

END THE PATRIOTIC MYTH END MILITARIST PROPAGANDA

Gallipoli

In April 1915, Australian and other troops of the British Empire attacked Turkey, in a doomed attempt to knock a minor ally of Germany out of World War I. Many soldiers on both sides died, but a myth was born. According to this myth, Australians are tough, honest, irreverent towards authority, fiercely loyal and completely courageous. Further, these virtues are embodied in the ordinary Australian soldier, the “digger”. And, according to this myth, these qualities are uniquely Australian.

Imperialism Today, Australian Style

Today, Australian soldiers are deployed in Iraq and Afghanistan, minor players supporting the failing U.S. “Global War on Terror”. These actions are insurance premiums on the Australian alliance with its great and powerful friend, and have nothing to do with whether invading either of these countries was justified in the first place. Australian troops also occupy East Timor and the Solomon Islands and have recently returned from occupying Tonga. These actions are about maintaining Australian control of its smaller neighbours and the Pacific islands.

Patriotism and Militarism

It’s hard to miss the patriotic and militarist propaganda these days. Both the Howard Government and the ALP are determined boosters of the military and the worst criticism they can make is to call someone “un-Australian”. By supporting militarist myths and patriotic propaganda, they are trying to make it impossible to criticise the military in any way and to compel support for imperialist wars.

Workers can end war

War is endemic in capitalism. Each national capitalist class employs its military to promote its interests at the expense of its own working class and that of other capitalist classes. Workers, however, have no reason to support this. We have nothing to gain from supporting the Australian Government’s imperialist wars. We do the fighting and the dying, while the bosses stay safe and reap the benefits. But we can end war by refusing to support governments that go to war. By refusing to supply military forces. By refusing to fight in their wars. And we can make a revolution to put an end to capitalism, to all governments and all armies worldwide. We can have a world of freedom, peace and equality.

FOR WORKERS’ ACTION TO END WAR

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