



## U.S./British/Australian Troops Out of Iraq/Afghanistan Now!

# Down With "War on Terror" Government Repression!

SEPTEMBER 9—The horrific terror bombings of the London subway and bus systems have provided another pretext for the capitalist rulers around the world to jack up their "war on terror," expanding the state's deadly powers of repression while further curtailing democratic rights and whipping up racist terror. Two weeks after the 7 July bombing, a failed bombing attempt against the London transit system occurred on 21 July. Two days later, on 23 July, the Egyptian Red Sea resort town of Sharm el Sheik was hit by bombs, with over 200 wounded and 64 people dead, including many Egyptian workers. Like those who bombed the World Trade Center on 11 September 2001, the nightclubs in Kuta, Bali in 2002 and the Madrid commuter trains in 2004, whoever was responsible for these new atrocities shares the vicious mindset of the imperialist rulers, identifying the working class and the population as a whole with their brutal capitalist rulers.



AP



David Moir

Sydney, 2003: Australian military take part in "anti-terror" exercises. Cops search bags of commuters at Town Hall station following reports of "suspicious" conversation by four men of Indonesian or Malaysian appearance. Racist "war on terror" targets immigrants, gives pretext for government attacks on civil liberties.

For the capitalist rulers, criminal terrorist attacks against civilians provide an opportunity to foment nationalism and racism, scapegoating minorities while lining up the population behind its imperialist military adventures abroad. Thus with almost 1,400 Australian imperialist troops taking part in the brutal colonial occupation of Iraq, the Howard government, with the enthusiastic backing of Labor, seized the opportunity following the London bombings to announce the deployment of up to 190 troops to Afghanistan.

In London, cops have been given "shoot-to-kill" orders against suspected "terrorists." The brutal killing of Jean Charles de Menezes, a 27-year-old electrician, showed the meaning of this policy. On 22 July, plainclothes cops pursued and gunned down the terrified young Brazilian immigrant. He was shot seven times in the head and once in the shoulder. The police then nearly killed the driver of the train on which Menezes was killed. They tackled the driver and a gun was put to his head, despite the fact that he was in uniform. The next day the London cops arrogantly said it could happen again. Since then, documents and photographs leaked to Britain's ITV news network have exposed police lies

used to justify the brutal killing.

Australian prime minister John Howard, in London at the time, stated that he had been "greatly impressed with the coordinated British response." ALP "opposition" leader Kim Beazley has been

ASIO's powers of search, detention and questioning. Under secretive coercive measures ASIO can detain and question a person repeatedly and without charge for up to seven days at a time. No one other than ASIO or the government may talk



AP/AAP

### Criminal Terror Bombings in London

— Statement by Spartacist League/Britain, page 5 —

on the warpath demanding ever more draconian "anti-terror" measures in Australia, above and beyond those that have already been instituted following September 11. Laws such as the Anti-Terrorism Act 2004 and amendments to the criminal code and Australian Security Intelligence Organisation [ASIO] Act have drastically increased

about these interrogations for two years (Age, 10 July)!

Now the government has announced a new raft of draconian laws including electronic tagging of "terrorist risks" for up to one year and "preventative detention" by police without charge for up to 48 hours. Under this proposed legislation anyone

found guilty of "encouraging" another person to commit "violence against the community" or Australia's military overseas could face seven years in prison. Such laws target all opponents of Australian imperialist militarism and oppression at home and abroad, from unionists who fight for militant picket lines to defend strikes to demonstrators who take a side with the Iraqi people against the brutal colonial occupation.

Following the London bombings, the federal government, Labor opposition and state Labor governments have waged a concerted campaign targeting Muslims while constricting the rights of all. Proposals for a national identity card have been re-floated and deprivation of citizenship canvassed, including by the prime minister. Muslim schools, mosques and bookshops are increasingly monitored. From the proposed anti-terror summit of the federal Liberal/National government and Labor state premiers, to prime minister Howard's recent meeting with "moderate" Muslims, the stage is being set to identify and isolate anyone outside the government's self-defined "security" circle.

One of the most prominent Australian victims of incarceration in the name of the "war on terror," Mamdouh Habib, was released without charge from the Guantánamo hellhole detention centre last January. Arrested by Pakistani police in October 2001, Habib was "rendered" by the U.S. military to Egypt for six months where he was tortured, including by forced injections and electric shock, and told by U.S. military interrogators that his wife and children had died. Habib has also stated that an Australian official witnessed U.S. guards abusing him in Pakistan. Howard and attorney-general Ruddock have parroted sham assurances from the U.S. defence department that Habib and continuing Guantánamo detainee David Hicks were treated "humanely" and did not suffer ill treatment. Sure, David Hicks was captured in Afghanistan in 2001. He has been kept in solitary confinement, beaten and tortured, resulting in chronic back problems, his eyesight reportedly failing from being kept constantly in the dark. He is facing a "star chamber" military commission, several members

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# “Trotskyist Platform”: Opportunism in *Action*

In mid-May, P. Balasubramaniam, then a Central Committee member of the SL/A and editor of *Australasian Spartacist*, resigned from the International Communist League (ICL) and declared himself to be a new tendency on the left, Trotskyist Platform (TP). Trumpeting that “TP stands in the best past traditions of the SL/ICL,” Balasubramaniam mythologised that the immediate cause of his defection was our supposed recoil from turning “written” defence of the Redfern and Palm Island Aboriginal militants into “actual action.”

Contrary to his assertions, key to the political dispute with Balasubramaniam was our struggle to organise a *proletarian-centred* demonstration in defence of the Redfern militants that would be exemplary and a concretisation of our revolutionary program. A motion from our last National Conference, passed with the support of Balasubramaniam, stated in part: “We understand that holding a protest on the streets of Sydney in defence of the Redfern militants is conditional on several key union endorsements.”

For over a year we sought bases of support particularly amongst the trade unions, Aboriginal groups and the left. However, expressing their loyalty to the Labor Party and the capitalist state, the trade-union misleaders responded to our efforts with indifference. Unwilling to face this harsh reality and driven by a moral imperative to “do something,” Balasubramaniam elevated the tactical question of having a demonstration to a “principle.” On the basis of this one-point program, he justified his quit from our revolutionary party, which had become a hindrance to his divergent political appetites.

Balasubramaniam’s quit is far removed from the best “past” traditions of the ICL on which he claims to stand. Rather, it was parochial and narrow. He did not raise other programmatic issues nor did he attempt to win SL/A or international comrades to his positions, which is what a Leninist would do. Instead he jumped ship, and on the very day of his resignation miraculously was able to produce two articles appealing to those programmatically to the right of the ICL. Balasubramaniam is a casualty of the retrogression of consciousness following the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union. Faced with a reactionary period in which the prospect of proletarian revolution seems distant, and when those impelled into defensive struggles are too often isolated, he has fled the often arduous

struggle to build a revolutionary internationalist party.

Shortly after his quit, Balasubramaniam announced a demonstration for 11 a.m. on Friday, 8 July around the slogans “Demonstrate Against Racist Brutality on Aboriginal Day: Defend the Aboriginal Opponents of Racist State Terror! Drop the Charges Against the Palm Island Black Defendants! Free the Remaining Political Prisoners from the Redfern Struggle! Defend the Block!” In a 26 June letter to Balasubramaniam, we noted:

“To our knowledge this protest lacks any significant backing from the organised working class. Moreover, to hold a demonstration at 11 a.m. on a working day would seem to preclude any meaningful participation by trade unionists, likely indicating that you are accommodating to political forces whose perspective is very distant from a union-centred mobilisation. “We are not endorsing this demonstration because we cannot take responsibility for, or lend our authority to an event which could result in increased persecution of its participants, including the very vulnerable Aboriginal youth. Of course we will vigorously defend any participants in the event that they are persecuted by the capitalist state.”

The demo was co-initiated by TP and two long-time Aboriginal activists, Jenny Munro and Gracelyn Smallwood. Both in the building of the demo and at the event itself, Balasubramaniam’s conduct confirmed that his rejection of the necessity for a proletarian-centred demonstration would lead him to accommodate other political forces.

The rally was timed to occur during the Australian government-sponsored NAIDOC (National Aboriginal and Islander Day Observance Committee) Week, whose calendar in the *Koori Mail* advertised the 8 July rally at The Block under the minimal demand “to defend Aboriginal Rights.” That this demonstration was grafted onto the “official” NAIDOC Week events was one indicator of its non-proletarian trajectory. Another was the deliberately ambiguous demand “Defend the Block!” Such a demand allows for many interpretations, from militant defence of the community against rioting police to welcoming the police to clean up “drugs and crime.” The latter is the line of Aboriginal leader Mick Mundine, who is chief executive of the Redfern Aboriginal Housing Corporation, an endorser of the 8 July demonstration. Neither at the rally nor in his propaganda did Balasubramaniam attempt to characterise NAIDOC or expose the pro-cop

Mundine, who is on record opposing the Redfern militants for their heroic protest against the cops in February 2004.

