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Melbourne Anarchist Communist Group
Australian Imperialism
Have Guns — Will Travel
25 April 2010

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# Australian Imperialism

**Have Guns — Will Travel**

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## Afghanistan

The current war in Afghanistan is a textbook case. The United States is in a bloody conflict with a band of religious fundamentalist cutthroats, in a country which has never been a nation and has never had more than a nominal central authority. It backs a corrupt government, mostly of competing fundamentalists. In this imperialist war of occupation, Australian troops commit blundering atrocities like the killing of five children in Uruzgan province last February. In a land where most people want the foreigners gone and a peasant by day can be a Taliban by night, crimes like this are inevitable. But support the United States and to fortify the Australian alliance with Uncle Sam, the Labor Government thinks it's all worth it.

## The Way Out

Imperialism is part of modern capitalism. Its wars will last as long as capitalism does and the Australian military is purpose-built to fight them. Whether it is a pointless sacrifice on a Turkish beach, or bloody murder in an Afghan village, it will continue until capitalism itself is ended — and the only way to end capitalism is through workers' revolution. Unlike the capitalists, the working class can unite across national boundaries. We can sweep away the capitalists and their State, with its armies, police and prisons. We can build libertarian communism, a world of peace and plenty, a world of both freedom and security. We can and we must.

HAVE GUNS – WILL TRAVEL



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## Gallipoli

World War I had bogged down, and Britain was looking for a way to change the balance of forces. A landing at the Dardanelles in April 1915, followed by the taking of Istanbul, was planned to open the supply route to Russia and possibly knock the Ottoman Empire out of the war. The campaign was a fiasco. Tens of thousands of young men from both sides were sacrificed in a minor episode of the clash of two rival imperialist alliances. Rather than being "the war to end all wars", WWI was a war for imperial domination, to be reprised on a larger scale twenty-one years later.

## A Franchise Arrangement

Ever since the 1870s, Australian troops have been sent to help fight the imperialist wars of a great and powerful friend. Whether in a World War, a British colonial war, or one of Uncle Sam's never-ending series of wars to defend his empire, the Australian military fights in far-flung places at the side of the larger power. Almost always, the objective is to cement the alliance, since the issues at stake are rarely of direct relevance. The pay-off is that Australian capitalism is granted the imperialist franchise for the South Pacific (and now East Timor as well), where it operates without the presence of its patron.