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Anti-Imperialism Abroad Means Class Struggle At Home!

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Down With Australian Imperialism!

The article below is based on presentations given by Spartacist League comrades in Melbourne, 30 July, and in Sydney, 6 August, abridged and edited for publication.

In 1916 amidst the carnage of the first imperialist world war, Russian Bolshevik leader V.I. Lenin wrote his pamphlet *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*. He detailed the development of monopoly finance capital, its inherently predatory character in search of greater and greater profits and ultimately the complete division of the world amongst the major imperialist countries. He outlined how each of the capitalist governments pushed racism and chauvinism while constructing massive military machines in order to enforce the subjugation of billions of people while plundering the resources of their lands. He exposed the social democracy as agents of the bourgeoisie within the workers movement, a key prop for capitalist rule and imperialist exploitation.

This well describes the Australian Labor Party. The ALP has backed every war and every dirty colonial adventure waged by Australian imperialism. It was entrusted by the bourgeoisie to run Australia during both imperialist world wars. One of the ALP's greatest crimes against the working class was its loyal service to the imperialists' drive to restore capitalism in the Soviet Union, leading to the destruction of the world's first workers state.

Just weeks ago imperialist bombs were ripping apart Serbia, terrorising the population and devastating that country



Pacific Defence Reporter

Bloody regional gendarmes for counterrevolution and Imperialist subjugation from Korea to Vietnam, Malaysia to East Timor.

amid a bourgeois propaganda campaign about defending Albanians in Kosovo. Across Europe the social-democratic parties, ruling on behalf of the capitalists, were the most bellicose prosecutors of this war, not least Tony Blair of the British Labour Party. In Australia, too, the ALP gave its fulsome support to the imperialist attack.

Under the U.S./NATO "peace" diktat,

Kosovo will be a NATO protectorate, NATO's goal from the start. This imperialist conquest is a blow not only to the people of Serbia and the Balkans, but to working people and the oppressed the world over. It will place the Kosovars—Serbs, Gypsies (Roma) and Albanians—under the direct thumb of the imperialists, exacerbating national hatreds in the region. From the moment U.S./NATO

troops entered Kosovo to enforce this predatory "peace," the Serb and Gypsy populations have been subjected to violent pogromist attacks. And it will sharpen the conflicting appetites of the major capitalist powers, accelerating the drive to an even bloodier war in the future. All U.S./UN/NATO troops out of the Balkans now!

We of the International Communist League called for the proletariat to oppose this war in word and deed, stressing the need for socialist revolution to defeat their "own" imperialist bourgeoisies, including here in Australia. We called for military defence of Serbia—a small dependent capitalist country—against the U.S./NATO attack, while giving not a shred of political support to Serbian strongman Milosevic. Opposed to the poison of nationalism, we fight for the class unity of the workers, for a socialist federation of the Balkans through proletarian revolutions to overthrow all the bloody capitalist regimes of the region.

We have historically defended the right of self-determination for the Kosovo Albanians, but this question became subordinated to military defence of Serbia against the U.S./NATO imperialists. We said from the outset that this war was not about the Kosovo Albanians, but a war of domination aimed at realising longstanding American plans to insert a substantial U.S./NATO military presence in Serbia.

In the tow of the pro-imperialist social democracies came virtually all the so-called left groups who echoed the imperialist war aims, bleating about "poor

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Break With Laborism—We Need a Revolutionary Workers Party!

Reprinted below is the Spartacist League's 10 August leaflet distributed at rallies protesting the federal Liberal government's proposed "second wave" union-busting legislation. These rallies were designed by the ACTU labour bureaucrats to channel simmering working-class anger away from the needed class-struggle fight against the bosses. While an estimated 100,000 stopped work to demonstrate in Melbourne on 12 August, the speakers platform was dominated by federal ALP leader Kim Beazley and others who preached lobbying Parliament and defence of the Arbitration system, a key institution tying workers to the capitalist state. Their eyes were especially on the Victoria state elections which were formally announced days later. In ALP-run New South Wales, the union tops did little to mobilise, resulting in perhaps

For a Class-Struggle Fight to Bust the Union-Busters!

10,000 rallying in Sydney on 24 August. Afraid that any NSW Labor Party representatives might be called to account for their anti-working-class attacks, the rally organisers deliberately kept them off the platform.

Between these two "days of action," about 20,000 coal miners struck for 24-hours on 13 August to demand that sacked Oakdale miners be paid the \$6.3 million in entitlements denied them when their thieving employer closed the pit. Within hours the federal government reversed its "let them starve" policy and now says it will provide compensation.

Even this brief strike showed the power of the working class. But the demands of the CFMEU miners union leadership were explicitly confined to minor adjustments in an already inadequate industry-wide long-service leave scheme. When the Hunter Valley miners were fighting for their union rights and when the Gordonstone miners faced sackings and cop assaults, the CFMEU tops refused to call a national strike.

Both the ACTU's rallies and the CFMEU's carefully limited strike underscore that the current pro-capitalist leadership of the unions must be ousted

and replaced by a leadership committed to a class-struggle program.

In the face of growing outrage against John Howard and Peter Reith's new union-busting bill the ACTU trade-union leadership has called protest rallies around the country this month, including a work stoppage in Victoria. But far from organising the working class for struggle against the capitalists and their government, the ACTU intends a mere parliamentary manoeuvre. Their strategy, in the infamous words of ACTU president Jennie George, is to lobby the capitalist Democrats to "just say no" to the bill in the senate. These are the same Democrats who helped ensure passage of the original 1996 Workplace Relations Act (WRA).

The very purpose of this "second
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For Women's Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!

Free Abortion on Demand!

This article was published in issue 11 of UNSW student publication Tharunka.

The availability of safe, legal and free abortion is a measure of the condition of women, which in turn is an index of the general advancement of any society. Yet in 1999 in Australia, abortion remains in the criminal statutes of every state. And even the already very narrow circumstances in which a woman may obtain this simple medical procedure legally are increasingly under attack.

We in the Spartacus Youth Club stand for free abortion on demand—this is inseparable from our struggle for free quality health care for all and free 24-hour childcare. The sweeping attacks on health care and social services, part of the broader capitalist offensive against the working class, have hit women first and hardest. Criminally, while patients die for lack of resources in public hospitals—cut to the bone by ALP as well as Liberal state governments—John Howard's federal government recently allocated \$220,000 for the establishment of an anti-abortion headquarters in Canberra.

Last year in Western Australia, for the first time in 30 years, doctors were charged with "procuring an illegal miscarriage," i.e., an abortion. Doctors Victor Chan and Hoh Peng Lee faced 14 years jail. In the wake of these outrageous charges, a new WA law was passed ostensibly legalising abortion but in reality making access *even more* restrictive. Women more than 20 weeks pregnant must get a permit from the Minister of Health while women under 16 years must go to Children's Court if they are unable or unwilling to get parental consent for the procedure!

In the Australian Capital Territory, women wanting an abortion must endure degrading and cruel compulsory "counselling." Then they are subjected to a further 72-hour "cooling off" period before they can have an abortion. The enforced wait imposes particular hardships on those who can least afford it: youth, working class and poor women. In some cases, it forces women to seek mid- or late-term abortions which are more costly, medically complex and not widely available.

The drive against late-term abortions acts as a wedge to undercut women's right to abortion in general. While the procedure is quite rare—in Australia one or two in 1,000—the women seeking such abortions are desperate and doctors who perform the procedure are dedicated and brave. The legal requirement for both birth and death certificates in such cases cruelly reflects the fact that the capitalist state considers abortion a crime.

Attacks on abortion rights are deadly for women. Millions of women around the world die every year from botched illegal abortions. In 1970, before (highly reversible) common law rulings made abortion obtainable, it was the *leading cause* of maternal death in Australia. Soon after Drs. Lee and Chan were charged two dangerously ill women were admitted to Perth hospital after trying to end their own pregnancies.

The powerful anti-abortion lobby, whose godfather is the repulsive Tasmanian senator Brian Harradine, combines with the profit-gouging pharmaceutical companies to deny women access to RU486, a drug which would make ending a pregnancy a safe and private non-surgical procedure. A "morning after pill"—only recently approved in the U.S. 30

of God's Precious Infants"—associated with the sinister "Human Life International"—have escalated their targeting of staff and patients with their reactionary, misogynist filth. On 17 July, 40 bible-thumping creeps descended on the clinic under a banner of the "virgin" Mary, setting up a gruesome display with giant photographs of fetuses and dolls drenched in fake blood, while provocatively videotaping pro-abortion demonstrators and patients from inside a van.

The anti-abortion fanatics are dangerous. In the U.S. at least seven people, including three doctors and two clinic workers, have been murdered by anti-abortion terrorists in the past five years. In Canada three doctors have been shot. Across North America clinics have been firebombed. In Australia the Ku Klux

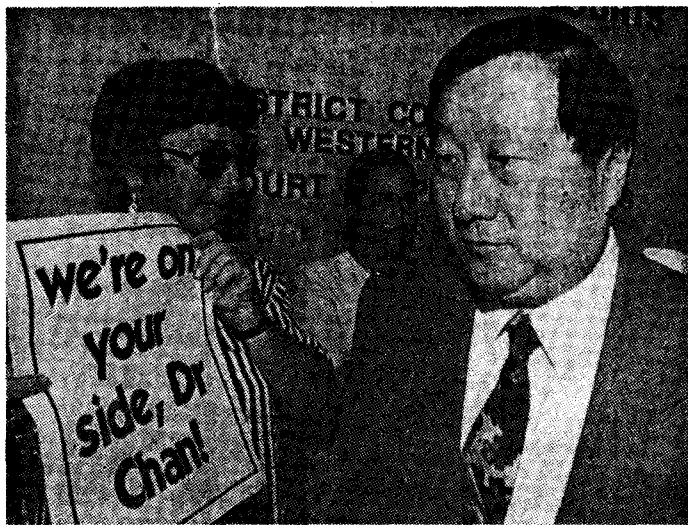
the working class and protection of the property and class rule of the bourgeoisie, of which the oppression of women is a cornerstone.

The oppression of women is rooted in the family, bulwark of conservatism and social control, and crucial prop for capitalist exploitation. In giving women some control over whether or not they have children, abortion is viewed as a threat to this central institution of capitalist society. Only a socialist society, putting all its resources at the service of humanity, can lay the material basis for the replacement of the family by socialised childcare and housework, freeing women to be full participants in social and political life.

Young women who hate the ingrained anti-woman bigotry of this society often refer to themselves as feminists, but feminism is politically incapable of resolving the most basic aspects of women's oppression because it functions entirely within the framework of bourgeois rule. The fate of many 1970s "radical" feminists is instructive. Rejecting the necessary fight to overthrow the entire capitalist system, they secured positions in the Labor Party and the trade-union bureaucracy and have helped to oversee the cutbacks and union-busting carried out by the ALP federally and in the states which have particularly hit their working-class "sisters." Committed to the preservation of capitalism while based upon the trade-unions, the ALP is a transmission belt for bourgeois ideology into the working class, not least racism and brutal male chauvinism. From Hawke and Keating's federal Labor governments to the state governments of Victoria's Joan Kirner and WA's Carmen Lawrence, the ALP has never once moved against the oppressive abortion laws. It is necessary to wage a political fight against Laborism to break the chains that bind the working class to the capitalist state.

We understand that the fight for abortion rights is an integral part of the struggles of all the working people and minorities against the attacks of the capitalist class. An organisation of revolutionary action and education, the Spartacus Youth Club is dedicated to helping build a revolutionary workers party to mobilise the multiracial working class in defence of the rights of women, gays, immigrants and all the oppressed in the fight for a socialist revolution which will sweep away the capitalist system and open the road to a truly human society. **Free abortion on demand—Free quality health care for all! For women's liberation through socialist revolution! Join the SYC! ■**

Abortion remains in criminal statutes of every state. In 1998, Perth doctors Victor Chan, right, and Hoh Peng Lee faced 14 years in jail.



Australian

years after it was first shown to be effective—would reduce abortions and unwanted pregnancies. This, along with a whole range of contraceptive products, from low dosage birth control pills to newer and safer IUDs, is also unavailable here. For young women just getting a prescription for birth-control pills can be difficult.

The attacks on abortion rights go hand-in-hand with a general anti-sex witchhunt which targets especially young people and homosexuals. Bob Carr's NSW Labor government has only recently backed off from its truly perverted policing of youth sexuality, ditching the "squeal rules" requiring doctors and others to report anyone under 16 years they think is having sex. There has been a frenzy over "pedophilia" while people are dragged through the courts for consensual acts that happened more than 30 years ago! Down with the reactionary age of consent laws!

The attacks on women's rights at all levels of government have emboldened the crazed anti-abortion bigots. At Sydney's Salisbury Road clinic the "Helpers

Klan, National Action and other fascist organisations, fuelled by the growth of One Nation, have been openly terrorising Aborigines and targeting immigrants. These sinister forces have been deeply entwined with the anti-abortion bigots. As part of the fight for free abortion on demand we call for mass, militant defence actions backed up by the social power of the labour movement to disperse the rightist mobs who besiege clinics and torment women.