While between 60 and 80 people rallied on the day, there was no organised union presence, just a few individual unionists and a couple of paper endorsements. A number of speakers evocatively described the relentless brutal nightmare that many Aborigines experience under racist capitalist rule. Jenny Munro and Gracelyn Smallwood deplored sell-out Aboriginal misleaders like Noel Pearson, who are handsomely rewarded by the government for pushing blame for dire conditions onto Aboriginal people themselves. Overall, the speeches were a mix of religiosity, reformist appeals to the state, some appeals for trade-union solidarity and one or two comments in opposition to capitalism.

Despair in the possibility of working-class struggle to defend the oppressed breeds reliance on the capitalist state or other anti-proletarian strategies. Illustrating the latter point, at the rally the word “resistance” was used to describe not only the Redfern and Palm Island protests against racist cop terror, but also cowardly and criminal acts such as the London Underground bombings of the day before. Whoever carried out those attacks shares the racist outlook and vicious mindset of the imperialist ruling class, holding the working class and population as a whole responsible for the crimes of the British ruling class. That Balasubramaniam allowed these anti-proletarian remarks to pass without public comment, including in later written propaganda on the rally, indicts him for the opportunist he has become.

Referring to government inquiries into police killings of Aborigines, the latest issue of *Trotskyist Platform* politely reports that “Some speakers at the July 8 action pointed out that Aboriginal people have got nothing from such inquiries.” The article continues “A TP spokesman,

in advocating a working-class centred strategy, argued that no justice whatsoever can come from state-run inquiries” (*Trotskyist Platform*, August-October). Yet in the very same article, Balasubramaniam uncritically upholds Aboriginal activist Lyall Munro as “Spokesman for The Block,” knowing full well that Munro helped lead a demonstration which put dead-end demands on the police and called for a Royal Commission soon after the cop killing of TJ Hickey last year! Calls for inquiries and commissions serve to clean up the image of the racist bourgeois state and to reinforce reformist illusions that its worst atrocities can be curbed by popular pressure. They paralyse the necessary working-class struggle in defence of the oppressed and strengthen the bourgeois state, the central agency for the oppression of Aboriginal people.

Balasubramaniam carried out a non-aggression pact with his bloc partners. The rally was like one that any number of garden-variety reformists might have organised when talking out of the left side of their mouths. As an event it did nothing to break people from the idea of using the state or other non-proletarian strategies to advance the cause of Aboriginal rights, much less to make concrete that the road forward is the independent mobilisation of the working class against the bourgeoisie.

The heroic Aborigines of Palm Island continue to be railroaded through the courts, and at least one of the Redfern militants continues to languish in prison. Across the country Aboriginal neighbourhoods suffer ongoing racist terror. Police and fascist killings in the lockups and on the streets continue unabated (see article, page 12). The courage of the Palm Island and Redfern Aboriginal militants is impressive; but militancy is not enough. The best Aboriginal fighters must be won to a proletarian revolutionary perspective. As we stated in our article “Defend Redfern Aborigines—Mobilise Union Power!” written immediately after the cop killing of TJ Hickey:

“Key to our perspective is the struggle to break the working class from racist Laborite nationalism and reliance on the capitalist state. Only in coming to the defence of the most oppressed against capitalist rule can the working class liberate themselves. It is urgently necessary to build a Leninist/Trotskyist party, a tribune of all the people, to overthrow this brutal capitalist system through workers revolution. Only then will the desperation and poverty imposed upon the indigenous peoples and increasingly felt by all, be eliminated once and for all.”

—*Australasian Spartacist* No. 186, Autumn 2004 ■

## ICL Declaration of Principles and Some Elements of Program

The Declaration of Principles of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist) is a concrete expression of our purpose: to build national sections of a democratic-centralist international which can lead the struggle for worldwide socialist revolution. This important document, which was adopted at the Third International Conference of the ICL in early 1998, was published in the four language editions of *Spartacist* and additionally in nine other languages.

### For a Workers Republic of Australia, Part of a Socialist Asia!

#### Program of the Spartacist League

- I. The Spartacist League of Australia
- II. Break with Laborism! For a Revolutionary Leadership of the Working Class!
- III. Australian Imperialism
- IV. Immigrant Workers—Key to Class Struggle
- V. Open the Road to the Women and the Youth!
- VI. Labour Must Defend Aboriginal Rights
- VII. The State and Revolution
- VIII. Leninist/Revolutionary Mobilisations to Stop the Fascists
- IX. For Science and Materialism!
- X. The Origins of the Spartacist League
- XI. For New October Revolutions!

## SPARTACIST

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# Churches, Charities and CIA Cash Social Forum Con Game

We reprint below an article from the Young Spartacus pages of Workers Hammer (No. 191, Summer 2005), newspaper of the Spartacist League/Britain.

## WORKERS HAMMER

If the "Make Poverty History" campaign had anything to do with actually challenging the scourge of poverty, AIDS, illiteracy and all-sided misery and destitution for the peoples of Africa, would it be endorsed by Tony Blair and Gordon Brown? These butchers of Iraq are trying to rebuild Labour's popularity with voters at home and to refurbish the image of blood-drenched British imperialism. Behind them is a whole cabal of celebrities, religious charities, NGOs, trade-union bureaucrats and reformists like the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) championing the "Make Poverty History" fraud.

Not everyone is taken in by Tony Blair and Gordon Brown's new-found concern for the poor. A letter in the *Glasgow Herald* (6 June) wryly noted: "Gordon Brown's genuineness about eradicating poverty is as genuine as, and in direct proportion to, his willingness to lead a demonstration of bankers, financiers and stockbrokers along the streets of Edinburgh with a banner proclaiming 'Long live the Cuban Revolution!'" As for imperialist hypocrisy about aid to the "Third World", we endorse a characterisation of bourgeois charity written by Engels in 1845. Addressing the English bourgeoisie, he wrote it was "as though you rendered the proletarians a service in first sucking out their very life-blood and then practising your self-complacent, Pharisaic philanthropy upon them placing yourselves before the world as mighty benefactors of humanity when you give back to the plundered victims the hundredth part of what belongs to them!" (*Condition of the Working Class in England*). "Sucking out the life blood" from the world's working masses and oppressed is what the G8 is all about.

For those who want to protest against the G8 meeting but don't want to go along with the "we are the world" roadshow, there is the iron fist of state repression. For months, the tabloids and other media have echoed police forces in scaremongering about "violent" anarchists attacking the G8 summit. An army of 10,000 cops has been mobilised; a five-mile-long fence has been erected around the five-star hotel in Gleneagles where the meeting will take place; and reportedly the US is stationing an aircraft carrier full of Marines off the west coast of Scotland.

Here are the methods the capitalist rulers use to deal with any perceived protest against their rule—state repression on the one hand and political co-optation on the other. Foremost among the mechanisms for co-opting "anti-globalisation"

protest are the World Social Forum (WSF) and European Social Forum (ESF), which are led and organised by much the same forces that are leading "Make Poverty History". Starting in 2001, these Social Forums have been used to defuse the wave of mass protests—against the G8, World Trade Organisation, IMF and other imperialist agencies—exemplified by the Seattle protest in 1999. The purpose was to draw radical youth away from pitched confrontations with the forces of the capitalist state and to corral them behind the "democratic alternative" of parliamentary reformism, while pretending that these talking shops were "non-parliamentary".

the state government of Rio Grande do Sul and the federal government of Brazil but also the Banco do Brasil and its biggest petroleum company, Petrobras! The 2002 ESF was financed by the city of Florence and the 2003 Paris ESF funded by the Chirac government. The 2004 London ESF was bankrolled and hosted by the New Labour mayoral office of Ken Livingstone, supporter of the imperialist bombing of Serbia and cheerleader for the police terror against "anti-capitalist" protesters on May Day 2000.

The Social Forums have also all been dominated by the misnamed "Non-Governmental" Organisations (NGOs). Of

of the industrial struggles in the car industry in the US. Following World War II it became a conduit for CIA funds for anti-Communist causes around the world.

While funded by some of the most notorious agencies of US imperialism, the World Social Forums have not been so welcoming to those seen as potentially threatening the interests of imperialism. The statement in the WSF Charter of Principles that "neither party representatives nor military organizations shall participate in the Forum" has been used to exclude the Zapatistas as well as the FARC (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Columbia). Even the Madres de Plaza

de Mayo, an organisation of mothers of leftists who were "disappeared" during the 1976-1983 Argentinian military dictatorship, was excluded from the 2002 WSF. On the other hand, a warm welcome has been extended to various heads of capitalist governments—who preside over "special bodies of armed men" more commonly known as the capitalist state.

