

# Socialist Equality Party (Australia) holds public meetings ahead of federal election

Our reporters

29 April 2025

The Socialist Equality Party (SEP) last week held public meetings in four key working-class electorates where it is running in the May 3 federal election.

The party's candidates addressed the meetings, which were held in Brisbane, Melbourne, Sydney, Newcastle and online.

In contrast to the stage-managed campaign events of Labor, the Liberal-Nationals and the Greens, the SEP meetings provided an avenue for serious discussion about the political questions confronting workers, students and youth.

Max Boddy and Warwick Dove, the SEP's Senate candidates in New South Wales (NSW), addressed the Sydney meeting.

Dove, a retired metal worker and a member of the SEP national committee, spoke about the Trump administration's tariff war and the historic breakdown of post-World War II alliances and trading arrangements. The Albanese government and the entire political establishment, he said, were desperately trying to cover up the political implications of these developments for Australian workers.

Dove warned against bogus claims that "Australia is a haven sitting at the bottom of the world, able to ride out the consequences of the descent into trade war and ultimately military war."

In fact, he explained, Australia is profoundly vulnerable to a US-led war with China, its largest trading partner. Behind the backs of the population, all the major political parties are readying themselves for such a war and the vicious social assaults on workers and youth that are required to fund it and crush popular resistance.

Dove reminded audiences of the recent ANZAC Day commemorations, the annual celebration by the political establishment of militarist reaction, warmongering and nationalism. The April 25 event, he said, marked the disastrous 1915 landing of British, Australian and New Zealand troops in Gallipoli during WWI, the first time the imperialist powers plunged humanity into a catastrophic global conflict.

"What was a battle that slaughtered tens of thousands of Australian, New Zealand and Turkish young men, and widely accepted as a catastrophe, was hailed this week by Prime Minister Albanese as an 'extraordinary victory' in which soldiers 'kept aglow the light of mateship and humour.'"

This shows that Labor, and the rest of the political establishment, "are no less intent on throwing the youth of today into the grinding machine of war than their predecessors were," Dove said.

SEP assistant national secretary Max Boddy warned that,

whatever the outcome of the May 3 election, "the incoming government's policies will be determined, not by the pathetic and meagre cost-of-living promises of Albanese and Dutton, which will be dumped after May 3, but by the crisis of the Australian and international economy, intensified by Trump's trade war on the world, and the descent of the globe into a new world war."

Boddy said the Albanese government had already boosted annual military spending to \$56 billion, in the largest expansion of the military since World War II.

"Every aspect of society is being put on a war footing and there is increasing talk of introducing the mass conscription of young people," Boddy said.

The Albanese government, with support from the Liberal-National Coalition, is not just participating in preparations for war with China but deeply implicated in the US-Israeli genocide of Palestinians in Gaza. Australia also remains one of the largest non-NATO contributors to the US proxy war against Russia in Ukraine.

"Labor and the Coalition are open parties of war, marching in lockstep to transform Australia into a frontline state for US imperialism. The Greens and the pseudo-left have become their accomplices," he told the meeting.

Having promoted themselves for decades as a progressive, pacifist alternative to the two-party system, the Greens have now "released their first-ever military policy, pledging \$4 billion for the domestic construction of missiles, drones and other offensive weaponry."

The Greens, Boddy explained, "are a capitalist party that supports Australian imperialism." Their aim is to join a government with Labor—the same party responsible for the complete support of Israel's genocide of the Palestinians, and which is spearheading the "transformation of Australia into a frontline state for a US-led war against China."

Boddy also exposed the bogus anti-war posturing of the pseudo-left Victorian Socialists and the Socialist Alliance and their efforts to keep workers and youth tied to Labor and the Greens, claiming they are a "lesser evil" compared to the Coalition.

These organisations, he said, "are the last line of defence of capitalism itself. They speak for an affluent layer of the upper-middle class, tied by a thousand strings to Labor, the Greens and the union bureaucracy, which seeks to advance its own selfish interests within the framework of the capitalist system."

The Melbourne meeting was held in the working-class suburb of

Broadmeadows, part of the Calwell electorate where Morgan Peach is standing for the House of Representatives.

Broadmeadows, like the rest of Calwell, has a large migrant population, especially from the Middle East, North Africa and South Asia. The audience included workers and youth who had just discovered the SEP, some attending their first party meeting.

Peach gave the main report, reviewing the global crisis of capitalism and turn to authoritarian forms of rule.

