

Australian educators call for opposition to the war on Iran

Our correspondents
19 March 2026

A meeting of the Committee for Public Education (CFPE), the rank-and-file educators' network in Australia, passed a resolution last week denouncing the barbaric US-Israeli assault on Iran and the Albanese Labor government's participation in it.

The meeting called on educators, students and workers to move similar resolutions against this illegal war, the criminality of which "has been underscored by the targeting of schools and hospitals, as is still happening in Gaza."

The meeting heard two reports from leading members of the CFPE. Mike Head, a member of the Western Sydney University Rank-and-File Committee, told the meeting: "As the *World Socialist Web Site* has warned for months, this war for total US-Israeli control over the oil-rich and strategic Middle East threatens to plunge humanity into a third world war."

Head said the Albanese government was completely complicit in the war crimes being committed. That had been underscored by the fact that three Australians were part of the crew on the nuclear-armed US submarine that murdered more than 150 Iranian sailors on an unarmed naval ship off the coast of Sri Lanka, as part of the embedding of Australian personnel in the US military.

Head emphasised that "the war will not be stopped by appeals to imperialist and bourgeois governments, or their UN, as the Greens and pseudo-left groups claim. That has been proven by two and half years of protests in Australia and around the world against the Gaza genocide. Far from responding to appeals, these governments have only ramped up their barbarism and are seeking to suppress or intimidate all opposition."

CFPE national convenor Sue Phillips' report focused on the connection between the imperialist war against Iran and the state and federal governments' austerity

program against the working class, the ongoing assault on public education and the restructuring of education to meet the Australian government's war plans.

Phillips outlined the impact of serious underfunding of public education, including the appalling conditions in South Australia where teachers reported classrooms with collapsed ceilings, pervasive mould and exposed wiring, all posing a direct threat to the safety of staff and students alike, while hundreds of billions of dollars were being poured into the preparations for war through the AUKUS alliance.

Phillips further reported on the militarisation of education, with weapons manufacturers increasingly embedded into the education system, particularly the universities.

The CFPE resolution, which was passed unanimously, stated:

This meeting of rank-and-file educators and students denounces the barbaric joint US-Israeli assault on Iran and the Australian Labor government's support for it. This is a criminal act of war waged in flagrant violation of the United States Constitution and international law. It is precisely what was described at the Nuremberg trials of Nazi leaders in 1945–46 as a "crime against peace"—the "supreme international crime differing only from other war crimes in that it contains within itself the accumulated evil of the whole." The criminality of this devastation has been underscored by the targeting of schools and hospitals, as is still happening in Gaza.

This is an illegal war to take control of the oil-rich and strategic Middle East, alongside the

continuing Gaza genocide. It is a step toward global war and nuclear catastrophe. We demand an immediate halt to all US and Israeli attacks on Iran, Lebanon and Gaza. We condemn the Albanese government's complicity in this illegal war and demand the withdrawal of all Australian and other imperialist forces from the Middle East, and the closure of the Pine Gap war targeting base in central Australia.

We urge all educators and students to oppose this plunge into another world war and join the fight for the development of an international, socialist anti-war movement of the working class.

We call on workers at schools and universities, as well as workers in other industries, to pass similar resolutions at their workplaces.

Following the meeting the *World Socialist Web Site* spoke to several participants.

A Queensland University of Technology staff member said: "By bombing schools and hospitals, the US is doing what Israel has been doing in Gaza with impunity. The working class has the power to stop this. I totally agree that the anti-genocide protests have not worked because the war crimes are worsening. We need to take charge and harness our power. We need coordinated general strikes, preferably globally.

"This is not just about Trump. If you are just fighting the puppet, you are ignoring the system that produced him. This war is going to create a flow-on effect. It will impact generations to come. Aligning with the US is putting us all in danger. These governments are sending poor people off to fight for rich people. We can't afford not to stand strong because there will be ripple effects around the world."

A PhD student from University of Melbourne commented: "The war is irresponsible and unethical, and it could result in the deaths of many thousands, if not millions. The Labor government's support for it reveals their interests being aligned with the US government, their lack of opposition to war, and their willingness to sacrifice so many people's lives. Any war that takes place now, given how tense the world situation is, is such a big risk—the likelihood is that this

will escalate to a larger war.

"I agree with the resolution we passed. It highlighted that the actions of the US government in beginning a war with Iran were not just in violation of international law, but against its own constitution as well. This means that laws and legality mean absolutely nothing to them."

A retired teacher from Victoria said one's words "are not equal to the horror, complexity and danger. We have endured years of cascading disasters. We are witnessing the violent disintegration of the capitalist system in real time. I support the CPFE's resolution. More than that, I urge workers and students to make it their own, to pass these motions and start building a bulwark against the creeping dark."

Both speakers at the meeting called for the formation of rank-and-file committees in every school and university to discuss and advance demands based on the needs of students and educators. Such committees would be democratically elected, accountable to their members and completely independent of the trade union bureaucracies, which have refused to take any action to halt the genocide and war.

Phillips said in her conclusion: "We need to link up with parents, students, and other public sector workers to launch a political rebellion against the program of war and austerity. Power must return to the rank and file to secure the future of public education."

For further discussion, or to send messages or resolutions of support, please contact the CFPE, the educators' rank-and-file network:

Contact the CFPE:

Email: cfpe.aus@gmail.com

Facebook: facebook.com/commforpubliceducation

Twitter: [CFPE_Australia](https://twitter.com/CFPE_Australia)



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