An insightful article titled "The Economics and Politics of the World Social Forum" in *Aspects of India's Economy* (September 2003) by Rajani X Desai captured the purpose and nature of the Social Forums:

"While several political forces fighting for a change of the system [have] been excluded from the WSF meets, droves of political leaders of the imperialist countries have been attending. Not only does the WSF as a body receive funds from agencies which are tied to imperialist interests and operations, but innumerable bodies participating in the WSF too are dependent on such agencies. The implications of this can be seen from the history of one such agency, Ford Foundation, which has closely collaborated with the US Central Intelligence Agency internationally, and in India has helped to shape the government's policies in favour of American interests."

### Left Cover for Class Collaboration

The fact that the World and European Social Forums have been all but bought and paid for by various capitalist governments and agencies is no big deal for the SWP. As SWP leader (and prominent spokesman on Social Forum platforms) Alex Callinicos shamelessly put it, "we all understood that a mass Social Forum needs money and money means compromises" (*International Socialist Tendency Discussion Bulletin*, January 2005). Indeed! Such sentiments are hardly peculiar to Callinicos. The first World Social Forum in 2001 was partly organised by the fake-Trotskyist United Secretariat (USec). Here young radicals were schooled in administering fiscal austerity for the capitalist state through mock "participatory budgets". The capitalist benefactors who funded the WSF got their money's worth. Today the Workers Party (PT) of Brazilian president Lula—with the aid of a "comrade minister" who is a member of the

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## HE WHO PAYS THE PIPER...



WSF's slogan is "another world is possible." But whose world? Above are some of the agencies who have sponsored and funded the Social Forums.

Far from being met with the tear gas, water cannons and bullets of the capitalist state, as happened in Genoa in July 2001, the WSF and ESF have been backed and bankrolled by various agencies of the imperialist rulers.

This is because the Social Forums and the so-called "anti-capitalist" movement in fact pose no fundamental threat to capitalist rule. Their organisers buy into the predominant myth of the "post-Soviet" world: that class struggle against the capitalist order is a thing of the past; the working class is irrelevant as a factor for social change and the best that can be achieved is to give the system a "human" face. The truth is that the capitalist system is as dependent as ever on the working class, which has the power to overthrow capitalism. To achieve this, the working class must become conscious that its own interests are irreconcilable with those of the capitalists. The Social Forums are an obstacle to this class-consciousness.

### Social Forums and State Funding

The European and World Social Forums have all been funded by capitalist states in the countries where they were held and received official backing from either bourgeois municipal governments or mayoral offices. The list of sponsors for the WSF has included not only the government of the city of Porto Alegre,

course these organisations, sanctioned by and receiving much of their funding from churches and capitalist states, are hardly independent from the governments to which they are answerable. Charities have long been the "humanitarian" face of imperialist intervention and of multinational companies looking to pillage "Third World" economies. Prominent NGOs at the Social Forums have included Oxfam, War on Want and Christian Aid. The major sponsor of NGOs around the world is the United Nations, which itself was set up to give a humanitarian veneer to the deprivations of imperialism, particularly American. In this tradition, the World Social Forum in Porto Alegre in January 2003 received a message of support from UN secretary general Kofi Annan.

As the old saying goes, "He who pays the piper calls the tune." And while all the Social Forums rail against the truly savage and deranged Bush administration in the US, among those funding the WSF are none other than foundations such as the Rockefeller Brothers Fund and the Ford Foundation. The Rockefeller foundation was used to clean up the Rockefeller's reputation following the 20 April 1914 massacre in Ludlow, Colorado in which 20 people—including children—were killed by company guards and militia during a bitter struggle by the mineworkers union. The Ford Foundation came to prominence in 1936 at the height

# Repression...

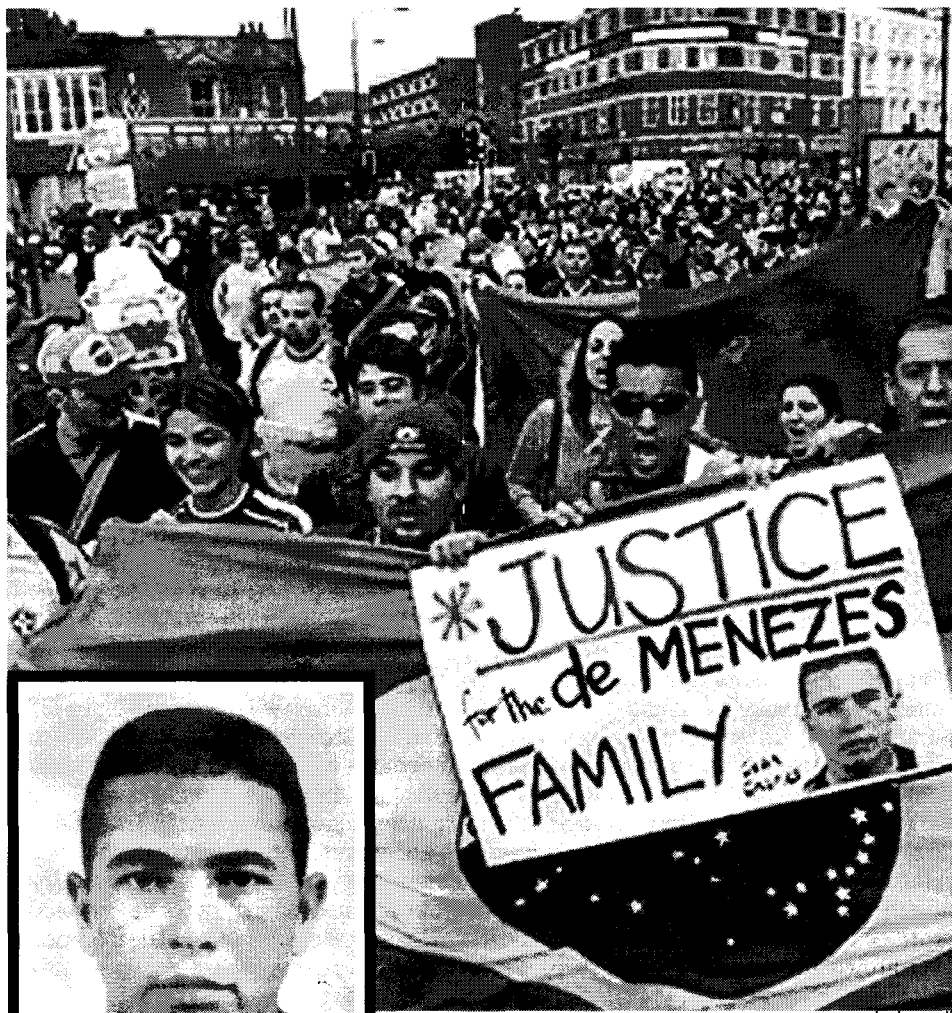
(continued from page 1)

of which were operationally involved in the war on Afghanistan. We say: *Free David Hicks and all the detainees from Guantánamo to Iraq! U.S. out of Guantánamo Bay—it belongs to the Cuban deformed workers state!*

Despite the Pentagon's decision not to bring any charges against Habib, the Australian government has ruled out any compensation and attorney-general Ruddock has ominously stated he remains a "person of interest" and a "security concern." In a sinister assault, just after midnight on 22 August Habib was attacked by two or three men in hooded jackets, stabbed in the stomach and struck on the back of the head while walking in a park near his home. He and his wife had gone out to talk, as they justifiably believe their home is bugged (*mX*, 24 August, 2005).

Increasingly state repression combines with burgeoning Christian fundamentalist bigotry. In late June there were a series of ASIO raids on houses in Sydney and Melbourne. On 22 June in Melbourne, ASIO, federal and Victorian police raided four homes, seizing computers, religious books and cassettes, searching rubbish bins and confiscating passports. Four of the men caught up in the dragnet stated they were raided because they practised a "pure" form of Islam. Bookshops in the heavily Muslim Sydney suburb of Lakemba have also been targeted. Echoing the racist ravings of former NSW Labor premier Bob Carr, current federal treasurer Peter Costello and education minister Brendon Nelson have demanded that Muslims conform to "Australian values" or stay away or get out of the country. Costello, who holds that the Ten Commandments "are the foundations of our law and our society" and is not shy about spruiking before reactionary Christian fundamentalist gatherings, rebuked Muslims who rightly complained against Danny Nalliah, a pastor in the Catch the Fire Ministries who urged his followers to "pull down mosques, temples and bottle shops" because they are "Satan's strongholds." Today government backbenchers such as Bronwyn Bishop further whip up racist Islamophobia by calling for the headscarf worn by some Islamic women to be banned from schools. (See "The Islamic Headscarf in French High Schools," *ASP* No. 185, for a fuller discussion of this question and the fight for women's liberation through socialist revolution.)

