

STOP THE GENOCIDE!

The late, unlamented Howard Government's «intervention» into Aboriginal communities in the Northern Territory was a blatant land grab, but it was also much more than that. It was a deliberate attempt to extinguish Aboriginal culture and forcibly assimilate Aboriginal people into White Australia. And the new Labor Government has not yet disavowed it.

** The Process is the policy*

In media discussion of the NT «intervention», much has been made of how certain aspects cut across the ostensible justification for it. The lack of consultation with Aboriginal communities about details of the «intervention» has resulted in needless violation of Aboriginal law, the removal of the permit system has opened Aboriginal communities up to sly dog-runners and other undesirables, and so on.

All of this is true, but these things are not «unintended by-products of the former Government's policies. Rather, the Howard Government fully intended these effects. The NT «intervention» was conceived in order to tackle what Howard and many sectors of the capitalist class in Australia feel is the underlying problem - that Aborigines still exist as indigenous people. Aboriginal communities are being ignored, coerced and steamrolled because the object of the exercise is to abolish Aboriginality, to make Aboriginal people just like White Australians - only poorer and with darker skins. The process is the policy.

** Assimilation is Genocide*

The NT «intervention» amounts to a program of forcible assimilation. It operates through Aboriginal people in remote communities having no income apart from welfare payments (because no jobs can be supported on the capitalist market); quarantining those payments to be spent at the direction of Government bureaucrats; and making even their receipt in the first place conditional on following Government directives. In this way, the Government can prevent the transmission of Aboriginal culture and teach residents of remote communities and town camps a «superior» way to live.

Forcible assimilation, however, is genocide. Genocide does not require gas chambers - it merely requires a State policy to achieve the elimination of an ethnic group. And this is what the NT «intervention» is all about. If it succeeds, it would be the consummation of the original sin of capitalist Australia - the invasion and conquest of a land that was not theirs and the dispossession of the original inhabitants. The continuing existence of Aboriginal people is a standing rebuke to that conquest and a threat to the legitimacy of capital and its State.

**** To win Requires Class Struggle***

There are two requirements to force the new Labor Government to drop Howard's plans. The first is the intransigent assertion of Aboriginal identity and the transmission of Aboriginal culture by Aboriginal people themselves. And it is abundantly clear that Aboriginal people, in their vast majority, have this. But left to struggle alone, however, Aboriginal people will be defeated. We also need the genocide to be opposed by the working class and, most especially, by the unions. The working class as a whole must come to the aid of its Aboriginal members. The new Labor Government must be put on notice that all workers, indigenous and non-indigenous, will not tolerate the genocidal NT «intervention».

**SELF DETERMINATION
NOT ASSIMILATION**

Melbourne Anarchist Communist Group

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* For a copy of our Aims and Principles write to P.O. BOX 2120, Lygon St. North, East Brunswick, VIC 3057 or macg1984@yahoo.com.au