Yet this strategy is opposed by all manner of reformist "socialists"—such as the Communist League (CL), Democratic Socialist Party, International Socialist Organisation, Socialist Alternative—who foster illusions in the "reformability" of the capitalist state especially when overseen by the ALP. What this means was graphically revealed at the 17 July demonstration at the Salisbury Road clinic called by the Women's Abortion Action Campaign. In the face of the anti-abortion bigots, CL supporters appointed themselves auxiliary police, demanding that Spartacist supporters move from the clinic entrance because the cops had decreed that only five people "from either side" could be there. When we chanted "Free abortion on demand! Free quality health care for all!" and "Defend the clinics, take a stand! Free abortion on demand!" a CLer tried to shut us up claiming we might upset patients. In fact, thanks to the CL's actions, women going into the clinic thought there were *only* anti-abortion bigots present!

The CL's cothinkers of the U.S. Socialist Workers Party are notorious for looking to the forces of the racist, anti-woman capitalist state to protect women's rights, including calling on the armed troops of the American imperialists to defend abortion clinics. Appealing to the state to give women "choice" shows fatal illusions in the nature of class society. The capitalist state is a machine for the repression of

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Frenzy Over "Pedophilia" Fuels Anti-Sex Witchhunt

In 1998 Perth teacher Jodee Fricker was convicted for having an obviously consensual sexual affair with a 15-year-old male student. More recently, a New South Wales coach, Paul Busteded, was jailed for a long relationship with a 14-year-old girl who went to the cops when things "soured." A Queensland Labor MP and former teacher faces 48 counts of sex with minors dating back to 1961.

These are just a few of the casualties of a sweeping state-orchestrated anti-sex witchhunt targeting so-called "pedophiles." It includes virulent anti-gay bigotry, attacks on the right to abortion, crackdowns on youth sexuality, censorship of movies, art exhibits and books, and a new federal law banning internet porn that rivals police-state Singapore in its repressive scope. Scarcely a week goes by without a teacher, judge, politician or sports official being charged with or jailed for *consensual* sexual activities with young people, many of which took place 20, 30, even 40 years ago. In the context of massive youth unemployment and government union-busting and job-slashing, this witchhunt aims at enforcing social regimentation and bolstering the powers of the bourgeois state—the instrument for maintaining the rule of a tiny handful of capitalists over the vast majority who must sell their labour power in order to survive.

In Labor-run NSW the hysteria unleashed by the Wood Royal Commission reached a crescendo two years ago when Franca Arena, then a Labor member of the NSW upper house, claimed many high-profile men were pedophiles. The Wood Commission staged raids on gay men's homes. Its inquisitors tried to make witnesses name gay politicians, judges and prosecutors and to state whether they had ever been in a certain nightclub in Sydney's Kings Cross. Conspiracies and coverups were alleged, while the press raved about "pedophile networks." A Queensland report absurdly claimed that some 300 "active pedophiles" could be sexually abusing 45,000 children. In 1997 "Operation Paradox," an annual "dob in your neighbour" phone-in, resulted in nearly 1,400 people being smeared to the cops as child sexual abusers. Arena's wildest claims were eventually discredited, but her rantings served their purpose, legitimising the state's all-out witchhunt.

Teachers have been particularly targeted. Three years ago we protested the jailing of Lee Dunbar for a love affair in the early 1980s with a 14-year-old female student. Queensland teacher Heidi Choat was just jailed for two years for an affair with a teenage male. The fate of a 32-year-old Queensland man convicted for an affair with a 15-year-old former

student highlights both how vindictive and how consensual these cases are. Ludicrously referred to as his "victim," the young woman (who instigated most of their liaisons) told cops the teacher was a "mega-babe" and "all the girls talked about wanting to have sex with Mr. Douglas."

In NSW hundreds of teachers have been investigated, many thrown out of their jobs, while unfounded and unproven allegations remain permanently on their records. The witchhunt of teachers also serves the aims of those who oppose the very idea of public education. Indeed, governments everywhere are

sive biological milestone—who, furthermore, engaged in consensual sexual activities. For the witchhunters, these issues are irrelevant. As the judge said when jailing Philip Bell for 14 years on 75 sex-related charges dating back to the 1970s, "What matters is not whether his victims had reached puberty, but whether they were below the age of legal consent" (*Weekend Australian*, 13-14 February).

Government Out of the Bedroom!

The forces of religion and state strive to ensure that the mass of the population conforms to heterosexual, mono-

common way to soothe children. Equally inflammatory to his critics was his entirely true and understated observation that the intervention of the state can do more harm than good.

More than 100 years ago Frederick Engels addressed some of these questions in his book *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*:

"Prior to the invention of incest (and it is an invention, and one of the utmost value), sexual intercourse between parents and children could be no more disgusting than between other persons belonging to different generations—such as indeed occurs today even in the most Philistine countries without exciting great horror...."

There are ambiguities of sexuality in capitalist society where the deformities of class inequality and racial and sexual oppression can lead to a lot of pain and ugliness, especially in the family, where women and children are viewed as the father's property and his authority is near absolute. Determining what is effective consent is always tricky, and particularly with youth there is a grey area. But such a judgement must be case by case—the act of sex in itself is not *a priori* evidence of abuse or coercion. In consensual relationships we are unalterably opposed to intervention by the racist, reactionary state. As we wrote in "Satan, the State and Anti-Sex Hysteria" (*Women and Revolution* No. 45, Winter-Spring 1996):

"while the abuse of children is a vicious and horrible crime, many 'illegal' sexual encounters are entirely consensual and devoid of harm per se. The willful conflation of everything from mutual fondling of siblings to the heinous rape of an infant by an adult caretaker creates a social climate of anti-sex hysteria in which the perpetrators of real violence against children often go free.... The sexual proclivities of a group-living mammalian species such as our own are patently ill-suited to the rigid heterosexual monogamy which forms the ideological foundation of the institution of the family, reinforced by organized religion."

Australia's laws on sexual relations and age of consent are a patchwork, varying widely between states. In Western Australia and New South Wales the age is 16 for heterosexual and lesbian sex, but for male homosexual sex it is 21 in WA and 18 in NSW. In Queensland, the powers that be have okayed vaginal intercourse at 16, but anal intercourse—for men or women—is *verboten* until you are 18. In NSW the anti-gay bigots of the ALP are obdurate about maintaining a higher age of consent for gay sex.

A central purpose of these laws is to regiment youth and to outlaw sex altogether for teenagers, who mostly do it with each other. Young people should have unfettered access to birth control, sex information and abortion, as well as the right to privacy and independence. When the NSW ALP government decreed a higher age of consent of 18 for sex between teachers and students, this underscored that these laws, widely resented by young people, are not just a straitjacket for youth, but are made to go after *adults* as well. One hundred years ago, in Australia the age of consent for women was 14! Today that's jail bait.

The Labor Party, especially in NSW, is in the vanguard of the "save our children" drive and has used the "anti-pedophile" hysteria to strengthen the powers of the capitalist state by passing ever more repressive laws. Since 1997 the Crimes Commission has had sweeping powers to seize documents, tap telephones and compel people on pain of imprisonment to answer questions. Stiffer jail sentences and fines have been

continued on page 4

Full Democratic Rights for Gays!

Oscar Wilde and his young lover Lord Alfred Douglas ("Bosie"). Wilde was jailed for homosexuality, driven to a premature death in 1900 as a consequence.

Library of Congress, Kaufmann Collection



slashing funds to public schools while handing out millions to private, particularly religious schools.

As one journalist quipped, in the 1950s we were told to fear "reds under the beds—now it's peds." "Pedophilia" means nothing more than sexual desire towards children. Central to the bourgeoisie's witchhunt is the willful conflation of consensual cross-generational sex with violence, rape or child abuse. A social "hot button" if there ever was, the imputation of "child sexual abuse" is enough to brand someone a monster, about whom anything may be said, to whom anything may be done.

But as case after case illustrates, we are not even dealing with children here, but with *teenagers* past puberty—a deci-

gamous sexual activity to bolster the status of the family in society, instilling the habit of obedience to authority. We Marxists do not presume to advocate *any* particular mode of consensual sexual behaviour and oppose any attempts to fit human sexuality into legislated or decreed "norms." We oppose reactionary "age of consent" laws (historically they were aimed at ensuring virginity before marriage). Such laws have nothing to do with protecting youth and are intended to enforce abstinence and guilt through the force of the state.

The guiding principle for sexual relations should be that of *effective consent*, nothing more and nothing less than mutual agreement and understanding, as opposed to coercion. We reject the equation of pedophilia with rape and abuse, and have a long record of defending advocacy groups which take up the socially explosive issue of cross-generational sex, such as the North American Man/Boy Love Association (NAMBLA) and the Paedophile Support Group (PSG) in Australia.

A key component of the bourgeoisie's "family values" campaign is the supposed innocence of children and youth and the fiction that they are asexual. A prominent doctor, Clarence Gluskie, who is to receive the Order of Australia for his work with children, is being investigated for pointing out that genital stimulation of children was not necessarily harmful and that in primitive societies it was a

Jamie Dunbar/Sydney Star Observer



October, 1991: Sydney cops attack gay-rights activists.

Witchhunt...

(continued from page 3)

imposed for possession or publication of "kiddy porn." Every person who has paid, unsupervised contact with children must submit to a criminal check.

Based on the presumption that "sex offenders" cannot be "rehabilitated," the NSW government decreed a lifetime ban on "convicted child sex offenders" from working with children. Those who have served their sentences must tell the cops if they change their name, address, employment or even car registration—a rationale for lifelong state surveillance and a massive attack on civil liberties.

State Repression Fuels Murderous Anti-Gay Violence

The "anti-pedophile" frenzy is the cutting edge of a sustained, state-orchestrated attack on homosexuality which in turn has spawned a wave of violent, sick crimes against gay men. In Townsville, the AIDS Council office was bombed, its director stabbed by skinheads with a syringe. Two NSW men bragged of murdering a doctor who treated AIDS patients because, they said, he was a homosexual. The courts throw the book at people for unambiguously consensual sex, but for outright murder or horrible beatings the "defence" of provocation arising from an alleged "homosexual advance" has been repeatedly and successfully used, including by a fascist.

In the city of Wollongong the hysteria was fanned to white heat by the *Illawarra Mercury*. The *Mercury* ran stories about the "secret lives" of local politicians and a "child sex ring," as well as claims of satanic abuse, none ever proven. As a reporter for ABC's *Background Briefing* put it, "In this declining industrial city...it adds up to a molten mix where issues of protection merge with prejudice, where paedophilia blurs into homophobia" (30 August 1998). The result was two hideous murders and a wave of suicides. Frank Arkell, a former mayor of Wollongong, was dragged before the Wood Commission and subsequently charged with 29 sex-related offences. In the following months Arkell, 67, was the victim of repeated threats and vandalism. A year later he was horribly murdered and mutilated, as was at least one other man.

The oppression of women and homosexuals in capitalist society stems fundamentally from the family. A key institution of the capitalist system, it is the means by which the next generation of workers is raised, based on the parents' wages and the household drudgery of women. Organised religion and the institution of the family are two crucial props for the capitalist system of exploitation, ensuring social conservatism and passivity. Anti-gay bigotry flows from the stereotyping decreed by the sexual division of labour in the family and its



Left: ISO fuels reactionary "anti-pedophilia" frenzy, Adelaide, 1995. Right: SL protests attacks on Paedophilia Support Group, Sydney, 1984.



ASp photo

resultant, hypocritical "morality."

Australia is deservedly notorious around the world for anti-homosexual bigotry and violence against both women and gays. "Little Australia" social-democratic nationalism glories in the anti-intellectual oafishness of the Australian "ocker" and the anti-woman cult of "mateship." It is white racist, and proud of its brutally male chauvinist and self-indulgent, parochial national character, best described as the culture of white pigs. Films like *The Adventures of Priscilla Queen of the Desert* and the huge Sydney Mardi Gras celebrations every year do not alter the brutal social reality of this country.

The earliest Australian rulers were fanatical about eliminating homosexuality, for which the death penalty was prescribed. As we wrote in "Smash Tasmania's Anti-Gay Barbarism":

"In this country the deep-seated roots of misogyny and anti-gay bigotry go back to the British colonial establishment of an overwhelmingly male penal colony. Women convicts were forced into prostitution. Central to the transformation from penal colony to a modern capitalist society was the bolstering and glorification of the family. Women were now to be 'God's police,' and gays were not to be at all. Alongside its foundations as a penal colony of the British Empire, Australian capitalist society was based upon the attempted extermination of the Aboriginal people, the driving out of Chinese immigrants and subsequent racial exclusion of all deemed 'non-white.'"

—ASp No. 154, Spring 1994

People are being victimised now for activities real or alleged that took place in the 1960s and 1970s when homosexuality was illegal. Fear of exposure and blackmail was constant and police frame-up operations and beatings were the norm. Prominent lawyer John Marsden (himself smeared by the Wood Commission) recounts being arrested near Sydney's Town Hall in 1966, having shown interest in a man who turned out to be an undercover cop trying to entrap gay men. In Adelaide in 1972 law lecturer Dr. George Duncan was murdered. Subsequent investigations revealed that he was in an area frequented by vice squad

cops trying to "catch" homosexual men. Years later three cops were charged with his murder, but never convicted.

Capitalist State: Chief Source of Violence Against Children

Simply through its day to day workings, the capitalist system, far from protecting families, women or children, spawns untold misery. A staggering one-fifth of children in Australia live in poverty. Youth have no civil liberties: cops can search at will if they claim they're looking for weapons. Mandatory sentencing laws have seen children as young as eleven tossed into jails for trivial "offences" against private property. Infant mortality for Aborigines is *double* that of the rest of the population.