Since the London bombings, heavily armed British cops have been patrolling the streets and subways. And the racist backlash against Muslims has been growing daily. There have been terrifying and relentless police raids on people's homes, targeting especially Muslims from Soma-



London, 25 July: Hundreds protest killing of Brazilian immigrant Jean Charles de Menezes (inset) by British cops.

lia and Ethiopia. In this atmosphere of racist hysteria, Anthony Walker, a black teenager in Liverpool, was murdered on 29 July, an axe embedded in his skull, after being subjected to torrents of racist abuse as he waited at a bus stop with his white girlfriend.

In Australia government anti-immigrant and "anti-terror" measures have spawned a growth of racist and fascist attacks nationwide. In the last four years there have been hundreds of reports from Muslim and Arab people of racist attacks. Last year a Turkish school in Melbourne was burnt to the ground. While so-called "academics" like Macquarie University's Andrew Fraser spew forth racist bile against African immigrants, fascist organisations like Australia First and the Patriotic Youth League feel emboldened to target desperate Sudanese immigrants for physical attack. Such filth pose a threat to immigrants, Aboriginal people, gays and ultimately to the organised workers movement itself. Mobilisations of unionists, immigrants, minorities and blacks must be built to crush these fascists wherever they appear!

In the United States in an outrageous and unprecedented move, also projected here, New York City cops are now author-

ised to "randomly" search commuters' bags and belongings on the city's transit system. Transport cop patrols were immediately stepped up across Australian capital cities in the wake of the London attacks. These measures have nothing to do with stopping terrorism. Their purpose is to get people used to unquestioning obedience to the police and to the wanton violation of their rights. In London, chillingly, an average person may already be recorded on video 300 times daily by the city's more than 650,000 closed-circuit cameras. In Sydney there are nearly 8,000 cameras in public transport alone. In Melbourne, security for next year's Commonwealth Games is being bolstered, a threat to Aboriginal groups and others intending to exercise their right to protest.

## Union Tops Embrace Bosses' Racist "Anti-Terror" Campaign

Now the repressive measures instituted after September 11, which initially targeted immigrants, openly threaten the left and organised working class. Air, transport and maritime workers are to be vetted for "criminality" and alongside draconian anti-union legislation subject to massive security crackdowns such as the introduction of the Maritime Security Identification Card (MSIC). The MSIC will allow ASIO, police and, in the case of non-permanent residents, the immigration department, to delve into the past life of workers. This is an outrageous intrusion into the lives of working people and a clear weapon that can be wielded by the bosses and their state to rid themselves of "troublemakers" who, either as rebellious youth or in standing up for their rights may have had a brush with the law. What is needed is forthright, powerful opposition to these measures from the unions. However, rather than waging a class-struggle fight against the attacks, maritime and transport union tops have signed on to the bosses' "anti-terror" campaign. Following September 11 the bankrupt MUA leadership, from Socialist Alliance's Chris Cain to MUA national secretary Paddy Crumlin, have combined the chauvinist campaign for "Australian Crews on Australian Ships" with calls for stronger "border security." This only feeds into the government's racist "war on terror" and anti-immigrant frenzy, which also

targets foreign shipping and crews.

This embrace of the reactionary "war on terror" by the union bureaucrats is counterposed to any struggle to mobilise working people in defence of oppressed minorities at home and those facing imperialist terror abroad. It is not only a barrier to the necessary independent working-class fight against the current barrage of union-busting attacks but opens the unions up to increased repression by the state. This was vividly shown recently when transport, maritime and manufacturing union bureaucrats backed the government's Maritime and Transport Security Amendment Bill. Having dutifully participated in a government "working group" which would help enforce police and ASIO checks on all 130,000 waterfront and shipping workers, the union leaders then claimed surprise that government bureaucrats had unilaterally added 30 additional crimes against which people's backgrounds could be checked. This included Part II of the Crimes Act, which includes picket lines, industrial dispute and lockouts. A miffed Dean Summers from the MUA remarked "that is certainly not a question of terrorism. We think it has overstepped the mark and without consultation." Later, while correctly condemning slanders of "criminality" by transport minister Warren Truss, the MUA still boasted that the union "expects no disruption on the nation's wharves as the new security ID system is introduced" (*MUA News* [online], 26 August).

Port and transport workers must oppose their leadership's reactionary lining up with the government's racist "war on terror"—what is needed is a fight for full union rights, including safe working conditions and transportation services and against the government's repressive measures which includes the overt racist targeting of immigrant workers. Such a struggle should be extended to take up the defence of immigrants and refugees who languish in detention concentration camps throughout the country. We need a proletarian-centred fight demanding: Full citizenship rights for all immigrants! No deportations! Close the concentration camps! Down with the "anti-terror" and national security laws—they are racist anti-union laws! Hands off airport, shipping and waterfront workers!

## Down with Australian Imperialism

Following the September 11 attacks, the vicious mindset of the capitalist rulers was expressed by Condoleezza Rice who told the U.S. National Security Council to think about how to "capitalise on these opportunities"! The Bush gang, fully supported by the Howard government, capitalised all right, launching terror bombings and military occupations of Afghanistan and Iraq while tightening the screws against the working class and oppressed at home.

The contingent the government has sent to Afghanistan includes a sizable number of SAS killers. While the deadly role of the imperialist military in Iraq is now internationally notorious, including the terror bombing of cities such as Fallujah and the torture of Iraqi prisoners at Abu Ghraib prison, not so well known is their role in Afghanistan. In 2001-2002 U.S., British and Australian imperialist military carried out the wanton slaughter of hundreds, if not thousands, of Afghani civilians and turned whole regions to rubble. *Time* magazine reported that Australian SAS troops were involved in a firefight in May 2002, which killed 11 Afghan civilians and wounded 16.

Now as the SAS is about to return to Afghanistan, Labor leader Kim "Bomber" Beazley enthuses that Afghanistan is "terror central" and the SAS need to "finish the job." Expressing tactical differences with the government over where he thinks Australian imperialist military

### Spartacist League Forums

**"Anti-Terror" Laws Shred Democratic Rights!**

**Down With "War on Terror" Government Repression**

- U.S./Australian Imperialist Troops Out of Iraq/Afghanistan!
- For Class Struggle Against Capitalist Rulers at Home!

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repression should take place, Beazley declared that "Hunting terrorists with the United States in Afghanistan is in Australia's national interests. Being bogged down in an Iraqi quagmire is not" (speech at Sydney Institute, 4 August). Beazley followed this by calling for a massive increase in funds to be directed towards ASIO and the Australian Federal Police.

Earlier, Labor's defence spokesman, Robert McLelland, remarked, "We would support a military involvement in Afghanistan because it has a direct relevance to our regional security" (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 7 July). This regional militarism has long been the refrain of the ALP (and the bourgeois Greens) and has increased in volume since the war on Iraq in early 2003. It demands a greater, more aggressive enforcement of Australian imperialist exploitation in Australia's "backyard." Earlier this year the ALP was thrilled that Australian imperialism was able to send its military to intervene in tsunami-stricken Aceh under cover of a humanitarian expedition. This intervention sets a dangerous precedent as well as bolstering arrogant government assertions that they have the "right" to pre-emptive military strikes in Asian countries as part of the "war on terror." We demand: Australian imperialism get out of the South Pacific and Southeast Asia! Not one person, not one cent for the Australian imperialist military!

As was amply demonstrated by the Australian/UN military occupation of East Timor, which enforced the theft of their oil and gas reserves while leaving the population the poorest in Asia, Australian imperialism is a deadly enemy of the toiling masses throughout the region. Alongside the U.S. they have a long and sordid history of counterrevolutionary terror, helping to slaughter millions of workers and peasants in Korea and Vietnam in their efforts to crush anti-capitalist social revolutions. Today the ALP's regional militarism combines with the targeting of the North Korean deformed workers state behind which lies China, the big prize for the imperialists. Thus ALP shadow foreign minister Kevin Rudd, Australian Workers Union leader Bill Shorten, the Greens, and Socialist Alliance's largest component, the Democratic Socialist Perspective, have backed the reactionary Falun Gong-backed Chinese defector Chen Yonglin. As proletarian internationalists we stand for the unconditional military defence of the deformed workers states—China, North Korea, Vietnam and Cuba—including their right to defend themselves through building and testing nuclear weapons. Key to our defence is the fight for workers political revolution to oust the Stalinist bureaucrats.