Peach said the intractable contradictions of capitalism which led to WWI—between a world economy and its division into rival nations, and between socialised production and its private ownership by a wealthy few—are threatening a new and far greater catastrophe.

“The only way to stop war is by building a movement against capitalism, the source of imperialist war. The SEP is alone in this election in warning workers of the dangers in the world situation and fighting to build a revolutionary movement of the international working class, independent of and opposed to all the capitalist parties and their defenders, on a socialist program,” Peach said.

SEP candidates for the Senate in Victoria, Keo Vongvixay and Taylor Hernan, also spoke at the Broadmeadows meeting. Hernan detailed the social crisis in Calwell, a sharp expression of the broader crisis confronting youth and workers across the country.

Vongvixay spoke on the necessity for the working class to develop their own organisations of struggle, independent rank-and-file committees, outside the stranglehold of the corporatised trade unions, which are an integral part of the capitalist profit system.

Mike Head addressed the SEP’s meeting in the Oxley electorate, which covers major industrial and working-class areas in Brisbane’s western suburbs.

Head, the party’s candidate, said the SEP’s election intervention was in line with its struggle to develop a mass working-class party based on international socialism, to overthrow the capitalist profit system and establish democratic workers’ control over the world economy.

“A dark cloud is hanging over this election, personified by Donald Trump. But he is just the frontman for the capitalist class of billionaires, like Elon Musk, who want to ‘Make America Great Again’ at the expense of the working class in America and globally. In fact, this dark cloud hangs over the entire world, not just this election,” he said.

Robert Creech, the SEP’s candidate for the seat of Newcastle, was the main speaker at the party’s public meeting in that city on Sunday. Newcastle is a key working-class city in the Hunter Valley and a major exporting hub for Australia’s multibillion-dollar coal industry.

The Hawke-Keating Labor government’s so-called national steel plan destroyed 10,000 steel jobs in Newcastle between 1983 and 1989 and led to the closure of BHP’s Newcastle steelworks.

Creech reviewed the escalating imperialist war preparations, attacks on democratic rights and the deepening assault on working-class jobs, wages and living standards.

The broad-ranging Q&A sessions at last week’s meetings reflected the interest of growing numbers of ordinary people in the party’s analysis and socialist perspective throughout the election campaign.

Attendees at the Sydney and Melbourne meetings asked about the SEP’s political position on China and the catastrophic consequences of any future war.

Speakers explained that the SEP’s opposition to US imperialist aggression against China did not imply support for the capitalist regime in Beijing.

In Sydney, WSWS national editor Peter Symonds provided a historical overview of the present evolution of US imperialist aggression against China, the restoration of capitalism by the Chinese Stalinist regime and its reactionary nature, and the deepening social divide between the Chinese working class and the dictatorial regime.

Pointing to the massive growth of the Chinese proletariat, Symonds said these workers were the natural allies of the American, Australian and the international working class. “This gives real meaning,” he said, “to the call that we make for an international anti-war movement of the working class to put an end to this system.”

SEP National Secretary Cheryl Crisp told the Sydney meeting that the Trotskyist movement categorically rejects the reactionary claims by pseudo-lefts that China is an imperialist power, thereby justifying their support for a US-led war against China.

In Melbourne, one attendee wanted to know about the SEP’s attitude towards the former Soviet Union. SEP members and candidates responded that the party is part of the world Trotskyist movement which has its origins in the fight against the Stalinist bureaucracy and the degeneration of the Soviet Union.

At Oxley, one worker asked what the SEP would do if it won a seat in parliament. Mike Head responded by explaining that such a victory would signify the rise of a mass movement against the capitalist order, not just in Australia but internationally.

The SEP would use its voice in parliament, Head said, to fight for the development of that movement and to expose the backroom conspiracies of the ruling capitalist class behind the smokescreen of parliament.

Pointing to lessons of history, Head said socialism could not be achieved through parliament. It would require the actual seizure of power by the working class over the key industries and institutions, and the establishment of a workers’ government based on truly democratic working-class bodies.

The range of these questions is another clear indication that workers and youth across Australia and internationally are profoundly dissatisfied with the establishment parties and are looking for a political alternative.

*Authorised by Cheryl Crisp for the Socialist Equality Party, Level 1/457-459 Elizabeth Street, Surry Hills, NSW, 2010, Australia.*



To contact the WSWS and the  
Socialist Equality Party visit:  
**wsws.org/contact**