

May Day 2014

Melbourne Anarchist Communist Group

1 May 2014

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Chicago 1886

May Day began in the United States, when Anarchist unions in Chicago called a general strike on 1 May 1886 to win the 8 hour day. A few days later, a bomb killed 7 police and 4 others at a protest connected with the campaign. In the ensuing witch hunt, eight Anarchist union organisers were arrested. They were convicted in a trial where there wasn't even a pretence at proving their guilt. Four were executed. A movement was born in the subsequent campaign for the exoneration of the Haymarket Martyrs and spread around the world.

Class War in Australia

The Coalition Government elected last year is showing itself as the most Right wing in generations. It has been physically repelling refugees from Australian shores; it has started a Royal Commission into the union movement; and it has slashed tertiary education funding. And this is only for starters. Its leaks about its impending Budget are simply staggering, with unprecedented attacks on the Age Pension, on Medicare and on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme being floated. Meanwhile, State governments have been implementing savage cuts of their own and attacking civil liberties on a wide front. And the bosses have announced a wave of factory closures, including the entire car manufacturing industry. This is class war, but there's only one side fighting.

Class War Worldwide

Across the world, employers and governments are attacking workers and, in many places, workers are fighting back. The Rana Plaza disaster in Bangladesh in April last year was followed later by a massive wave of garment workers' strikes that won a 77% pay rise. Cambodian garment workers staged a mass strike in December, only to be forced back to work by murderous State repression. And China, despite the continuing tyranny of the so-called "Communist" Party, is the strike capital of the world, with 180,000 "mass incidents" recorded in the last 12 months.

An End to Class War

No matter what gains we make in struggle, sooner or later employers and governments will try to roll them back. And no matter how much ground we give, employers and governments will only come back for more. The class war goes on, because whether we fight or we don't, capital never stops fighting. The struggle will continue until we organise as a class, take the means of production into our own hands, and overthrow the entire capitalist system. Only workers' revolution can end the class war and bring peace to the human race.

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