In the face of aggressive Australian imperialist military interventions in Iraq and Afghanistan we say: defend the Iraqi and Afghan peoples against U.S. and Australian military terror! U.S./Australian imperialist troops out now! Every blow struck against the savage imperialist occupation forces is objectively a blow for the international working class. But we stand opposed to the reactionary communalist violence waged by Islamic clerics in both countries and by remnants of the Ba'athist regime in Iraq. The key to defeating the occupation of Iraq and imperialist marauding in Afghanistan is class struggle at home in the imperialist centres.

Today the capitalist rulers are on a reactionary offensive. However, what they can get away with will be determined by the outcome of class and social struggle. There is certainly a palpable desire on the part of many workers to fight. On 30 June and 1 July hundreds of thousands of workers across the country stopped work to protest the government's draconian anti-union laws. With Qantas and other workers threatened with massive job losses and the gutting of public services we desperately need a class-struggle leadership of the unions. Such a leadership, built in



AFP/Marwan Naamani

**U.S. and Australian imperialist troops "secure" area in Baghdad. Down with colonial occupation of Iraq, war of terror against Iraqi peoples!**

political opposition to Laborism and linked to a revolutionary workers party, would fight to win opponents of imperialist terror abroad and constriction of civil liberties at home to the crucial understanding that the capitalist system, based on the exploitation of labour power for profit, cannot be reformed but must be overthrown in a thoroughgoing workers revolution.

We reprint below a 21 July statement issued by the Spartacist League/Britain, section of the International Communist League, following the London attacks.

**Following Criminal London Terror Bombings:  
Down With U.S./British  
Imperialist Occupation of Iraq!  
Defend Muslims Against  
Labour's Racist Witchhunt!**

Within hours of the horrific London bombings that killed over 50 people and injured hundreds, Tony Blair seized on this atrocity as a pretext to escalate the "war on terror". Let's be clear: these bombings were a criminal act of indefensible terror. Like the attack on the World Trade Center and the bombing of commuter trains in Madrid last year, the perpetrators share the same mindset as the imperialist rulers, identifying the working class and the whole population with the policies of the capitalist exploiters and oppressors. The bombs were aimed not at Bush or Blair, who were in Scotland for the G8 summit, but at the multiethnic working people of London: areas such as Edgware Road, which is overwhelmingly Arab; Aldgate, the heart of the Bangladeshi community; Kings Cross and Russell Square, through which hundreds of thousands of ordinary people of every race and ethnicity travel every day.

Bush and Blair, whose savage occupation of Iraq has cost the lives of an estimated 100,000 people, self-righteously condemned the terrorists for taking innocent lives. Behind their crocodile tears for those killed and wounded in the London bombings they seek to deflect the justified outrage and sympathy of the population for the victims and their families in order to reinforce their rule at home and abroad. As *Guardian* journalist Seumas Milne noted, even to link the bombings to Britain's role in Iraq or Afghanistan, which is obvious to millions, can get you denounced as a "traitor"; to question Blair's assertion that the bombings were an attack "on our way of life" is to be branded "an apologist for terror".

For millions around the globe, British imperialism's "way of life" has meant untold terror. Kurds in what is now Iraq, a country manufactured by British imperialism, were bombed from the air while Arabs were shelled by the British colonial overlords in 1919-20. The 1917 Balfour Declaration set the scene for carving the

state of Israel out of the homeland of the Palestinians. The bloody partition of India under the Labour government of Clement Attlee ushered in communalist slaughter on an unprecedented scale. This laid the basis for murderous religious and ethnic conflicts that persist to this day, as well as the poverty, destitution and desperation of countless people from the Indian subcontinent to the Near East to Africa.

Millions in this country took to the streets in protest against the impending imperialist slaughter of Iraq in 2003 and Britain's role in the brutal occupation of Iraq cost Blair in the last elections. In that context, London Mayor Ken Livingstone's prominence in the demonstrations protesting the war on Iraq made him an ideal candidate to lead a patriotic "unity" crusade against "terrorism". Addressing the crowd at a 14 July vigil for the victims, flanked by leaders of all the main religions, Livingstone intoned "you see the world gathered in one city, living in harmony, as an example to all". Livingstone's speech could have been written by the Socialist Workers Party (SWP), who was in the vanguard of this "unity" chorus. Their 7 July statement on the bombings proclaimed: "London is a centre of peace, the most multiracial city in Europe and a global centre of opposition to the war and occupation of Iraq and Afghanistan."

This is a shameless and grotesque denial of the reality of life for London's working class and poor, especially immigrants and minorities whose daily grind means long hours and pitiful pay while being routinely vilified by the racist press, the government and police. Since September 11, police dragnets have rounded up more than 600 foreign nationals under "anti-terrorism" legislation, the overwhelming majority of whom were later released. The handful detained, on no charges other than being "terrorist suspects", are confined in Britain's own Guantánamo—Belmarsh prison—or else

electronically monitored under "house arrest".

To be Muslim is to be suspect. No sooner had bombs ripped through the Underground than a further wave of racist attacks was unleashed. Muslim organisations received 30,000 hate-filled e-mails; mosques had windows smashed and one was firebombed. In Nottingham a Muslim man, Kamal Raza Butt, was murdered by a gang who shouted "Taliban" before beating him to death. In London, the putative "city of peace", the fascist BNP put out a leaflet with a picture of the bombed bus, declaring that people should now "start listening to the BNP". Muslims fear an even more severe racist backlash now that the police say the bombings were supposedly carried out by British Muslims.

The government is planning more round-ups, more deportations and more sweeping police-state measures. A range of new offences will be created for what are essentially "thought crimes", such as "acts preparatory to terrorism", which might mean visiting "terrorist" websites; "indirect incitement", which includes "glorifying the acts of suicide bombers" as well as "attacking the values of the West"! While aimed most immediately at Muslims, the "war on terror" is designed to strengthen the capitalist state's machinery of repression, to be imposed with a vengeance against anyone the government perceives as an opponent as most recently demonstrated by the mass arrests outside the G8 summit. But the ultimate target is the multiethnic working class.

Today, Blair and Livingstone have the audacity to salute the heroism of the Tube workers, firefighters, ambulance drivers and others who put their bodies on the line to help the victims of the bombings. But, for years the government has savaged the living, working and safety conditions for these and other workers. And when the unions have fought back, like the firefighters did on the eve of the Iraq war, they were branded the "enemy within" and threatened with the full force of capitalist state repression. Last summer, Livingstone—the boss of transport workers in the capital—called on London Underground workers to scab on their own strike. And greed for profit and the policies of the government pose the biggest threat to the lives of passengers. The 1987 Kings Cross fire, the 1999 Paddington rail crash and other rail disasters have claimed far more lives than any terrorists. Now, the government is trying to scrap the legislation—introduced after the inferno in Kings Cross took 31 lives—which mandated stricter fire regulations!

**For Class Unity of the  
Multiethnic Working Class!**

It is a sign of the times that we have to point out today that London is a class-divided city, not to mention the seat of power of the blood-soaked British ruling

*continued on page 9*

**Just Out in Chinese!**

Stalinism—Gravedigger of the Revolution  
**How the Soviet Workers State  
Was Strangled**

For Socialist Revolution to Sweep Away  
Yeltsin Counterrevolution!

**For Central Planning Through  
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Down With U.S./Japan  
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**Defend the Chinese and North  
Korean Deformed Workers States!**

Joint Statement of the Spartacist Group Japan  
and Spartacist League/U.S., 13 March 2005

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## Social Forum...

(continued from page 3)

Usec—are administering the capitalist state in Brazil, slavishly abiding by the dictates of the IMF through pushing austerity on an impoverished population.

At the most recent WSF in January, Lula was roundly booed by many of the attendees who oppose his open pandering to and collaboration with the IMF and World Bank. But the truth is that Lula represents the politics and programme of the WSF on the level of state power. This is what is known as the popular front: a class-collaborationist political bloc of working-class organisations with capitalist agencies in which the politics of the working-class component of the bloc are subordinated to the politics of the bourgeoisie, to the defence of the bourgeois state and capitalism. Like Lula's government in Brazil, popular fronts are called upon by the rulers to sell austerity to the workers more effectively than the discredited bourgeois parties can.

With Lula now discredited due to his attacks on Brazilian workers and peasants, the new hero of the 2005 WSF was Venezuelan president Hugo Chávez. This was quite a turn-around because at the 2003 WSF, while he was fighting the attempts of the US government to overthrow him, he was not invited and not given an official space when he turned up anyway. Chávez's popularity among the oppressed in Venezuela comes from the fact he has used the oil revenues to introduce reforms that have benefited the poor, and he is not seen as a lackey of the US. But these are not even basic structural reforms, much less a social revolution, and are subject to the fluctuations of world oil prices.

