

Stop the Genocide

End the Intervention

Melbourne Anarchist Communist Group

February 27, 2010

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The unions, and all working class organisations, need to come together to denounce the NT Intervention as the racist atrocity it is, and fight to end it. In the course of this struggle, we can develop a true movement of reconciliation. We can build a society which recognises land rights, and abolishes both wage labour and real estate. We can have a revolution.

A Racist Intervention

The Northern Territory Intervention, the so-called “emergency response” to a report into child sexual abuse in NT Aboriginal communities, is nearly three years old. It is a bipartisan policy of the “Labor” Party and the Liberals, introduced by Howard and continued by Rudd. It is not, and never was, about child abuse.

The NT Intervention comprises nine measures, the most prominent of them being:

- Compulsory acquisition of Aboriginal land in targeted communities;
- Compulsory control of Centrelink benefits of people in the targeted Aboriginal communities; and
- Imposition of Government Business Managers to control targeted Aboriginal communities.

To achieve this, and the other measures, the Racial Discrimination Act was suspended. This is as clear an admission of racial discrimination that you can get from any modern government.

Back to Paternalism

The NT Intervention marks a policy turn of historic proportions for Australian capitalism. A decisive fraction of the ruling class has abandoned its inconsistent and often tokenistic support for indigenous self-determination. It is now driving hard at re-introducing the long-discredited policy of paternalism and assimilation.

Land rights and native title have failed to produce a class of capitalist Aboriginal entrepreneurs. Instead, underfunding and racist contempt have created communities, especially around township camps, where many Aboriginal people have neither a functioning traditional culture nor the resources to prosper in white society.

The capitalist class has concluded that Aboriginal people can't manage their own affairs, so they have to have white people control them again “for their own good”. And what is good for them is (according to them) assimilation, to become absorbed into white capitalist society and live just like white people.

Assimilation is Genocide

There are many ways to commit genocide, and putting people into gas ovens is only one. The ambition to destroy Aboriginal culture by assimilating Aborigines into white capitalist society also meets the definition of genocide. If the new paternalists have their way, Aborigines will move into “economically viable” towns and cities, Aboriginal languages and culture will be lost and, most importantly, Aboriginal land rights will no longer be an obstacle to mining companies.

Aborigines are simply to be “Australians” — who happen to be very poor and have dark skin, thereby singling them out for racist treatment by coppers and rednecks. And there’s the rub. The genocide of Aboriginal society, even if accomplished, will not mean that Aboriginal people become “normal Australians”. Poverty and racial oppression are still to be their lot.

An Injury to All

Apart from those living in remote communities and resisting integration into capitalist relations, almost all Aborigines in Australia are part of the working class. To achieve working class unity, we need to fight all divisions within our class, including racism, and the intended Aboriginal genocide in Australia is racism par excellence.

The unions, and all working class organisations, need to come together to denounce the NT Intervention as the racist atrocity it is, and fight to end it. In the course of this struggle, we can develop a true movement of reconciliation. We can build a society which recognises land rights, and abolishes both wage labour and real estate. We can have a revolution.

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