The capitalist state, through its cops, courts and laws, upholds the oppressive family, enforcing sexual repression and fear. Yet while proclaiming "protect our children," the state intervenes in families all the time with great savagery and violence. In the name of stopping "child abuse" U.S. attorney general Janet Reno incinerated 80 people in the racially integrated Branch Davidian commune at Waco, Texas in 1993.

Of the many brutal racist crimes of the Australian ruling class, among the most cruel and barbaric is surely the ripping away from their families of tens of thousands of Aboriginal children, the "Stolen Generations." Part of the ruling class scheme to eliminate Aborigines through forced "assimilation," these children were torn from their parents at a very early age and thrown into "homes" or institutions or forced into domestic servitude as virtual slaves. They were forbidden to speak their language. Many were subjected to terrible torments of physical and sexual abuse.

In 1992 the Victoria Labor and NSW Liberal governments kidnapped 140 young children from the Family of Love religious commune. Held incommunicado for a week, some children reported being "stripped and intimately examined," a truly perverted and sadistic act of official sexual abuse of young children. Today these children, now in their teens, are suing the NSW government in an effort to gain some recompense for their terrible suffering. Religious bigotry, along with vile anti-woman prejudice, also fuelled the state witchhunt of Lindy Chamberlain, a member of the Seventh Day Adventist church. Framed up and falsely convicted of murdering her daughter, she was jailed for three years where she gave birth to another daughter who was taken from her by the state.

Tribune of All the People

For our defence of groups like NAMBLA and the PSG, for our opposition to the *a priori* criminalisation of incest and for opposing state interference in the most private aspects of people's lives, we have earned the enmity of many righteous feminists and self-styled radicals. That's fine by us. Lots of left groups pride themselves on being "pro-gay" and even against the age of consent laws. Rhetoric notwithstanding, both the International Socialist Organisation (ISO) and the Democratic Socialist Party

(DSP) quite openly share the outlook of the witchhunters, equating "pedophilia" with child abuse. In 1995 at an Adelaide anti-fascist demonstration an ISO placard read "No Free Speech for Rapists, Pedophiles or Nazis!" This is obscene! In 1998 the fascist terrorists of "White Aryan Resistance" plastered stickers around central Sydney targeting "Paedophiles, mongols, negroids and mongrels" among others, for death.

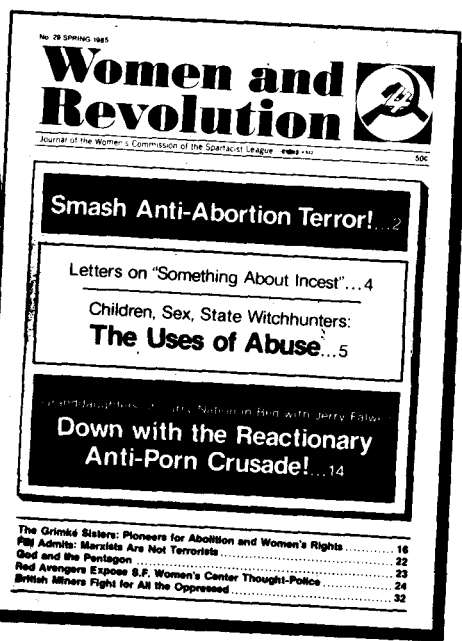
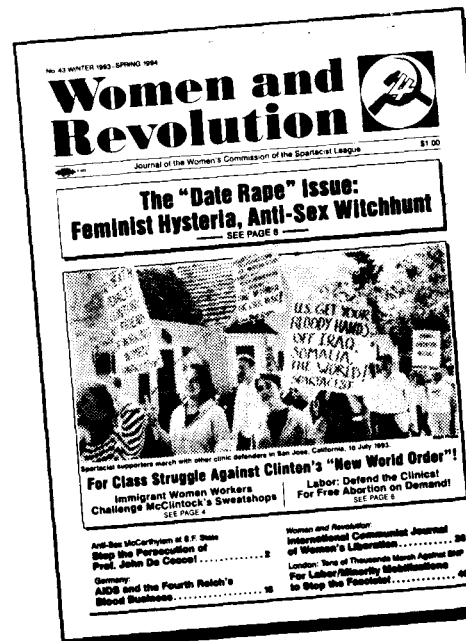
When the federal government recently tried to ban the film *Lolita*, based on Vladimir Nabokov's classic novel, the DSP joined the outcry. Claiming "*Lolita* denies the reality of abuse," *Green Left Weekly* (21 April) said Nabokov's story should be rewritten to reflect the DSP's puritanical views: "Twisting *Lolita*'s crush on Humbert into 'consent' denies the reality of her rape. Humbert raped *Lolita*, held her captive and abused her—there is nothing ambiguous about that." These are the very arguments that have put many innocent men and women behind bars. Both the DSP and ISO reformists accept the framework of capitalism and thus reflect the social values of the ruling class, particularly as preached by the pro-capitalist Labor Party and trade-union tops.

From its inception the Marxist movement has championed the rights of homosexuals. Oscar Wilde was defended against persecution for homosexuality by the most authoritative journal of the Second International, *Die Neue Zeit*. When the Bolsheviks came to power in 1917 in the first successful workers revolution in history, they began immediately to undercut the old bourgeois prejudices and social institutions responsible for the oppression of women and homosexuals. They eliminated all the legal impediments to women's equality, legalised abortion and abolished all the laws against homosexuality, declaring it a private matter.

We seek to forge a revolutionary vanguard party modelled on Lenin's and Trotsky's Bolsheviks. In Lenin's book *What Is To Be Done?* he wrote that the revolutionary's ideal should be:

"the *tribune of the people*, who is able to react to every manifestation of tyranny and oppression, no matter where it appears, no matter what stratum or class of the people it affects; who is able to generalise all these manifestations and produce a single picture of police violence and capitalist exploitation; who is able to take advantage of every event, however small, in order to set forth *before all his socialist convictions* and his democratic demands, in order to clarify for *all and everyone* the world-historic significance of the struggle for the emancipation of the proletariat."

We Trotskyists have always opposed the "family values" conservatism of the anti-Marxist Stalin, just as we fought his bureaucratic usurpation of soviet power and the resulting counterrevolutionary international program. Seeking to construct an authentic revolutionary party which acts as the vanguard of proletarian revolution, we fight all the manifestations of capitalist-imperialism. We look forward to a classless society, one in which social and economic constraints over sexual relations will be non-existent, and in the words of Frederick Engels, "there is no other motive left except mutual inclination." ■



Marxists oppose state interference in the most private aspects of people's lives. Back issues of *Women and Revolution* can be ordered from Spartacist ANZ Publishing Co., GPO Box 3473, Sydney NSW 2001.

Mexico: Down With Government Repression Against UNAM Student Strike!

AUGUST 29—Facing rising threats of a government crackdown, the striking students at Mexico City's National Autonomous University (UNAM) are at a critical point in their struggle. Sparked by a government plan to impose tuition fees that would eliminate even the limited access poor and working-class students currently have to public higher education, the strike at the 270,000-student university has lasted over four months, the longest in UNAM's history. This attack is part of a broader "austerity" plan favoured by all wings of the Mexican ruling class, and demanded by the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

The widespread support the strikers have won among working people, who face a related assault on their livelihoods under the IMF plan to privatise state-owned industries, has been crucial. From the beginning, workers from the STUNAM campus workers union and the Union of Electrical Workers (SME) have been key, joining students on the strike barricades. On 28 August, hundreds of thousands of trade unionists joined in a protest against privatisation in Mexico City, overflowing the mammoth Zócalo square.

Government attempts to break the student strike have escalated over the last month. On 24 August, hundreds of rightist students, among them many thugs in white bandannas armed with pipes, sticks and shrapnel bombs, attacked over a thousand striking students, who managed to repel them. President Ernesto Zedillo, who has railed against the student strike as "brutal aggression," is appealing to right-wing students to break the strike, effectively calling for more police-sponsored thug attacks on students.

On 4 August, Mexico City mayor Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas unleashed riot cops in a vicious attack on students picketing in front of a strikebreaking registration centre. More than 100 student strikers were severely beaten and arrested. Cárdenas threatened, "The Mexico City police intervened and will do so as many times as necessary." A 13 August march of 50,000, including a contingent of hundreds of STUNAM workers, protested the repression.

Our comrades of the Grupo Espartaquista de México (GEM) and the Juventud Espartaquista (JE) youth group responded to the cop attack with a leaflet the next day headlined "Cárdenas' Police Attack the UNAM Strike—Drop All Charges Against Student Strikers! For Strike Action by the Unions Against Privatisation and to Defend Public Education!" The leaflet warned against illusions in Cárdenas' "left" bourgeois-nationalist Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD), a capitalist party no less committed than Zedillo's Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) and the right-wing Party of National Action (PAN) to imposing the IMF's austerity plans, including through bloody state repression. Our comrades concluded with the demands: "Free, quality education for all! For open admissions and no tuition! Stop the union-busting privatisation schemes!"

At the same time, the International Communist League elicited statements of solidarity from unions and other organisations, part of an international effort to defend the UNAM strikers and the workers supporting them. Particularly noteworthy were statements from the powerful Transport and General Workers' Union and National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) in South Africa.

The NUM statement headlined, "Education Is a Right and Not a Privilege!" From Australia, Aboriginal and Korean student groups, abortion-rights defenders as well as the NTEU university teachers union sent statements. Other protests have come from the U.S., Canada and France. The Merseyside Port Shop Stewards of Liverpool, England, themselves pitted for several years in a bitter struggle against union-busting, wrote: "We strongly condemn the Cárdenas Government in Mexico for the brutal oppression of the UNAM student strikers."

At a Spartacus Youth Club-organised speakout at the University of California

give power back to the administration. This strikebreaking proposal was narrowly voted down at a 14 August meeting of the General Council of the Strike. But this proposal continues to be promoted, including by the STUNAM and SME union misleaders. In this way, the pro-capitalist union bureaucrats show how their outlook is counterposed to that of the many workers who have mobilised to defend the UNAM strike.

Throughout the strike, the GEM/JE has warned against illusions in the current misleadership of the student movement and of both the official trade unions tied to the ruling PRI and the

were still there when the university students arrested in 1968 arrived there." It is telling that the only examples of violent state repression they list in this article are those perpetrated by the PRI! Indeed, the very day after this article was published, Cárdenas unleashed his riot cops against the student strikers. This reveals the softness toward the PRD which is behind the IG's constant harping on the "Cardenista popular front."

As the GEM noted about the IG in a 26 July leaflet, "At the core of their politics is a mythical 'popular front' around the bourgeois PRD. The popular front is a specific form of class collaboration, in which the reformist parties of the working class make an alliance with the bourgeoisie in order to impede workers' unrest and the potential for a socialist revolution. But there is no mass workers party in Mexico, and the Mexican proletariat has been tied historically to the bourgeoisie by means of bourgeois nationalism, pure and simple.... Thus, by means of its 'popular front,' the IG tries to obscure the class nature of the bourgeois PRD, dressing it in red." And with the PRD desperately seeking an alliance with the rightist PAN, the IG's camouflaging of this bourgeois-nationalist party as a "popular front" looks even more obviously fake.

In the course of this strike, the GEM/JE have become known as the Trotskyists who advance a revolutionary internationalist program to defend public education and defeat the bourgeoisie's attacks on the working class. A GEM spokesman addressed the rally in the Zócalo at the conclusion of the huge 13 August march. As he rose to speak, our comrade was greeted with cries of "Go, Espartaco, go!" We reprint his speech below in full.



José Núñez

Mexico City, 26 July: Tens of thousands of workers and students march in solidarity with UNAM student strike.

in Los Angeles on 19 August, the SYC speaker linked our support for the UNAM strikers with our opposition to the imperialist "free trade" rape of Mexico under the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), declaring:

"As Marxists, we combat the economic nationalism which seeks to pit workers in the U.S. against their class brothers and sisters north and south of the border.... We fight for common class struggle by U.S. and Mexican workers against the U.S. imperialist beast—represented by both the Democrats and Republicans—and its PRI, PRD and PAN lackeys in Mexico."

As it attacks and threatens the student protesters at UNAM, the Mexican government is massively escalating its bloody repression in Chiapas, which has been under military occupation since the New Years' 1994 Zapatista (EZLN) uprising launched at the time NAFTA was imposed. The indigenous inhabitants have lived in terror, subjected to beatings, "disappearances" and outright massacres. Many students are enraptured with the EZLN, and have organised marches and aid caravans in their support. While defending the Zapatistas from state repression, the GEM has argued against the petty-bourgeois EZLN's program of pressuring the bourgeois state (via the PRD) for concessions through negotiations.

In its hysterical media campaign against the student strikers, the Mexican ruling class has denounced them as crazed leftist "ultras" who follow the orders of the Zapatistas' subcomandante Marcos. Clearly the intent is to set these student militants up for attack, jailing and worse.