Chávez is a bourgeois nationalist who rules for capitalism in Venezuela. Nationalist populism and economic neoliberalism are merely alternative policies of the rule of the same capitalist class. It is a fact that Chávez is reviled by many of the big landowners and capitalists in Venezuela as well as the neocons in the Bush administration, who in April 2002 backed a military coup against him. But more rational representatives of imperialism see Chávez, with his popular appeal, as a man who can be trusted to protect their investments. Chávez's defeat of the 2004 recall referendum against him was welcomed as a guarantor of "stability" by such mouthpieces of imperialism as the *Financial Times* and the *New York Times*. As we wrote in *Workers Vanguard* no 831, 3 September 2004:

"The immediate perspective that is urgently posed is not only to oppose U.S. imperialist incursions into Venezuela and elsewhere, but to fight to shatter the support of the workers movement to either

Chávez or the opposition, and to forge a revolutionary internationalist workers party to lead the working class to power. This requires an intransigent fight against nationalism in Venezuela, which obscures class divisions in the country. Only the victorious struggle for working-class rule, i.e., socialist revolution throughout the Americas, will ensure land to the landless and enable the oil workers and other proletarians to enjoy the wealth created by their labor."

In presenting bourgeois nationalists like Chávez as fighters against "globalisation", the Social Forums provide a service against the fight for socialist revolution, binding the working class to their "own" national capitalist class. In fact the reason why the World Social Forums have all been hosted in "Third World" countries such as Brazil and India has been to mask the class antagonism between the working



Left: Brazilian cops attack landless workers movement (MST) protesters in Brasilia, 17 May. Right: Lula, head of Brazilian popular-front government, speaking at World Social Forum in Porto Alegre earlier this year.

class of these countries and their native bourgeois exploiters. The message has been that the bourgeoisie of the "Global South" can be relied upon to join with "the people" and fight against "globalisation". But the main concern of the capitalists of the "Third World" is to defend their profits, for which they are dependent on the imperialists and require the maximum exploitation of the working class.

With the same goal of binding the exploited to their exploiters, the ESF pushes the illusion of a humane "Social Europe" under capitalism, contrasting it to the "neoliberal" model represented by the US and Britain. It is the promotion of this vision of a "Social Europe" that has attracted to the ESF the pro-capitalist trade union leaders as well as social-democratic politicians across the continent. The political perspective of the European Confederation of Trade Unions was expressed by its general secretary at the 2000 Nice EU Summit protests: "There needs to be the incorporation of

the trade unions and NGOs into the decision-making structures in Brussels.... We agree that Europe must become more competitive, yes. But the new Europe must also contain a dignified quality of life for all its citizens" (quoted in "The Economics and Politics of the World Social Forum"). Becoming "more competitive" means extracting greater profits from the sweat and toil of the working class. The bureaucrats of the British Trades Union Congress (TUC) endorsed the 2004 London ESF and used it as an opportunity to provide a platform for the Iraqi Federation of Trade Unions (IFTU) Sobhi Al-Mashadani, a stooge of the imperialists' stooge government in Iraq. This followed the Labour Party conference where, at the behest of the union bureaucrats, another IFTU representative,

permanent delegate-based, elected, coordinating bodies that can prepare the way for a structured Congress in which organisational and policy proposals can be debated out, amended and adopted".

Left out of Workers Power's equation is any political fight in opposition to the whole purpose of these Social Forums, which are premised on the *maintenance* of the capitalist system, merely trying to give it a more "democratic" and "humanitarian" face lift. But even Workers Power is forced to admit that these Assemblies lack a conception of the "capitalist system as the enemy", "the working class as the force" and "socialism as the only possible basis for the 'other world' it aims to build" (*Workers Power*, March 2005).

The reality of class-collaborationism was starkly brought home at the first ESF in Florence in 2002. The L5I gushed: "The sheer intoxication of being 'tous ensemble' (all together) meant that even dyed-in-the-wool reformists spoke like revolutionary firebrands. Everyone was carried forward too by the urgency of doing everything possible to stop George Bush's war on Iraq." "Everything possible" included an explicit appeal to Europe's imperialist rulers to oppose US plans to invade Iraq, signed by a gamut of the European left including the SWP, Workers Power and Revolution at a Brussels meeting preparatory to the Florence ESF. It said: "We call on all the European heads of state to publicly stand against this war, whether it has UN backing or not, and to demand that George Bush abandon his war plans" (*Liberazione*, 13 September 2002). This wretched appeal to the "peace-loving" European capitalist rulers only serves to bind the exploited to their exploiters.

The prime movers behind the Florence ESF were mass Italian reformist parties such as Rifondazione comunista (RC) and Democratic Left (DS). In the 1990s, DS formed part of the "Olive Tree" coalition government that administered anti-immigrant terror and severe attacks on the working class on behalf of Italian imperialism. Until late 1998, RC formed a tacit coalition with DS. The ESF provides these consummate popular frontists with a cheap way to rebuild support so that they can return to government. Likewise the Paris ESF was organised by the Communist Party (PCF) and Alain Krivine's pseudo-Trotskyist Ligue communiste révolutionnaire (LCR). Today in France, where Chirac's government is totally discredited with the vote against the EU constitutional treaty, these same forces are working feverishly to put together a new class-collaborationist alliance hoping to take the reins of government. That means implementing the attacks on welfare as well as the racist "war on terror".

### The Popular Front: Not a Tactic But the Greatest Crime

Breaking the working class and radical youth from the idea that they can negotiate a common progressive future with representatives of the capitalist ruling class responsible for exploitation, imperialist war, racism and women's and sexual oppression, is the basic task of revolutionary Marxists. As the producers of capitalist society's wealth, and the bourgeoisie's profits, the working class is the

Abdullah Muhsin, backed the imperialist occupation by helping to ensure the defeat of a motion calling for early withdrawal of British troops from Iraq.

### Workers Power Induced By Its Own Hypnosis

In its pamphlet *Anti-Capitalism: Summit Sieges and Social Forums* (2005), Workers Power's League for the Fifth International (L5I) poses as a left critic of WSF organisers like Bernard Cassen and Susan George of ATTAC, an organisation founded to campaign for a tax on international financial transactions and against "neoliberalism". Despite the fact that its offices are staffed by French Communist Party and Usec supporters, ATTAC does not pretend to oppose capitalism. It is a thoroughly bourgeois organisation which boasted of its close ties to the Lionel Jospin popular-front government. Yet regarding Cassen and George, the L5I argues: "We don't need to arrange any artificial split from them. But neither do we need to fear a split with them. If we go forward determinedly, they will desert at once." By an "artificial split", the L5I means a *split along class lines*. The L5I is not opposed to class collaboration; it simply wants a more militant popular front.

Indeed, the crackpot conception of the L5I, Workers Power, and its youth group Revolution, is that they can build not only a "movement" but even a "revolutionary" party out of these cross-class, state-funded alliances: "the anticapitalist movement, the workers' movement, the movements of the racially and nationally oppressed, youth, women, all must be brought together to create a new International—a world party of socialist revolution" (*Anti-Capitalism: Summit Sieges and Social Forums*). While crying foul against right-wing bureaucratic dominance, Workers Power seeks to gain "democratic structures" within the Social Forums to engineer the movement's transformation. It urges the utilisation of "initiatives like the Assembly of Social Movements to propose

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AUSTRALASIAN SPARTACIST

## Young Spartacus

only agent with the social power and objective interest to overthrow the capitalist system and to shatter its state. This requires socialist revolution to replace the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie with a workers state that will defend and administer a collectivised, planned economy. On an international scale, this would lay the basis to eradicate scarcity and produce for the needs of the entire human race. The only instrument that can organise the proletarian struggle for the overthrow of capitalism is a revolutionary vanguard party.

This is counterposed to the class-collaborationism of the Social Forums. Tailored to the sentiments of activists who are sick of parliamentary politics and parties, the Social Forums are popular fronts that promote the myth that a "people's alliance" with supposedly "progressive" capitalists can end the ravages of imperialism. The popular front (or "People's Front") was the weapon of choice used by the Stalinists in the 1930s for the purpose of preventing workers revolution. Trotsky vehemently opposed the popular front and relentlessly warned of its dire consequences for the working class. As then-Trotskyist leader James Burnham pointed out in his 1937 pamphlet, "The People's Front, the New Betrayal":

"For the proletariat, through its parties, to give up its own independent program means to give up its independent functioning as a class.... By accepting the program of the People's Front, it thereby accepts the aims of another section of society; it accepts the aim of the defense of capitalism when all history demonstrates that the interests of the proletariat can be served only by the overthrow of capitalism."

The popular front has often had bloody repercussions for the working class and oppressed. A classic example is that of Chile in 1973, where Salvador Allende and his fellow reformists led the revolutionary-minded working class into a coalition government with the capitalists. Allende vowed not to challenge the capitalist order or the state; he put an end to peasants seizing land and workers seizing factories. Aided by US imperialism the Chilean bourgeoisie then turned to General Augusto Pinochet to attack the working class and its leaders (including Allende), imposing a savage military dictatorship at the cost of 30,000 lives.

