the response of the Australian political establishment is the opposite. Albanese and Dutton are in a contest over who would be best placed to work with Trump.

Albanese has declared that he will try to develop a “friendship” with Trump, and has congratulated him repeatedly. Labor Foreign Minister Penny Wong attended Trump’s inauguration, and declared it “an honour and a privilege for me to be... at such an important event.”

Labor’s whole pitch is that it can work with Trump in the confrontation with China. Albanese has touted his government’s role in completing Australia’s transformation into a frontline state for war with Beijing, including through a massive military build-up and the vast expansion of US basing in the country.

For his part, Dutton has said he and Trump would share an affinity as “strong leaders.” Dutton has unveiled several Trumpian policies, including mass public sector sackings and denunciations of a purported “woke” agenda.

The SEP has explained that the fawning over Trump reflects the commitment in dominant sections of the ruling class to the US-Australia alliance. Australian imperialism

prosecutes its own predatory interests under the umbrella of the alliance, particularly in the South Pacific.

This embrace of Trump is a warning to the working class. Albanese and Dutton are committed to a program that parallels that of Trump, from support for the Gaza genocide, to war with China, an assault on the social conditions of workers and major attacks on democratic rights. Both have been involved in a crackdown on opposition to the Israeli genocide, as well as sweeping attacks on immigrants, in policies similar to those of Trump.

The SEP explains that Trump is not the disease but the symptom. He is the sharpest expression of the program of the ruling classes everywhere, amid a breakdown of the global capitalist system.

This cannot be fought by supporting those who advocate Australia adopt a more “independent” foreign policy. That simply means a slightly different foreign policy in the interests of the ruling elite, including an even greater military buildup.

Instead, what is required is an independent movement of the working class, against all the capitalist governments and parties. This is a global struggle, posing the need to unite workers in Australia, the US, China and all over the world, on the basis of their common class interests. Above all, what the events in the US demonstrate is the urgent need for socialism: the expropriation of the banks, the corporations and the oligarchs, and the democratic control of society and the economy by the working class.

That is the perspective that the SEP and our candidates are advancing in the election, outlined in our statement: “Support the SEP in the Australian federal election! Build a socialist movement of the working class against war, austerity and dictatorship!”

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