Currently, the government, the media and UNAM rector Barrés are hailing a proposal by a group of eight "emeritus" professors as a way to end the strike and

"independent" unions, which are no less subordinated to bourgeois nationalism, if often via the more "leftist" colouration of the PRD. The GEM's Trotskyist politics drive some centrist groups crazy. In a shrill and demagogic article in their 3 August *El Internacionalista* supplement, the Internationalist Group (IG) declares that the GEM/JE's exposure of the role of bourgeois nationalism as the chief obstacle to Mexican workers' class consciousness "is nothing else but beautifying the mechanism of white terror with which the semi-bonapartist regime of the PRI-government has propped up its power for more than 70 years!"

The IG claims "it would be enough just to remember the destiny of the hundreds of rail workers, who as a consequence of their strike in 1958 against the union bureaucrats were jailed and after a decade in the prisons of the PRI, they

The Grupo Espartaquista de México, section of the International Communist League, greets the thousands of people who gathered today at this Zócalo in defence of free education.

This student strike has gone beyond the boundaries of the university and found sympathy and active support among key sections of the working class, such as SME, STUNAM, SITUAM [campus workers union at Metropolitan University] and others.

The strike is now at a crucial moment. The fight in defence of public education, which is part of a broader struggle against the privatising schemes directed against the working class, can only go forward if the unions also go on strike. By themselves, students lack any social

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SPARTACIST

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Imperialism...

(continued from page 1)

little Kosovo." Among the most egregious were the Democratic Socialist Party (DSP) and Workers Power (WP) who openly pushed for support to NATO's nationalist Kosovo Liberation Army (UCK/KLA) pawns. Revealing the extent to which they embraced the imperialists' war aims, the DSP and WP called to arm the UCK. Indeed, WP joined a rally in London dominated by NATO and Albanian flags and placards screaming, "NATO Good Luck." A month later in London they shamelessly laded out advice to the UCK while calling a speaker who hailed NATO an "Albanian colleague."

The International Socialist Organisation (ISO) pleaded with the imperialists to "Stop the bombing" and for "welfare not warfare." That this was nothing but an appeal for the imperialists to adopt a more "humane" foreign policy is proved by the fact that one of their British leaders, Alex Callinicos, backed a call for troops under the UN or the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe to occupy Kosovo (*Socialist Review*, June).

Lenin waged a political war against those who maintained that imperialism was merely a policy that could be changed by the capitalists. The fake leftists who lend credence to the lie of "humanitarian" or "human rights" imperialist mass murder are the political progeny of the Second International, the majority of whose leaders rallied around their "own" rulers in the first imperialist world war.

There was a material basis for this historic betrayal of socialism. The social-democratic parties reflected the sentiments of a layer of workers leaders who had found a comfortable niche within the bourgeois order as MPs or union officials, bribed by the crumbs which the ruling class, bloated with enormous profits sucked out of their colonial possessions, were willing to throw them.

The Bolshevik Party understood that imperialism would only end when the entire capitalist system was overthrown

in blood the German Revolution of 1918-19. In the absence of a hardened, tested leadership like the Bolsheviks, the revolutionary upsurge of 1923 was defeated. This gave enormous impulse to the conservative, nationalist bureaucratic caste headed by J.V. Stalin which had arisen in the Soviet Union under conditions of hostile imperialist encirclement and economic backwardness. In 1923-24 this parasitic layer usurped political power in a political counterrevolution. With its nationalist dogma of "socialism in one country" the Stalinist bureaucracy undermined and ultimately strangled the workers state through betrayal of the struggle for international extension of revolution and tyrannical suppression of workers democracy. As Trotskyists we stood for unconditional military defence of the former Soviet Union against imperialism and internal counterrevolution. We fought for proletarian political revolution to oust the Stalinist betrayers.

The counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union in 1991-92 was a world historic defeat for the working class, devastating the proletariats of the ex-Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, and throwing back the political consciousness of workers internationally. Today the defence of the gains of the remaining bureaucratically deformed workers states—Cuba, Vietnam, North Korea and China—against imperialist attack and capitalist counterrevolution is urgently posed. Especially in China, the Stalinists' anti-working-class "market reforms" are opening the floodgates to capitalist investment as the bureaucrats seek to become partners in exploitation with imperialist forces. We urgently seek to build a Leninist-Trotskyist party to lead the fight for proletarian political revolution to stop capitalist re-enslavement.

No longer constrained by anti-Soviet unity, the imperialist powers are pursuing their own appetites for control of world markets with seething rivalries over trade and influence. The more the imperialist powers attempt to operate together, as in the Balkans, the more toes are stepped on and tensions accumulate. The growing cracks and strains of trade war between the U.S., Europe



M.S. Nappelbaum

Lenin at First Congress of Communist International, March 1919. Only socialist revolution can end Imperialist barbarism.

and prevent united class struggle against capitalist rule.

A recent survey in Western Australia showed that women's wages relative to men's have fallen by more than 30 percent since 1991. More and more women are being forced into part-time work. So-called "illegal" immigrants languish in detention-centre hellholes while desperate refugees are routinely denied asylum and deported to face torture and death. Immigrant youth confront systematic racist police brutality while hundreds of thousands of predominantly immigrant women and children slave for a pittance in sweatshop conditions. For Aboriginal people it is even worse. Young Aboriginal men continue to be murdered in police lock-ups and on the streets. As an index of the brutal conditions, Aborigines between the age of 25 and 54 are six to eight times more likely to die than white Australians.

While the capitalists are certainly on the offensive, there is no shortage of social tinder ready to explode and willingness to fight the capitalists and their profit system. This was seen in the recent waves of strikes and rallies by members of the heavily immigrant Manufacturing Workers, miners, construction and health-care workers, and, most graphically, in the outpouring of support by large sections of the proletariat and oppressed for the Maritime Union last year. But time and again the trade-union misleadership and their parliamentary ALP brethren have sought to demobilise and betray any social struggle, opposing a class-struggle fight against the capitalists and their state.

UN/Australian Imperialists: Get Out of East Timor!

The extent to which the pro-capitalist union bureaucrats see the world from the vantage point of the capitalists, rather than of the workers they claim to represent can be gauged in their demand that the Australian imperialists send 5,000 troops to East Timor. This is direct support to the regional ambitions of the Australian ruling class which seeks to throw its weight around in Southeast Asia and the South Pacific. The Australian imperialists are realigning their military strategy to one of "forward offence," and are gearing up to at least maintain their zone of exploitation. Nowhere is this better illustrated than in the case of Indonesia and East Timor—where Australian Federal police are now stationed under the aegis of the United Nations.

Contrary to social-democratic mythology, the UN is not some independent arbiter between imperialist and oppressed countries, but an instrument for imperialist intrigue and plunder. Millions of Koreans lost their lives when the U.S., fully backed by Australia, tried to smash the North Korean workers state in the early 1950s. This was a UN "peacekeeping" mission. So too was the 1991 Persian Gulf war and subsequent starvation blockade and continued bomb-

ing of Iraq which has left more than a million dead, mainly women and children.

The Australian imperialists are presently poised to send a military "peacekeeping" force to East Timor, which has one purpose: ensuring neo-colonial stability in the region. The Australian rulers have always been fearful of revolutionary upheaval in Asia, especially Indonesia. Typically it has been Labor governments at the forefront. Labor icon Gough Whitlam's response to the 1965 slaughter of up to one million Indonesian Communist Party members, ethnic Chinese and others—which led to the brutal Suharto regime—was to express "relief." Ten years later he backed the Indonesian occupation of East Timor with the vicious racist comment that no one should worry about the Timorese because "they are all mulattoes"!

The self-proclaimed socialist groups in this country do not demand the Australian cops get out. They do not demand that the UN get out. To the contrary, the DSP is *for* the UN in East Timor! Indeed, on 26 April this year the DSP proudly participated in a rally at the Australian War Memorial to "Remember East Timor" and the Timorese who died "defending Australia." Held in concert with the official "commemoration" of Australian imperialist militarism, this event featured church, ALP and trade-union leaders who called for UN/Australian intervention in East Timor.

Also at this ANZAC Day holiday rally were the ISO. This is not the first time they and the DSP have pushed vile Australian bourgeois patriotism. In 1995 they were the "best builders" for a despicable chauvinist campaign against Australia's French imperialist rivals over nuclear testing in the Pacific, echoing the rabid Australian nationalism of the ALP and trade-union bureaucrats, just as they do today over East Timor.

Against class collaboration at home and pro-imperialism abroad we in the SL proclaim: Independence now for East Timor! Australia/UN get your bloody hands off! For workers revolution in Indonesia!

PNG: Racist Australia's Neo-Colony

The Laborite left looks to the Australian imperialists to "help" the people of East Timor. The "help" Australian imperialism brings can be seen in Papua New Guinea. As early as 1883 the premier of Queensland, Thomas McIlwraith, sent a force to seize Papua to plant the Union Jack there so the French and Germans wouldn't get it. Papuans were from then on to suffer Australian "protection": deprived of rights, subject to forced labour, punished for moral "crimes" (like "adultery") and even banned from wearing any garments above the waist lest they appear too like their "lords and masters." They were forbidden to remain in towns after dark and forbidden to travel outside the country, especially not to Australia. Between 1929 and 1936, 57 people were hanged, while in one year alone in the



Taim Bilong Masta

For over 100 years, racist Australia has brutalised the peoples of Papua New Guinea.

through socialist revolution. The October Revolution of 1917 proved this in practice. It occurred precisely because the working class of Russia was led by a party, the Bolsheviks, which steadfastly opposed its "own" Russian imperialism in World War I. The working class in power, through the rule of soviets (workers councils), expropriated the capitalists and landlords and laid the basis for a planned, collectivised economy. In 1919 the Communist International was founded—a concretisation of revolutionary internationalism—as the Bolsheviks directed their primary efforts toward proletarian revolution in the advanced industrial countries of Europe, notably Germany.

In Germany the social democrats served as counterrevolutionary guardians of the capitalist order, backing the imperialist war and then helping to drown

and Japan are causing no little nervousness within the Australian imperialist bourgeoisie, historically caught between their U.S. military ally and Japan, which is both their largest trading partner and target of their deepest racist fears.

Capitalists Wage War Abroad and At Home

It is in this context of interimperialist tension that the Australian ruling class are waging a war at home against the working class, women, youth and Aborigines. The federal government's union-busting "second wave" legislation is part of across-the-board attacks intended to increase the capitalists' already bloated profits. And as in other countries, the bourgeoisie is going after those they perceive as the most vulnerable—immigrants, minorities, gays, women—as a wedge to divide the working class

1930s, 700 indentured labourers died toiling in the mines and plantations.

In World War II, contrary to popular Australian nationalist mythology, Papuan men were *dragoned* to support the Australian imperialist army. Those who rebelled or simply wanted to leave were kept by force. One of the most terrifying punishments was the so-called "drum beatings" of Kerema. A fire was lit in a 44-gallon drum and when it was hot the escapees were put across it and beaten.

After the war, having "pacified" the country by punitive expeditions, massacres and burning of villages, a thin layer of white planters, police, administrators and the feared Kiap (patrol officers) enforced a brutal regime in the mines and copra plantations. BHP's Ok Tedi mine was run apartheid-style, requiring permits to enter, with separate housing, clubs and so forth. PNG workers' pay was one-tenth of the wage of white workers. Having declared PNG formally independent in 1975, Australian capital continues to run PNG as a neo-colonial fiefdom. Nothing shows this better than the recent selection of a Canberra-approved prime minister eager to cooperate with the imperialist bankers' International Monetary Fund.

CRA/Rio Tinto's copper mine in Bougainville gives a vivid picture of white



Union-busting Hawke ALP government used Air Force to break 1989 pilots' strike.

racist imperialist rapacity. In 1964 when the administration flew in they told the indigenous people, "you get nothing." In May 1975 a strike was crushed by riot squads. By 1988 the mine accounted for 45 percent of PNG's exports. In 1989 a guerrilla struggle by the Bougainville Revolutionary Army began. They demanded closure of the mine.

On behalf of Australian imperialism, Bob Hawke's ALP government brain-trusted the PNG army's attack on Bougainville. The army proceeded to burn and "relocate" villages. Then defence minister, now ALP federal leader, Kim "Bomber" Beazley (who, Hawke said, was always looking for "a small war") ran it. They sent four helicopter gunships and elite SAS killers and helped impose a naval blockade. The result: 20,000 Bougainvilleans died, many women in childbirth for lack of medicine. A phoney "peace" deal has now been set up in Bougainville under the guns of Australian and New Zealand troops.

The Australian imperialists have played a similar role in the western part of New Guinea, also rich in copper and gold. In 1969 the UN (at the behest of

the U.S.) handed West Papua, today Irian Jaya, over to Indonesia. Last year Australian troops, in the guise of a "humanitarian" mission, flew into Irian Jaya, aiding the Indonesian army's maintenance of "order" as native Melanesians began to raise demands for independence. We oppose Bougainville's forcible retention within the state boundaries of PNG and that of Irian Jaya within Indonesia and we demand: Australian imperialism get out of PNG, Bougainville and Irian Jaya!

Labor, Nationalism and Racism—Some History

Lenin aptly described parties such as the ALP as bourgeois workers parties, thoroughly bourgeois in their leadership, outlook and program but based in the working class. The central strategic task of revolutionaries is thus to split away the working-class base from the pro-capitalist leadership, centrally through a struggle to replace the union misleaders with a class-struggle, revolutionary leadership. The working class needs to be transformed from a class in itself—the object of capitalist exploitation—to a class for itself—conscious of the need to overthrow capitalist rule through proletarian revolution. As the experience of the Russian Revolution proved positively, and subsequent experience has proved negatively, this will not happen spontaneously, but only through the active intervention of a revolutionary vanguard party that fights for nothing other than the dictatorship of the proletariat.