### From Seattle to Social Forums

Hoping to appeal to militant youth who despise the Social Forums as endless talk shops, the LSI pleads for a return to the street demonstrations of Seattle and Genoa. Its pamphlet proclaims that "For five years our movement has besieged the



Peter Macdiarmid

Ken Livingstone—patron of London ESF, cheerleader for cop violence against anti-capitalist youth at May Day 2000 (left).

summits of the rich and the powerful.... It must take to the streets again, and show through mass direct action its intent; to build a world without classes, oppression, racism, war and imperialism." But the politics of the WSF is an extension of, not counterposed to, the politics of Seattle. While attracting many youth who oppose the impact of capitalism internationally, the political shots at Seattle were called by the social democrats and trade-union bureaucrats whose anti-Communist tirades against China echo the interests of the imperialist rulers whose aim is the restoration of the system of capitalist exploitation to the Chinese deformed workers state. "Direct action" protest based on pro-imperialist, popular-front politics is just "militant" class collaborationism.

The backdrop to the proliferation of Social Forums is the counterrevolution in the former USSR and the bourgeoisie's ideological campaign that "communism is dead". Typical of the regression of consciousness brought about by the destruction of the Soviet Union is the idea, prevalent among young leftists, that the working class is irrelevant as the agency for social change, or simply one more victim of oppression. Meanwhile union bureaucrats now justify betrayals of workers' struggles by arguing that "globalisation" makes class struggle ineffective because the capitalists can easily move production to low wage economies in Asia or Eastern Europe. While there have been certain *quantitative* changes in the world economy in recent decades,

"globalisation" is not a *qualitatively* new phenomenon. The fact that the capitalist market economy is "global", that banks and corporations seek out those (low wage) countries where they can get the highest return, and the internationalisation of finance capital, was explained by VI Lenin nearly 90 years ago:

"Imperialism is capitalism at that stage of development at which the dominance of monopolies and finance capital is established; in which the export of capital has acquired pronounced importance; in which the division of the world among the international trusts has begun, in which the division of all territories of the globe among the biggest capitalist powers has been completed."

—Imperialism, *The Highest Stage of Capitalism*

Poverty, disease, exploitation and war are not aberrations in the capitalist system but are inherent within its workings. Only through the overthrow of capitalism can the productive forces be developed to provide a decent standard of living for all of humanity.

In the face of an international witch hunt against the "direct action" anarchists of the Black Bloc, following the police killing of leftist protester Carlo Giuliani in Genoa in 2001, the bulk of the social-democratic left in the anti-globalisation movement joined in violence-baiting and cop-baiting the Black Bloc. The ICL stood out for our forthright defence of the Black Bloc against the capitalist state and its lackeys. At the same time, we stressed:

"The question before the huge numbers of young radicals who have been drawn to the 'anti-globalization' protests of

recent years is: how do you change the world? While the protests have succeeded in forcing the imperialists to schedule future meetings in isolated backwaters, this does nothing to impede the workings of the capitalist system. To do away with imperialist exploitation requires a political mobilization of the proletariat in a thoroughgoing socialist revolution....

"What's needed is a new, revolutionary leadership of the working class, a tribune of the people and fighter on behalf of all the oppressed. It is necessary to break with the class-collaborationist politics pushed by those who, in the name of a 'lesser evil,' subordinate the vital interests of the proletariat to those of its capitalist exploiters and oppressors. It's necessary to forge a revolutionary workers party that fights to set up a workers government through socialist revolution against the entire capitalist system."

—"Blood and Bullets in Genoa",  
*Workers Vanguard* no 762,  
3 August 2001

We Marxists of the Spartacus Youth Group and International Communist League understand that the fight for the independence of the working class is the precondition for the emancipation of humanity through socialist revolution. Our attitude to the Social Forums, as with any other popular front, is to oppose them through intervening with a sharp characterisation and explanation of this deception in a bid to win those that genuinely want to fight oppression and exploitation to an internationalist, revolutionary, proletarian programme. We are proud communists and refuse to be lackeys of the social democrats, trade-union bureaucrats and their capitalist masters. If you do too—join us! ■

## Aboriginal...

(continued from page 12)

Block became intense as developers and landlords increased their efforts to gain control of the valuable land. Residents told me children kidnapped by police were beaten and left naked in distant suburbs or taken to Alexandria Park and terrorised as cops played Russian roulette.

### For a Class-Struggle Fight for Aboriginal Rights

The oppressed and marginalised Aboriginal people should not be left to fight alone against racist state terror! We seek to mobilise the social power of the integrated, organised labour movement, *independent of the capitalist state*, to consistently champion Aboriginal rights. We say there should be union/black/minority mobilisations to defend the heroic Aboriginal militants of Redfern and Palm. Such actions would demand:

Free all the Redfern and Palm prisoners now, including those imprisoned on remand or on crippling bail conditions! Drop all the charges!

Following the events in Redfern, while the newspapers were full of racist hysteria, we produced and distributed our leaflet "Solidarise with Militant Aboriginal Youth Against Racist Cop Terror! Defend Redfern Aborigines—Mobilise Union Power!" We also held forums in defence of the militants. In Melbourne we had to wage a fight to hold our meeting at Trades Hall. At the behest of the Police Association, grotesquely an "affiliate" to the Victorian Trades Hall, the then-Victorian Trades Hall Council (VTHC) Secretary, Leigh Hubbard, ordered Trades Hall to cancel our room bookings.

We put out a statement against the cop attempts to silence our defence of Aboriginal militants and took the issue to the left and workers movement. In particular we sought out union officials who had earlier walked out of a VTHC meet-

ing in protest over an ACTU-brokered motion condemning union support for so-called "criminal" and "violent" behaviour. These unionists correctly saw the ACTU motion as an attempt to strangle defence of union activists such as Craig Johnston, who was jailed for defending striking workers. We pointed out that it is the same police who assault Aborigines who attack workers' picket lines, like at the Morris McMahon factory at Arncliffe last year, and made the point that cops and screws, whose job is to enforce capitalist repression, have no place in the workers movement. The fight to make the unions weapons of struggle will include driving the agents of the state out of the workers movement.

To their credit these officials responded to our fight against the sinister police provocations and pressure was successfully brought to bear on the VTHC leaders. In winning back our room, we beat back a concerted campaign by right-wing labour "leaders" in alliance with the cops

and successfully asserted the right of socialists and all others who would defend Aborigines to hold our public events. It was a victory not only for Aboriginal people but for the working class as a whole. As we said in our leaflet, the interests of Aborigines, immigrants, minorities and those of the working people will go forward together or they will fall back separately. An injury to one is an injury to all! But these union leaders would only go so far. We note bitterly that such "left" Laborite union officials have not even sent statements, let alone mobilised their members, to protest the witchhunting of Redfern militants by the Carr Labor government.

Despite this, the fight for union mobilisations against racist terror is not a utopian fantasy. Some of you will be old enough to remember the killing of Aboriginal worker David Gundy in 1989. Completely innocent of any crime, Gundy was gunned down in his home by racist cops.

continued on page 8

# Aboriginal...

(continued from page 7)

In response, hundreds of construction workers downed tools and joined a protest by Aboriginal people and their supporters. The workers formed a defensive perimeter around the demo and faced off the assembled cops who would have loved nothing more than to attack the demonstrators. The social power the working class is able to wield by withdrawing its labour and stopping the bosses' profits is crucial. This is exemplified in a small way by current CFMEU construction union bans which have stalled attempts by greedy developers to take over the Aboriginal Settlement and associated housing in Chippendale.

## Some History of Union Defence of Aborigines

In fact there's an interesting and important history of defence of Aboriginal people in the New South Wales Builders Labourers Federation (NSWBLF). Some of this history is told in the Bergmanns' book, *Green Bans, Red Union*. They quote a motion from the BLF's 1965 federal conference:

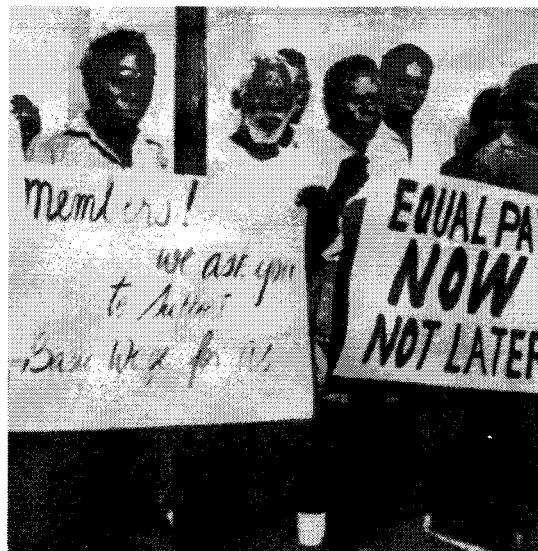
"We call on the Federal and State Governments to grant full citizenship rights to the aboriginal people. All discrimination against aborigines should be a crime in law. Further, we call on Governments to give special assistance...to compensate them for past injustices and to rapidly help them to take full advantage of citizenship.... The pertinent points that require special support from our Union are: The restoration of Aboriginal lands; granting of land titles; preservation of Aboriginal communities; development of Aboriginal industries such as co-operatives; improved living and working standards, including equal pay rates; provision of all community and social services on reserves, provision of special education facilities; legislative reforms to give Aboriginal people equal electoral rights; provision of proper housing; prevention of any further alienation of Aboriginal lands without the agreement of the people and with full compensations."