A Leninist vanguard party is counterposed to the social-democratic conception of the "party of the whole class," of which the ALP is an example. A "party of the whole class" submerges the most advanced layers of the class into the most backward ones. Such a party is necessarily chauvinist, based on the dominant ethnic group, and tied to the imperialist interests of its own ruling class. The ALP is not a half-way house to revolutionary class consciousness, but an obstacle to it, actively preaching the "values" of the white racist imperialist rulers. Even a cursory examination of Australia's history makes this clear.

Since its brutal beginnings as a British convict colony and settler outpost, Australia has been a racist hellhole. The bloody massacre and dispossession of the Aboriginal peoples provided massive wealth in minerals and farming. During the gold rushes there were pogroms against the Chinese who were eventually driven from the country with Federation. There was abduction and enslavement of South Pacific islanders on the sugarcane fields of Queensland.

Queensland was already notorious, even in Britain, for barbarities against the local Aboriginal people and the kidnapped Kanakas (about 60,000 Pacific Islanders, who later were nearly all deported). By 1891 these latter represented under two percent of the population but accounted for 45 percent of the executions carried out between 1895-1905. Historian Humphrey McQueen opined that "Labor's opposition to kanaka labour prevented it opposing capital punishment in the first decade of this century, because so many of the executed were islanders" (*A New Britannia* [1978]).

The capitalists pushed the idea of a "white man's paradise"—the commonality of interest between boss and worker. These lies were bought hook, line and sinker by the misleaders of the fledgling trade-union movement of the 1880s. Though Chinese and non-European labour constituted a significant part of the economy, they were systematically legislated against by the bosses and denied union protection.

In 1888 in Sydney the Anti-Chinese League mobilised a crowd of 50,000 for a national demonstration. The leading banner at this event featured a large boot kicking the Chinese out of the colony. Next to it was a union banner reading "Justice for All"! Both the Sydney Trades and Labour Council and no less than

eleven unions were affiliated with the Anti-Chinese League.

In the years prior to Federation in 1901 there was an avalanche of racist legislation mirrored by whites-only clauses in the trade unions designed to either starve or drive out non-white people. Some of the historical examples resonate today. Poll taxes were imposed on Chinese immigrants (read ever-increasing immigration fees). Furniture trades unions got legislation passed that items made by Chinese had to be stamped accordingly (read "buy Australian"). After more than 20 years lobbying the seamen's union had a "whites only" clause codified in 1901 (read "Australian crews for Australian ships"). At the same time there was an ongoing campaign depicting Chinese as drug addicts who corrupted the morals of European women (read today's racist "war on drugs"). And this in a culture where domestic violence against women and children has long been endemic, and judges have ruled it a lesser crime to rape a prostitute or one's wife!

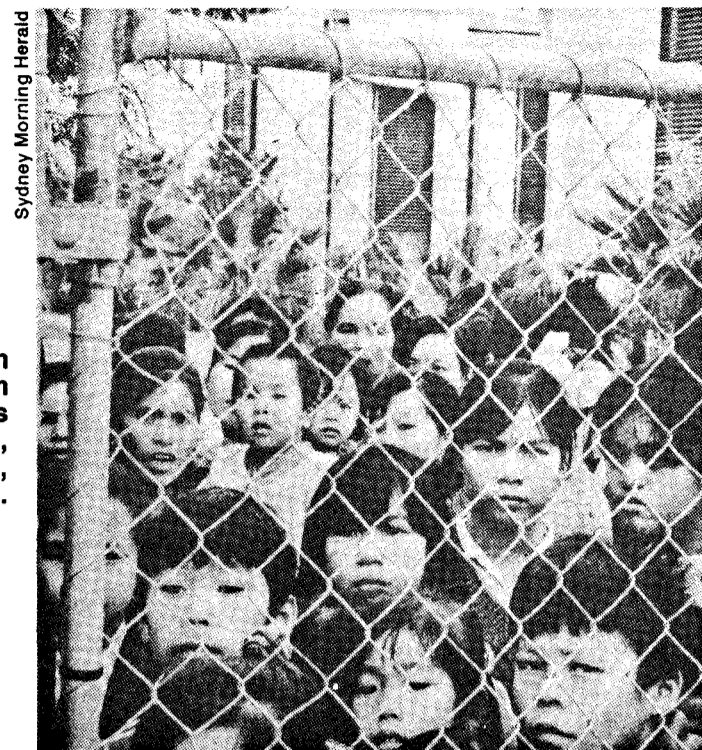
With Federation came the 1901 Immigration Restriction Act—the Labor Party's "White Australia" policy enshrined in law. "White Australia" is no longer law, but Australia remains a white imperialist enclave. The Australian state is so rabidly racist they recently refused visas to the black African delegates of an international conference of the deaf held in Brisbane, claiming they might "overstay." Today the trade-union tops pound the working class with poisonous nationalism, screaming for immigration quotas in the manner of Pauline Hanson's One Nation, and demanding protectionist tariffs which serve to line up workers behind their bosses and *against* their fellow workers particularly in the countries of South East Asia and the Pacific Rim.

In 1914 the Industrial Workers of the World wrote the following (and it shines like a light against the prevailing Laborite backwardness):

"The arrival in this country every year, of thousands of immigrants, is thought by the average wage-slave to be the cause of unemployment, but they forget that this curse is world-wide, and that these workers have themselves been forced to leave the land of their birth by the unemployment existing there.... The real cause of unemployment is because the workers have not reduced the hours of their labour in proportion to the productivity of the machine."

We say full citizenship rights for all immigrants!

What did all this racist protectionism and class collaborationism achieve for workers during the strikes in the maritime, mining and pastoral industries in the 1890s? It brought them state repression and defeat. Coal miners in Mt. Kembla saw scabs load coal under the protection of cops and soldiers armed with Nordenfelt guns, capable of shooting a stream of bullets. In 1894 shearers' leaders were taken in leg irons, sentenced to up to 15 years in gaol. The murder of shearer William John Maclean by a scab



White Australian capitalism imprisons immigrants, Port Hedland, WA, 1995.

in the same year was termed "justifiable homicide" by the trial judge.

It brought young workers the "right" to march to their deaths in the first inter-imperialist world war (the "War to end all wars"). No doubt Labor party leader Andrew Fisher's infamous pledge to "stand beside our own to help defend her [Britain], to our last man and our last shilling" rang in their ears. The point is, the partnership of labour and capital is a cruel lie foisted on the working class by bought-off, privileged trade-union misleaders in the service of the capitalist rulers.

The ALP was founded directly in *opposition* to workers' struggles against the capitalists following the defeat of the 1890s strike wave. It was explicitly pro-capitalist, putting forward the absolutely false proposition that as the Australian capitalists prospered, so too would the workers. Its entire purpose was to use the working class as voting cattle in order to get into government, the better to "improve" capitalism. Soon after Federation the privileged Laborite bureaucracy established an historic racist pact with the ruling class—the capitalist state would set wages and working conditions through the Arbitration system, industries would be tariff-protected and Asian and other non-white people would be excluded from the labour force. So right-wing was the ALP, even the chauvinist Second International would not admit it to membership. To this day the Laborites laud Arbitration, push protectionism and whip up racist anti-immigrant hysteria.

Australian Imperialists: Bloody Regional Gendarmes

Through the 19th century, eager to assist in the maintenance of the British empire, Australia sent troops to the Maori wars in New Zealand, to the Sudan in the 1870s and to the Boer war in South Africa. But it has been under Labor governments, better able to secure the cooperation of the working people, that the two inter-imperialist wars of this century have been waged. During World War I settlers of German descent were driven out of their jobs from Townsville to Sydney to Newport, Victoria and interned. During World War II Japanese people in Australia were rounded up and incarcerated; 234 Japanese prisoners of war were killed after trying to escape from a camp in Cowra, NSW.

The domestic barbarity of Australia's rulers was mirrored in the notorious brutality of Australian imperialist troops abroad. The war in the Pacific was deeply racist on *both* sides. For all that you hear about the treatment of Australian soldiers by the Japanese, you won't hear about the Australian machine-gunning of more than 300 unarmed Japanese seamen adrift in lifeboats. In North Africa the Australians were recognised as the most brutal and vicious of all the armies which fought there. They were

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Imperialism...

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known to take very few prisoners.

Following World War II and the crumbling of the British empire Australia found a new "big brother" protector in the United States. This counterrevolutionary Cold War alliance was codified under the 1951 ANZUS agreement. Australian lackey imperialists have served as bloody anti-Communist regional gendarmes, from rushing 17,000 troops to Korea in 1950 to the drive to crush the Malayan Communist Party in the 1950s to the preparation of assassination lists by the Australian Security Intelligence Services (ASIS) and the CIA during the anti-Communist bloodbath in Indonesia in 1965.

ALP: Roadblock to Revolution

Having won the 1983 federal election, the ALP picked up the anti-Communist cudgel with a vengeance. U.S. imperialism's loyal ally in anti-Soviet Cold War II, the Hawke government backed the CIA-funded mujahedin cutthroats in Afghanistan against the Soviet Red Army and upheld the U.S.'s vicious blockade against Vietnam. Hawke endorsed the strategic U.S. spy and military installations at Pine Gap while strutting the region as the U.S. imperialists' deputy sheriff, laying down the imperialist Cold War line among Australia's neo-colonies in the Pacific.

The whole gamut of fake-left groups were loyal camp followers of Cold War Labor. With Hawke and later Keating they proclaimed "solidarity with Solidarność" (the counter-revolutionary Polish "union" backed by the CIA, Western bankers and the pope), denounced the Soviets in Afghanistan and supported Yeltsin's counterrevolution in the Soviet Union. In 1983 they all rallied behind support to the ALP. We didn't. We forthrightly declared, "These elections offer not the slightest pretence of a class vote for workers.... No vote to

Labor's program of Cold War racism and social contract!" (ASP No. 100, February/March 1983).

Pledging to use its "special relationship" with the unions to bolster the bosses profits by holding down wages, Hawke's anti-working-class attacks at home were the flip side of support to every imperialist provocation against the Soviet degenerated workers state. The 13 years of ALP rule saw the smashing of the Builders Labourers Federation and pilots union, an enormous shift in wealth from the working class to the bosses, a systematic tightening of immigration laws and cuts in benefits to immigrants, a



January 1991: Spartacists march for defeat of Australian imperialism, defence of Iraq.

massive escalation of Aboriginal imprisonment and police murder and racist imperialist aggression from Iraq to Cambodia to Somalia.

The Hawke/Keating Labor years, through the Accords and "national consensus," were years of class collaboration par excellence. In doing the job for the bosses the Labor years saw a drop in industrial disputes from 2,060 in 1982 to just 539 in 1996. As strikes and struggles by the proletariat were vari-

ously smashed, sold out or legislated against, the rate of unionised workers in Australia fell from 49 percent in 1982 to just 31 percent in 1996—and today it's 28 percent.

In this country, where Labor has ruled for one third of the century with an unvarnished record of class treachery, the argument (made by the likes of Workers Power) that it must be put "to the test of office" is itself pure Laborism. During elections, when a mass reformist workers party claims to represent the interests of the working class independent of and against the parties of the bourgeoisie it might be appropriate to apply the tactic

this was a sellout and defeat because the union bureaucracy would not unleash the power of the working class.

The entire fake left retailed the MUA tops' line that this was a victory. In the face of stubborn facts, some groups tried to cover their tracks. Socialist Alternative published a pamphlet in which they make tepid criticism of the strategy of reliance on the courts but, ever loyal to the ALP, they conclude "unionists certainly want Labor to thrash the coalition in any election." Grotesquely the DSP still talks about the MUA's "moral and political" victory.

During the maritime struggle the DSP, ISO, WP and others called variously for 4-hour, 8-hour, 24-hour national stoppages. They were all about a little more action, a little more militancy. What they weren't about was waging a political fight against the trade-union misleaders, the need for workers to break from the racism, chauvinism and pro-capitalist politics of Laborism.

This country has a long history of militant economic union struggles such as the strikes in the 1890s. In 1949 when the Labor Party sent the troops to smash the miners strike, led by the Communist Party (CP), there was plenty of militancy. The mines were shut down, a Sydney committee produced five million leaflets. In defence of the miners 100,000 special issues of the union magazine *Common Cause* were produced, and there were over 500 meetings in Sydney alone during the course of the strike. But the strike still got broken because the CP-led Miners Federation couldn't and wouldn't take on the Labor Party which they had supported in government throughout the war! Opposing the struggle for proletarian power, such "leftists" bolster the Labor Party and trade-union bureaucracy and are therefore simply among the guardians of Australian capitalist rule.

The Spartacist League, Australian section of the International Communist League, has a fundamentally different program. We aim to build a revolutionary vanguard party to lead the fight to overthrow the brutal class rule of white Australian imperialism. This requires a proletarian internationalist perspective which aims at nothing less than the seizure of power by the working people. As we stated in our recently published program:

"The international character of the socialist revolution means the struggle for workers revolution in Australia is inextricably linked to the class struggle of the workers in Indonesia and other states of Southeast Asia, through to the powerful proletariat of Japan. The name of our newspaper *Australasian Spartacist*, reflects our strategic goal, to be part of the struggle for workers revolution throughout the Asian region."

Down with Australian imperialism! For a workers republic of Australia, part of a socialist Asia! ■

Mexico...

(continued from page 5)

power. What is needed is that labour flex its muscles through strike actions to stop production and services. That the student strike has lasted so long is due to the support received from university workers, reinforced by brigades of workers from other powerful unions. The rectory's plan to undermine the strike by carrying out "extramuro" classes must be stopped with workers strike picket lines in all the facilities. A strike means: "Everyone stops! Nobody works!"

This attack shows a fundamental point we Marxists have made from the first day of the strike: cops are not "workers in uniform" but the attack dogs of the bourgeois state. The presence of cops in the university, affiliated to STUNAM, is an immediate danger for the union itself and for the student strike, as well as for any action the STUNAM may be involved in. "Auxilio UNAM" cops out of the university and STUNAM!

No illusions in the PRD, a bosses' party! The attack against the strike has been a calculated move by Cárdenas and the PRD, using the cops in the name of law students who were trying to break the strike by registering for the new semester. Breaking the students' heads is the way in which Cárdenas wants to show the Mexican bourgeoisie, its imperialist masters and the rightist PAN that it is the best candidate to represent the interests of the capitalist class in the coming presidential elections through an alliance between the PRD and the PAN. The current situation shows that to achieve even a basic democratic right such as access to education requires a revolutionary struggle against capitalism.

Pushing utopian plans for building a "university at the service of the people," as the Partido Obrero Socialista and En Lucha do at the university, only serves to sow more illusions in the bourgeoisie. Spartacists say: No to the dialogue with the rectory! No to the servile proposal of the "emeritus"! It is necessary to continue the strike until victory is achieved, and that requires allying with the social power of labour. For joint strike actions by workers and students in defence of free education and against privatisations! Free, quality education for all, in the city and the countryside!

What is needed is the building of a Leninist-Trotskyist party to lead the working class to state power. The greatest obstacle to this is the ideology of bourgeois nationalism, which aims at portraying everyone as simply "Mexicans." In counterposition, we Spartacists advance proletarian internationalism. As a sample, we bring today greetings to the university strike from powerful unions from South Africa to Canada and the U.S., especially the powerful unions of miners and transport workers of South Africa. The proletariat has no fatherland! Our anthem is not the bourgeoisie's national anthem but the proletariat's *Internationale*!

As American Trotskyist James Cannon said: "Our party is a party of the proletarian revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat. The proletarian revolution is the only solution to the problem of the working class, and all our work must lead to that goal." Such is the basis of Spartacist politics. Break with the bourgeoisie! No illusions in the bourgeois PRD! Forge an international Leninist-Trotskyist party! For new October Revolutions around the world!

Adapted from *Workers Vanguard* No. 718, 3 September.

of critical support in order to explode the contradiction between its bourgeois program and working-class base. But we strenuously oppose the view, held by almost the entire fake left in Australia, that it is the duty of revolutionaries invariably to support the ALP in elections.

For a Revolutionary Workers Party

The maritime workers fight last year was enormously popular among workers and could have galvanised a real class-wide fight against the attacks of the ruling class. But the ACTU/MUA bureaucracy consciously hung the waterside workers out to dry. Bowing to the bosses' laws, they prevented mass pickets to stop the scabs; they promoted the lie that the cops could be allies of striking workers and they buried the whole thing in the bosses' courts while telling their members to vote Labor in the next election. They even said Patrick's actions were "unAustralian." The result: more than a third of the workforce lost their jobs and the bureaucrats' actions demobilised and demoralised workers across the country. We were the only organisation that stated the truth: that

Australasian

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Laborism...

(continued from page 1)

wave" union-busting bill is to remove every obstacle to the capitalists' pursuit of profit. With the closed shop already outlawed, unions will now be prevented from organising even 60 percent of the workers in an "enterprise" while union representatives will be all but barred from the shop floor. Industrial action over dangerous working conditions, for example, will be illegal. During "bargaining," strike votes can only be held by undemocratic postal ballot and any strike can be decreed illegal within 48 hours. At the same time the law would enshrine two-tier wage systems and strip away any protection for long service leave and sick pay, among other things.

This bill is the continuation of the one-sided class war being waged by the capitalists. And the ACTU's response is a continuation of the class peace they have enforced on the working class.



Jeff Herbert

Laborite union tops bow to bosses' laws, but strikers in Sydney (left) had to defy cops and stop scabs to win back co-workers' jobs in July.

From the waterfront to the coalfields, every crucial class battle has been sold out by the trade-union tops, an organic part of the Labor Party. Their purpose is to deflect working class struggle from the point of production in the conflict between labour and capital to the hot-house of the bourgeoisie's parliament and the straitjacket of their courts and Arbitration system. Thus a Sydney ACTU representative declared that the August actions would be no repeat of the 1996 Canberra protest. Then too the ACTU intended nothing but tame lobbying of parliament against the WRA. But angry workers, coming to the defence of Aboriginal people under cop attack, stormed the parliament buildings and hoisted a Soviet flag. This bold declaration that the mood of these workers had far outstripped the confines of ALP labour reformism struck fear into the pro-capitalist trade-union misleaders. With the bosses, they waged a vicious witchhunt against militants across the country.

All workers in Victoria should honour the 12 August work stoppage. Even such an action—confined to one state for just a few hours—can give a taste of the tremendous social power of the working class. Just imagine the impact of a serious mobilisation of the working class—a national coal or port strike, to say nothing of a general strike—in stopping the scabbing at Hunter Valley or rolling back the union-busting war on the Maritime Union. There was wide recognition that these were make-or-break battles for the working class as evidenced by the thousands who flocked to the MUA's pickets. If these fights had been won, which they could and should have been, this latest union-busting legislation wouldn't even be on the agenda—victorious class struggle would have changed the relationship of forces. With the rate of unionisation down to only 28 percent, with wages and working conditions decimated, with health care and education being ripped apart, the working class is paying bitterly for the cowardly betrayals of the ALP and trade union "labour statesmen."

Under the last federal ALP government workers were hogtied by the class-collaborationist Accord in the name of

the "national interest," that is, the interests of the capitalist exploiters. Labor's union-busting privatisations swelled the coffers of the ruling class while Enterprise Bargaining Agreements undermined union power, setting the stage for the Liberals' all-out war on workers.

In ALP-run New South Wales budget-slashing and layoffs have been unabated. Nearly 3,000 government workers will get the axe this year. Carr's government aims to cut millions from the already crisis-racked public hospitals and the cash- and teacher-starved education system is also under the gun. On the streets Carr & Co. have bolstered the forces of racist "law and order" targeting Aborigines, immigrants and youth.

For Working-Class Independence from the Capitalists and Their State

Pushing the lie of a partnership between labour and capital, the ACTU tops' central strategy rests on upholding the Arbitration system. Jennie George

complains that Reith's new bill will "begin the process of eroding the system of conciliation we've had in this country." This is pure sucker bait! It is the system of state-mandated arbitration that for 100 years has been used to subordinate workers' union organisations to the capitalist state, the class enemy. Arbitration is a "safety net" for the bosses and their Laborite servants to derail *successful* class struggle. The establishment of the Arbitration system early this century was based on the historic racist pact between the Laborite union bureaucracy and the ruling class, institutionalising protectionism and a "whites only" labour force and laying the legal basis for paying women lower wages.

To take on and defeat the capitalists' depredations there must be a political break from Laborism, a struggle in the unions to oust the pro-capitalist bureaucracy and replace it with a class-struggle leadership committed to the independence of the proletariat from the capitalists. Strikes backed by mass picket lines, occupations, black bans and other acts of solidarity can make the union-busting laws a dead letter. At Visy Board in Sydney, workers faced down scabs and defied court injunctions, getting three fired co-workers reinstated. Picket lines mean don't cross! The only illegal strike is one that loses!

Immigrant workers, often women, have been in the forefront of many of the recent strikes in small manufacturing plants. The capitalist rulers, backed by the ALP, are whipping up a racist frenzy against immigrants, hunting down desperate people from China and elsewhere and throwing them into concentration camps like Port Hedland and Villawood. Pushing racist protectionism—"Australian jobs for Australian workers"—the ALP and ACTU fuel the likes of the fanatically anti-union, fascist One Nation. Opposing every manifestation of racism and chauvinism, the working class must fight for the integration of immigrant workers—who are key to class struggle—into the unions. Full citizenship rights for all immigrants!

Against craftism rooted in exclusion of minorities and women, a class-struggle leadership would fight for *industrial* unions (embracing all workers, skilled

and unskilled, in each major branch of the economy), union programs to recruit those historically discriminated against and equal pay for equal work. It would organise the unorganised, bringing the unemployed behind unionised workers, fighting for jobs for all through a shorter work week with no loss in pay. Such challenges to the capitalists' sacred "right" to profit and private property can be led to a successful conclusion not by the election of a new crop of Labor parliamentarians but only by a revolutionary workers government that will expropriate the bourgeoisie and place the means of production in the hands of the working class. The bosses want a world without unions—we want a world where those who labour rule!

This program of class struggle is anathema to the assorted fake-left organisations. Groups such as Workers Power (WP), the International Socialist Organisation (ISO), Socialist Alternative, etc., give militant-sounding cover to the treachery of the trade-union tops while preaching the election of the ALP, in fact opposing the struggle to win the working class from Laborite class-collaboration. The Democratic Socialist Party (DSP) will even vote for the anti-union Democrats or anti-immigrant Greens. The extent to which such groups tail the social-democratic traitors was vividly shown when they joined the MUA/ACTU tops in hailing last year's sellout of the MUA as a "victory." At the time, only we Marxists of the Spartacist League told the bitter truth: the MUA's struggle was *demobilised and betrayed* by the MUA/ACTU misleaders through the strategy of relying on the courts instead of the social power of the working class.

Despite mouthing criticisms of the ACTU's hopes to pressure the Democrats to stop Howard's union-busting bill, the fake left seek merely to pressure the ACTU tops and ALP. The DSP wants unions to pass a motion which "calls on the ACTU to strengthen its campaign." Similarly, the centrist WP urges the union tops to call conferences to "devise a strategy" aimed at "building for a general strike," demanding the ALP—which in the election *refused* to call for repeal of the WRA—"mobilise all its branches and members to fight these laws." WP is truly the acme of "militant" class collaborationism.

The capitalists maintain their system of exploitation through force: the cops, prisons, army are the armed fist of the capitalist state. The ISO, far from demanding that cops, prison and security guards be driven from the union movement, have a long, sordid and international record of championing their "struggles." Indeed, they recently saluted a "strike" by Armaguard thugs in Queensland.

Anti-Imperialism Abroad Means Class Struggle At Home

Defenders of capitalist rule at home, the ALP and trade union bureaucracy promote the "national interests" of Australian imperialism abroad. The DSP and ISO toe the Laborite line in this, too, appealing in one way or another to the imperialists to help "free" East Timor. Neither group has breathed a word against the ACTU's demand for 5,000 Australian troops to East Timor under a UN figleaf. They are happy to call for the Indonesian army get out of East Timor, but now that Australia has

cops on the ground there and a "Rapid Deployment Force" at the ready in Darwin, they *refuse* to demand that the Australian imperialists, the bloody god-fathers of the Kopassus killers, get their hands off East Timor.

A few months ago Workers Power claimed opposition to Australian imperialism in East Timor. Unable to long withstand the political pull of social democracy, this "opposition" is now replaced by tacit approval of the UN umbrella under which the Australian cops operate, saying the East Timor vote must be overseen by "representatives of not just the UN, but of the whole world labour movement" (*Workers Power*, August-October)! From Bougainville to Irian Jaya "human rights" Australian imperialism means war, death and racist subjugation. We say: Australia/UN/U.S.—get out and stay out of East Timor! Independence now! For workers revolution in Indonesia!

The ALP fully backed the NATO imperialist bombing of Serbia while their social-democratic brethren in Europe—whose election was celebrated by these fake lefts—were among the most belligerent and eager prosecutors of this war. Their rallying cry was "poor little Kosovo." In this context the democratic right of self-determination for the Kosovo Albanians—a right we uphold—was subordinated to the struggle against the imperialist bombing. But WP, with their calls of "Independence for Kosovo" and support for NATO's KLA pawns served as "little drummer people" for the NATO imperialists' war aims in the Balkans. Revolutionary internationalists, we Spartacists proclaimed: Defeat U.S./NATO Imperialism! Defend Serbia!

In *Socialism and War*, written in 1915 amid the carnage of the first imperialist war, Russian revolutionary leader V.I. Lenin noted:

"Opportunism and social-chauvinism stand on a common economic basis—the interests of a thin crust of privileged workers and of the petty bourgeoisie.... Opportunism and social-chauvinism have the same politico-ideological content—class collaboration instead of class struggle, renunciation of revolutionary methods of struggle, helping one's 'own' government in its embarrassed situation, instead of taking advantage of these embarrassments so as to advance the revolution."

The ALP is a bourgeois workers party, thoroughly bourgeois in its program, outlook and leadership while based on the trade unions. The Spartacist League's perspective is to build a revolutionary workers party which will split away Labor's working-class base from the pro-capitalist tops. It is only through such a Leninist party that the workers' struggles can become *conscious* class struggle, when the most advanced workers understand themselves as the leaders of a single class whose actions are directed against the entire class of capitalists and their state.

The strength of the working class lies in its numbers, organisation and discipline, and above all the fact that through its labour it uniquely makes the wheels of profit turn in capitalist society. That is why it has the potential power to smash the attacks of the ruling class. Under the banner of the proletariat all the diverse sectors and layers of society oppressed by capitalism can be united in struggle to expropriate the capitalist exploiters in a thoroughgoing social revolution. Smash Howard/Reith's war on workers! For a workers republic of Australia, part of a socialist Asia! ■

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Iran...

(continued from page 12)

bled an entire generation of young men—to consolidate its hold on society and strengthen poisonous Persian chauvinism.

The current generation of Iranian youth—fully two-thirds of the population is younger than 25 years old—did not live through the 1979 upheaval. The recent student demonstrations crystallized a broad sense that this is the beginning of the end for the ayatollahs' regime. While the powerful Iranian proletariat did not bring its social might to bear during last month's demonstrations, there have been numerous strikes in recent years against mounting unemployment and nonpayment of wages. As revenue from the export of oil has been cut by more than half since 1976, provoking a deep economic crisis, the average annual income has plunged from \$2,600 to \$1,800. The strategically powerful oil workers have carried out repeated strikes in the past decade. Among more recent labor actions reported on the Fedayeen (Minority) Web site was a May 1 strike at the Mobarakeh steel works.

The burgeoning crisis in Iran cries out for a revolutionary vanguard party to lead the proletariat, standing at the head of all the oppressed, in a socialist revolution which sweeps away the theocratic regime and capitalist class rule. Such a party must be steered in the lessons of the bloody defeat of 1979, lessons which the contemporary Iranian left has refused to learn. In 1979, the Iranian left—centrally the Stalinist Tudeh party with its substantial proletarian base—worked to subordinate the working class, whose strikes and protests were instrumental in the downfall of the Shah monarchy, to the reactionary clericalist movement led by Ayatollah Khomeini. What was necessary was the independent mobilization of the proletariat in a struggle for its own state power. The International Communist League's predecessor, the international Spartacist tendency, raised the call: "Down with the Shah! No support to the mullahs! For workers revolution in Iran!"

Today again, what is posed is the independent mobilization of the proletariat against all wings of the Islamic theocracy and the Iranian bourgeoisie. In a backward, dependent country like Iran, the historic achievements of the classic bourgeois-democratic revolutions in West Europe and North America remain on the agenda. Only under the dictatorship of the proletariat can there be agrarian revolution, the separation of church and state, the liberation of women and the emancipation of national, ethnic and religious minorities from the Persian-chauvinist prison house of peoples. Proletarian power in Iran must necessarily be linked to a perspective of international socialist revolution, particularly in the imperialist centers, if it is to survive and develop on the road to

IRAN: A NEW POWER IS BORN

Socialist Challenge
15 February 1979

THE FORM-RELIGIOUS THE SPIRIT-REVOLUTION!

Iran is a fabulously wealthy country. It earns billions of dollars each year through oil. It owns millions more from natural gas, of which it holds the world's second largest reserves. Yet its people are among the world's poorest. The vast majority of Iranians live in

Socialist Worker
January 1979

British USec (top left) and U.S. ISO hailed Khomeini's 1979 "Islamic revolution." Spartacists warned that mullah rule would mean bloody repression against workers, women, religious and national minorities.

WORKERS VANGUARD

For Workers Revolution in Iran!

Down with the Shah! Don't Bow to Khomeini!

—15 December 1978

socialism. This is the Trotskyist program of permanent revolution. As we wrote earlier this year in "Iran: 20 Years of Islamic Dictatorship" (WV No. 708, 5 March):

"No fundamental social liberation will be accomplished short of a revolution shattering the entire power structure of capitalist and pre-capitalist social relations. A Marxist intervention in this fluid situation would seek to crystallize revolutionary proletarian opposition to mullah rule and combat illusions that liberal reformers, not to mention clerics like Khatami, will satisfy the masses' desire to throw off the yoke of an oppressive dictatorship."

Pro-Imperialist Democrats in "Socialist" Garb

Khatami's reputation in the West as a "reformer" is due in no small part to the fact that he is a vocal advocate of re-opening Iran to U.S. imperialist penetration. While Washington was more than willing to work with Teheran in sponsoring anti-Soviet *mujahedin* cutthroats in Afghanistan in the 1980s, the U.S. has maintained punitive sanctions against the Islamic regime since the 1979 takeover of the U.S. embassy in Teheran. With the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union in 1991-92 and the renewed imperialist scramble to stake out oil and natural gas fields in the Persian Gulf region, a significant section of the American ruling class has become increasingly exasperated at losing out on investment opportunities in Iran. Washington sent out unmistakable signals of support to Khatami against the hardliners.

Illusions in the "democratic" pretensions of the imperialist rulers were evident at protests in solidarity with Iranian students held in various cities in the U.S., Canada and West Europe last month. A prominent slogan at a July 15 demonstration in Los Angeles was "United Nations Pay More Attention," appealing to the agency which has served as a fig leaf for imperialist slaughter from Korea to Iraq to the Balkans. Avowed socialists joined in promoting "humanitarian" imperialism. At a July 17 protest in Toronto, Joe Flexer, leader of Socialist Action, the Canadian affiliate of the fake-Trotskyist United Secretariat (USec), called on the Canadian government to close the Iranian embassy and stop all trade with Iran.

Imbibing the bourgeoisie's "death of communism" lie, the fake lefts internationally are today little more than garden

variety liberals. Having tailed behind Khomeini in 1978-79 and cheered when his regime carted other leftists off to prison, today the Tudeh in a July 10 statement applauds the Iranian student leaders' demand that "the government of Khatami honour its promise for democracy." Protest demonstrations in the West bringing together exiled Iranian leftists, liberals and nationalists were likewise limited to appeals for (bourgeois) democracy. Even supporters of the former monarchy were welcomed at these "democracy" rallies!

Thus a July 18 protest in Hamburg, Germany initially included a contingent of monarchists. Our comrades of the Spartacist Workers Party (SpAD) denounced the presence of the Shah supporters and argued with the protest organizers that they be driven away, to no avail. It was only after the monarchists decided themselves to leave midway through the demonstration and after an SpAD speaker had raised our revolutionary program for Iran that Persian leaflets bearing the hammer and sickle began to materialize at the protest. Today, Iranian leftists bloc with monarchists against the mullahs; 20 years ago, they blocked with the mullahs against the monarchy.

Virtually the whole of the left internationally likewise supported Khomeini's "Iranian Revolution." Then USec spokesman Ernest Mandel promoted the mullahs' accession to power in 1979 as an expression of "partial bourgeois democracy" and "the beginning of a process of permanent revolution" (see WV No. 237, 3 August 1979). *Socialist Challenge* (15 February 1979), the newspaper of the British USec group, waxed poetic about "liberated Tehran" and exulted in a front-page headline, "Iran: A New Power is Born." British USec leader Brian Grogan even boasted that he had joined in chants of "Allah akbar" ("god is great") during a demonstration in Teheran.

Tony Cliff's British Socialist Workers Party (SWP), represented in the U.S. by the International Socialist Organization (ISO), continues to genuflect before Islamic reaction to this day. In 1979, the ISO hailed the Khomeinist "revolution," headlining one article: "The Form Religious, The Spirit—Revolution" (*Socialist Worker*, January 1979). Following Khatami's election, the ISO praised him as a liberal alternative to the "conservatives," claiming that his presidency "promised to be a significant break after 19 years of Islamic rule" (*Socialist Worker*, 14 August 1998)—Islamic rule whose introduction they cheered!

More recently, the SWP's "Marxism '99" confab in London last month featured presentations on "Iran 1979" and "Islamic Fundamentalism" which lauded the virtues of Islamic reaction. The speaker on 1979 reshaped the left's "anti-imperialist" whitewash of the mullahs with the line that the "Iranian Revolution" had removed from power Washington's key ally in the region, the Shah. But the "anti-imperialist" mullahs then proceeded to bloc with U.S. imperialism against Soviet troops in Afghanistan—as did the anti-Communist Cliffites themselves. At the second workshop, the speaker went on about how Islamic fundamentalists mobilize people against the state. This grotesque statement came

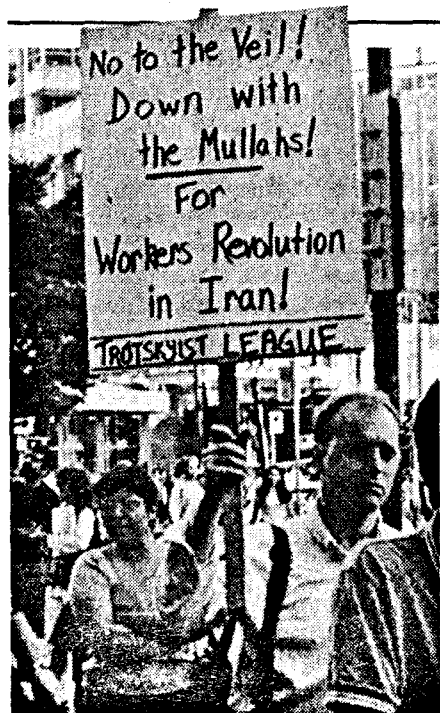
even as government-sponsored fundamentalist thugs in Teheran were throwing student protesters out of windows! In fact, in 1979 the Khomeinists took over the same capitalist state previously administered by the Shah—including its secret police, torture chambers, etc.—and wield it to this day against the working class, the left and national minorities.

"Two-Stage Revolution"—Policy of Bloody Defeat

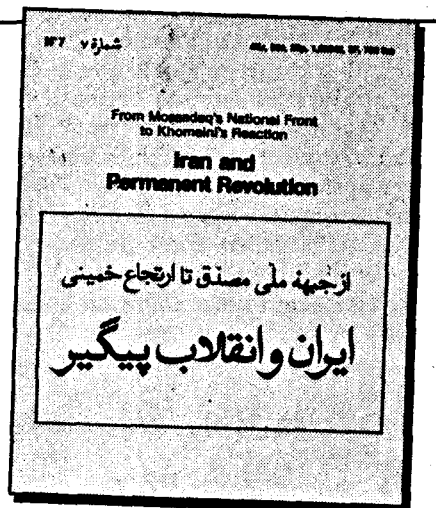
The Worker-communist Party of Iran (WPI), which has organized a number of protests internationally in solidarity with the Iranian students, has sought to strike a "left" stance, raising the call for a "Socialist Republic in Iran!" and speaking of the need for a "workers state." But this socialist rhetoric is belied by the WPI's own appeals to the imperialist bourgeoisie. A July 14 leaflet on Iran by the WPI in Los Angeles declares that "the entire regime should be put on trial for crimes against humanity." And a WPI leaflet titled "Against the Terrorist Islamic Regime in Iran!" distributed in Canada last January called for an international tribunal to try the leaders of the Islamic Republic and the closure of the Iranian embassy in Canada. These are thinly disguised calls for the sort of imperialist "war crimes tribunal" which the United Nations has set up for the Balkans. Indeed, some years ago an article "In Defense of the Demand for Independence for Iraqi Kurdistan" by WPI leader Mansoor Hekmat in the Farsi-language *International* (June 1995) explicitly looked to the UN to oversee a referendum on Kurdish independence.

Seeking to tail pro-imperialist liberals, the WPI has been particularly sensitive to our revolutionary criticism. Thus, after a Trotskyist League comrade speaking at a WPI-initiated protest in Vancouver on July 24 polemicized against their appeals to the imperialists, some WPI supporters threatened to exclude our speakers at future rallies. Now more than ever, it is crucial to pursue a clash of opinions on which way forward in Iran.

The WPI's appeals to "democratic" imperialism are in line with its stagist politics. Although the WPI claims to oppose the Menshevik/Stalinist scheme of two-stage revolution—which postpones the socialist revolution to an indefinite future while subordinating the proletariat to the bourgeoisie in the struggle for a "first stage" limited to capitalist democracy—in practice it operates firmly within that framework. A July 13 WPI statement in Farsi to Iranian workers declaims: "It was your strikes that brought the Shah's military regime to its knees." Workers strikes were indeed instrumental in bringing down the Shah, but what the WPI obscures is that the proletariat did not play an independent class role; it was *politically subordinated by the Tudeh and other reformists to the Khomeinists*. And a 1990 pamphlet titled "A Brief Look at the Situation of the Working Class in Iran," which was written by the WPI's predecessors of the Communist Party of Iran and is still distributed by the WPI, not only says that the "working class was the backbone of the revolutionary movement" in 1979 but maintains that there was a "revolutionary period" right up to 1981, two years after the mullahs had consolidated power over



Spartacist Canada



ICL advanced revolutionary-proletarian program at 13 July Vancouver protest and internationally in defence of Iranian students. For ICL Farsi-language pamphlet, send \$5.00 to Spartacist ANZ Publishing Co., GPO Box 3473, Sydney NSW 2001.

East Timor...

(continued from page 12)

Taiwan, a move into East Timor raises the spectre of a military threat to China and the other bureaucratically deformed workers states in Asia, Vietnam and North Korea. For the racist Australian rulers, occupation of East Timor would not only forcibly assert their "interests" in the region, but would also provide a means of keeping out desperate refugees. Portugal wants its piece as well.

In laying the basis for what they want to ensure is stable neo-colonial rule, the imperialists are assisted by the East Timorese petty-bourgeois nationalist leaders who have been demanding armed imperialist intervention. Agreeing that East Timor should become a UN "protectorate" for the next five years, they are bidding to become frontmen in the exploitation of their "own" people.

We say that the real and only allies of the desperately poor people of East Timor are the international working class, from the multi-millioned proletariat of Indonesia to the workers of the imperialist countries in the region, Australia and Japan. This is the program of *proletarian internationalism*. The Australian workers movement has a particular duty to oppose the intervention of its "own" rulers, racist overlords of oppressed neo-colonies from Papua New Guinea to Fiji. We fight for union bans



Pacific Defence Reporter

**Darwin:
Australian
troops poised
to hit East
Timor on
30-minute
alert. No to
imperialist
intervention!**

the corpses of militant workers, leftists and Kurds.

The WPI's view that democracy can be achieved under capitalism in Iran is also clear in its programmatic statement, "A Better World" (1994). While claiming not to strive for a reformed capitalism, this program contains a massive laundry list of reformist demands addressed to the Iranian ruling class and asserts: "Our aim is to force the existing system to recognise and abide by the unquestionable rights of the working people." While the WPI stands out among Iranian left groups for prominently raising the key question of women's emancipation and calls for legalization of abortion, it capitulates to religious backwardness by denouncing "the act of abortion," arguing that it displays "the inherent contempt for human life in the present system."

Under the impact of the crisis gripping Iran today, the WPI recently underwent a substantial split. However, from the documents which we have been able to read and from discussions with members from both sides, there do not appear to be fundamental differences on key questions of strategy. The minority claims to stand on "A Better World" and also apparently adheres to the WPI's position that the Soviet Union became "state capitalist" in the late 1920s, a theoretical justification for its refusal to call for unconditional military defense of the Soviet degenerated workers state when it existed. This was a decisive question of proletarian class strategy, particularly in a country bordering on the former Soviet Union.

on *Australian* military goods as part of the struggle to defeat imperialism. The maritime workers refusing to handle war goods destined for the imperialists' attack on Vietnam stands as a proud example of internationalist solidarity.

In Indonesia, a prison house of peoples, the proletariat must struggle to transcend the dominant Javanese chauvinism fostered by the bourgeoisie. A Trotskyist party in Indonesia would fight to mobilise the working class in urgent protest and struggle to demand Indonesia get out of East Timor, while opposing imperialist intervention. Championing independence for East Timor, it would fight for the right of self-determination of all the oppressed peoples in the archipelago.

In Indonesia, a country of belated capitalist development, *all* wings of the bourgeoisie are so tied to imperialism and fearful of the proletariat, that they are incapable of fulfilling the tasks historically associated with the bourgeois-democratic revolution—national liberation, agrarian revolution, legal equality for women and political democracy. Achieving these tasks and putting an end to the brutal exploitation of the masses requires the *proletarian* seizure of power—the Trotskyist program of *permanent revolution*. To consolidate proletarian rule in the face of hostile imperialism and lay the foundation for socialist economic development in backward Indonesia requires a struggle for socialist revolution internationally, in

imperialist Australia, Japan and the U.S., and throughout the Asian region.

Laborite Left: "Critical Support" to Imperialism

The Labor Party, notably its foreign affairs spokesman Laurie Brereton, has been the most hawkish in demanding the Australian military go into East Timor, while the ACTU union bureaucrats have called for 5,000 troops to be sent and the Northern Territory Trades and Labor Council calls for economic sanctions against Indonesia. This is chauvinism and class treason, the effect of which is to call on the Australian rulers to wage war on neo-colonial Indonesia. In the wake of the ALP/ACTU come the Laborite left. These leftists do not oppose imperialism as a system, but instead seek to pressure the capitalists into adopting a "progressive" foreign policy. They are purveyors of the deadly fiction that there can be "humanitarian" imperialism.

The Democratic Socialist Party (DSP) has long demanded that Australia "act" in defence of the East Timorese, and their paper *Green Left Weekly* has featured regular calls for UN intervention. Now, in the person of Jon Land, spokesman for their front group Action in Solidarity with Indonesia and East Timor (ASIET), the DSP openly calls for a UN military force:

"In the context of the unrelenting violence by the pro-integration militias, a UN peace-keeping force for East Timor should be given critical support. An armed UN peace-keeping force would act as a deterrent to the destabilisation campaign by the militias and the Indonesian military."

—*Green Left Weekly*, 1 September

The DSP's support is "critical" because, they say, "Interventions by UN forces elsewhere have often had disastrous consequences." This is a revolting alibi for UN-sanctioned slaughter, starvation and political subjugation. Look at Iraq. In the name of the UN, this country was bombed to oblivion in 1991, and since then, the UN's embargo has killed well over a million people. Australian navy vessels to this day patrol the Persian Gulf enforcing UN sanctions against Iraq. From the Korean war to the Congo, Somalia and Cambodia, UN "peacekeeping" interventions are aimed at imposing the diktats of the imperialist powers.

The International Socialist Organisation (ISO) have said they are opposed to Australian troops to East Timor, but they *refuse* to call for the Australian cops and military advisers there now, much less the UN, to get out. Prettifying Australian imperialism, they write, "Instead of sending troops, the government should be sending unconditional aid" (*Socialist Worker*, 12 March) and they back the union tops' pro-imperialist calls to ban all trade with Indonesia.

Workers Power (WP) claims to oppose Australian imperialism, but they too, do not demand Australia get out. In fact they give tacit approval to the UN presence in East Timor, demanding the recent vote be overseen "by representa-



**Cigarette
factory workers
protest near
Surabaya,
Indonesia.
Proletariat
must champion
independence
for East Timor.**

tives of not just the UN, but of the world labour movement" (*Workers Power*, August-October)! WP seems to think that imperialist occupation is a precondition for workers revolution. As in Kosovo, where WP's British co-thinkers conjure up the possibility of socialist revolution under NATO bayonets, in East Timor they call for a "popular militia," "councils of workers', peasants' and students' delegates," and "a Workers' and Peasants' Government," all under the eye of the UN!

The DSP have long been the local press agents for the People's Democratic Party (PRD) in Indonesia. Recent months have seen waves of worker protests and strikes in Indonesia, and in this volatile situation the PRD has grown. PRD militants have shown great courage in the face of heavy state repression, and workers must demand freedom for all PRD, trade-union and East Timorese militants from Jakarta's dungeons! However, the PRD's central strategy is to pressure Megawati Sukarnoputri's bourgeois Indonesian Democratic Party for Struggle (PDI-P). PRD leader Dita Sari, recently released from prison stated: "We must and will demand that the PDI-P meet its responsibilities to the people who voted for it. We will put forward our program for what any new government must achieve for the workers in its first 100 days!" (*Green Left Weekly*, 11 August).

Tailing Megawati, a vicious Javanese chauvinist who has long insisted that East Timor belongs to Indonesia, underscores that the PRD's program of petty-bourgeois nationalism is counterposed to the perspective of mobilising the Indonesian proletariat against the army's butchery in East Timor and anywhere else. Pushing illusions in the good offices of the imperialists, as early as 1996 the PRD called for Indonesia "to hand [East Timor] over to multinational peacekeeping operations under the auspices of the UN, as we have seen in Bosnia, Ethiopia and Cambodia" ("Resolution on East Timor," 26 July 1996).

UN officials are suggesting that a "Kosovo-style intervention" into East Timor of U.S., New Zealand and Australian troops would be quicker to mount than a UN operation. Just as the fake left, who spewed the imperialists' propaganda about Kosovo as a pretext for the war on Serbia, bear a share of responsibility for the imperialist destruction there, so too will they bear responsibility for what an imperialist occupation of East Timor will bring.

As the Australian section of the International Communist League, we understand that proletarian solidarity with the Indonesian and East Timorese masses means, *above all*, mobilising proletarian opposition to Australian and all imperialist intervention in the region, part of the struggle to overthrow this vicious, racist ruling class. Independence now for East Timor! For workers revolution in Indonesia! Down with Australian imperialism! ■



"Two-Stage Revolution"—Policy of Bloody Defeat

Iran: Mass Protests Shake Islamic Regime

The following article is reprinted from Workers Vanguard (No. 717, 6 August 1999), newspaper of the Spartacist League/U.S.

AUGUST 3—Shouting "death to dictatorship," tens of thousands of students across Iran took to the streets for six days in early July in the largest protests since the blood-drenched mullahs came to power in 1979. In Teheran, as many as 25,000 students faced the iron bars, chains, clubs and tear gas volleys of the cops and the truncheons and automatic gunfire of Islamic fundamentalist militias. Dozens of student activists were injured in the nationwide protests, some 1,400 arrested and many others forced into hiding. Hundreds remain behind bars, some threatened with charges punishable by death. The international workers movement must urgently demand: **Free all student protesters now!**

The recent turmoil began with open skirmishing within the theocratic regime between the hardline wing under Ayatollah Ali Khamenei and the "moderate" wing under President Mohammad Khatami. Hours after a July 8 protest by 200 Teheran University students against increased press censorship and the banning of the pro-Khatami newspaper *Salam*, police and fundamentalist Hezbollah thugs stormed a dormitory. As students were beaten in their sleep or thrown from windows, as many as eight



Riot police were unleashed against student protests in Teheran in July. Cops and fundamentalist thugs killed at least eight, while dozens were injured and 1,400 arrested.

For Workers Revolution!

were killed. The next day, 10,000 students demonstrated in Teheran to demand the ouster of the national police chief and to appeal for support from Khatami, who was elected in 1997 largely thanks to the votes of youth and women. But the students' growing disillusionment soon became evident when

they chanted, "Khatami, where are you? Your students have been killed."

Dissatisfied with the token dismissal of two senior police officials responsible for the raid on the university, protesters tried to storm the interior ministry building on July 13. The following day, the mullahs brought out tens of thou-

sands of soldiers, government workers and bazaaris (the small merchants who are the clerics' traditional base) in a countermobilization against the students. Faced with a threat to the Islamic regime, Khatami quickly closed ranks with his hardline rivals, denouncing the students as rioters with "devilish aims" who "intended to attack the foundations of the system and lead the country into anarchy" (*New York Times*, 14 July).

The student demonstrations have tapped into widespread popular opposition to the theocracy. A bystander at the July 13 protest said, "I just want to get rid of the filthy regime. Anything would be better than these clerics, even the worst criminals." Fed up with the dictates of the reactionary *ulema* (clergy), many students want the all-pervasive morals police to butt out of their lives and are demanding that draconian restrictions on sexual freedom and freedom of expression be lifted. After riding to power on a wave of protests against the hated tyranny of the Shah in 1979, the Islamic hierarchy instituted an equally tyrannical regime which dealt out bloody repression against workers and leftists, enslaved women in the stifling head-to-toe *chador* and perpetuated the murderous subjugation of Kurds, Arabs and other national and religious minorities. The Islamic regime used the squalid, nationalist war with Iraq—which lasted from 1980 to 1988 and

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No Imperialist Intervention!

**Independence Now for East Timor!
Australia/UN Hands Off!**

SEPTEMBER 4—It has just been announced that an overwhelming 78.5 percent of East Timorese have rejected a sham autonomy deal offered by Indonesia in a United Nations-sponsored "popular consultation," clearly opting for independence. In the months before the 30 August vote pro-Indonesia death squad "militias" killed hundreds and forced tens of thousands from their homes. In the wake of the vote, dozens have been killed while parts of Dili, the capital, and the towns of Maliana and Liquica have been burned, in an orgy of spiralling violence.

These atrocities are being used as the pretext for imperialist intervention in East Timor. Already more than 300 Aus-

tralian cops and military advisers are there, part of a 1,000-strong UN force. Thousands of Australian troops are on 30-minute standby in Darwin, the largest Australian military force mustered since the Vietnam War. Currently, 7,000 U.S. troops are taking part in "Exercise Crocodile 99" manoeuvres off North Queensland along with 15,000 Australians. A British warship in the South China Sea is reportedly ready to sail to East Timor. As proletarian revolutionaries and implacable foes of our "own" ruling class, we demand that the Australian imperialists, the U.S., the UN and all their lackeys and camp followers get out

of East Timor and stay out!

The idea that military intervention by Australian and U.S. imperialism will bring independence and "freedom" to the East Timorese is a horrible lie. These same imperialists backed Indonesia's annexation of the former Portuguese colony in 1975, leading to the deaths of more than 200,000 East Timorese. For 30 years they supported and armed the bloody dictator Suharto while training the Indonesian army, including the Kopassus special forces killers. These are the imperialists who devastated tiny Serbia and are now occupying Kosovo, overseeing brutal ethnic cleansing and

pogromist terror against Serbs and Gypsies there. These are the imperialist

mass murderers who slaughtered millions in their losing effort to defeat the Vietnamese revolution.

Imperialist military intervention means continued neo-colonial oppression, death, destruction and terrible poverty. For the imperialist rulers, who make fabulous profits exploiting the masses of the Asian region, an overarching purpose of military intervention is to prop up capitalist rule and suppress social struggle, particularly in Indonesia with its militant working class. In the context of the drive for capitalist counterrevolution in China and imperialist sabre rattling over

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