—Meredith and Verity Bergmann, *Green Bans, Red Union—Environmental Activism & the New South Wales Builders Labourers' Federation* (1998)

This was two years before Aboriginal people won the right to even be counted in the census. While the motion looks to the capitalist state to defend Aboriginal rights, and therefore remains within the framework of reformist parliamentarism, the union's willingness to champion the cause of the oppressed represented a significant break from "White Australia" Laborism. Importantly it also wasn't just words.

During the 1966 Gurindji strike at Wave Hill in the Northern Territory, fundraising efforts by the NSWBLF were strong and Aboriginal leaders from the Northern Territory were warmly welcomed on many building sites in New South Wales. This strike by Aboriginal stockmen followed the land claim by Yolngu people from Arnhem Land against the Nabalco mining company. They presented their famous bark petitions to parliament in 1963. In 1967, the BLF federal council carried another motion, which also called for "extensive government-funded schemes, administered without discrimination, 'to train the Aboriginal people in trades, professional and all other types of work, with proper homes and child recreational facilities being made available'."

In 1973 the BLF collected money from builders labourers in support of 2,000 striking cotton chippers, mostly black, in Wee Waa in outback New South Wales. They earned a flat rate of \$46 per week for a ten-hour workday in appalling conditions. Arthur Murray, an Indigenous worker, was one of the strike leaders. He and his family were later punished beyond endurance by the killing of his son Eddie at police hands in Wee Waa prison in 1981. No charge was laid against the cops. In their long search for



Left: Aboriginal stockmen fight for equal wages in 1960s. Right: Captain Major, Aboriginal leader of Newcastle Waters strike addresses building workers in Sydney 1967.

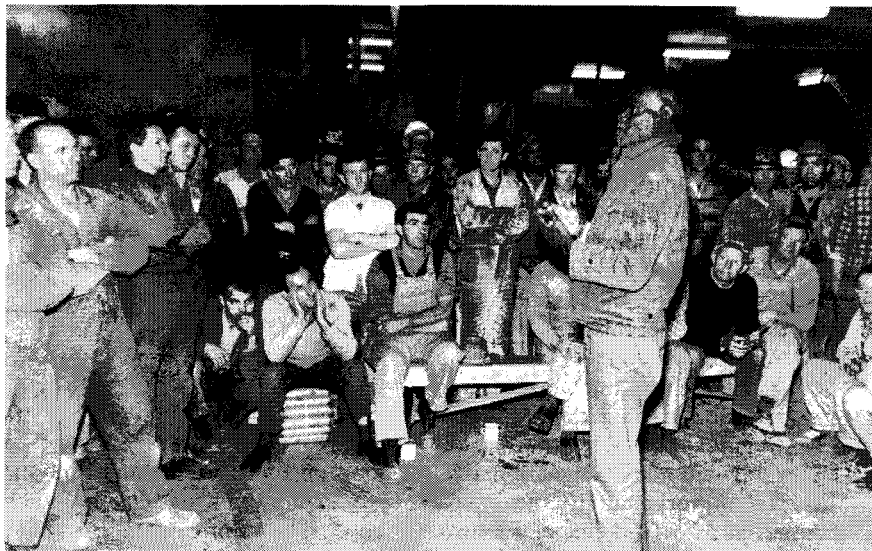
justice, Eddie Murray's remains were exhumed in the 1990s. But the whitewash of his killing remained in spite of this painful act by his family.

## Union Muscle Built The Block

The earlier solidarity by the BLF with Aboriginal struggles laid the basis for union action in Redfern in late 1972. In response to a request from Aboriginal residents the BLF and Plumbers' Union put a black ban on work on Aboriginal housing targeted for demolition and re-development in the area now known as The Block. Union support also extended to houses in nearby Chippendale, which were occupied by Aborigines. This union action was key to the success of Aboriginal resistance to the developers and was a powerful example of working-class defence of Aboriginal people. Early the next year the Whitlam Labor government felt compelled to buy the houses and grant the area to the black community, thus also making possible one of the first successful Aboriginal land rights claims.

But later, in the 1980s, the federal ALP government of Bob Hawke, backed by the Victorian State Labor government of John Cain, smashed the BLF in the service of capitalist austerity. Despite a strong desire on the part of building workers to fight, the BLF leadership pushed a defeatist strategy in the face of Labor's attacks and refused to mobilise for the necessary industry-wide strikes and mass pickets. They isolated union militants while attempting to stop the ALP's union-busting deregistration through court injunctions. The smashing of the BLF, and later the pilots' union, were signatures of the Hawke/Keating years, as was the horrendous escalation of killings of Aborigines in police lockups and on the streets.

But getting back to the 1970s. The Aboriginal-run Community Housing Scheme, which was set up on The Block provided low-rental accommodation. Aboriginal builders labourers were among the workers employed on construction and renovation work including a gym and cultural centre, a preschool and a health clinic. An elected co-op committee managed the whole project and a corner store provided cheap food. Of course the state and landlords have tried to destroy The Block ever since. Its residents have lived under constant police surveillance, including today from the nearby high-rise TNT Towers. Last November, the Carr Labor government announced that at least seven floors of the towers had been "secured" and were being used for "police purposes." Meanwhile many houses have been demolished and residents driven out. If you want proof that reforms wrested from the bosses' tight fists aren't enough, then The Block's it! The deep inequality of this society cannot be redressed through reforms because you cannot have a radical redistribution of wealth in a system



based on private ownership of the means of production.

To construct a different type of society, where decent jobs, free quality education, healthcare, decent housing, good public transport are provided for all, requires a proletarian revolution and the establishment of a planned collectivised economy. Vital to politically arming the working masses to be able to take on the racist capitalist rulers and win, is the fight for uncompromising working-class defence of the Aboriginal people. Mobilised around a revolutionary program, proletarian-centred actions would include the struggle to enforce equal access to public and private amenities. They would demand jobs for all and equal wages, and for massive health, housing and education programs to begin to redress the dispossession and oppression of Aboriginal people.

## No Reliance on the Capitalist State

The Redfern militants who didn't want a cop invasion of The Block knew full well what it meant when the police mobilise. They had every right to defend themselves and showed enormous courage

reformists of Socialist Alliance joined the calls for an inquiry into his death. This is bullshit! Such appeals foster illusions in the main force for anti-working-class racist oppression—the capitalist state—that at its core consists of the cops, military, courts and prisons. This society is divided into two main hostile classes with counterposed interests: workers who must sell their labour power to survive and the property owning capitalists to whom their labour power must be sold. The capitalist state was created and exists to enforce the rule of the tiny minority of capitalists through the exploitation and subjugation of the majority. Thus it follows that any inquiry set up by the state to investigate itself can only serve the interests of the capitalists against the working class and oppressed.

There have been different variations on appealing to the state. In Brisbane on 1 December some of the Murri community put forward a call for the United Nations to send an investigative team to examine evidence at Palm Island. But the UN is a den of imperialist thieves and their victims and will not help Aboriginal people. For example, under the UN in 1993, U.S. helicopter gunships, supposedly in Somalia to



Letty Scott, still courageously fighting for justice for her husband Douglas, who was killed in Darwin prison 20 years ago. Whitewash coronial inquiry and Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody exonerated prison screws.

and tenacity in doing so, against the cop assault. What is needed is working-class support independent of the capitalist state, not appeals to the state to investigate its own atrocities. This leads nowhere but to whitewashes and cover-ups. For instance, in response to the escalation of state killings of Aborigines in the 1980s under federal Labor, the reformist left along with bourgeois liberals campaigned for a Royal Commission into black deaths in custody. We warned against this at the time and sure enough in all 99 cases that came before the Commission, the cops were exonerated.

After the killing of TJ last year, the

provide aid, massacred hundreds of black people in the capital Mogadishu.

A leftist group, the Freedom Socialist Party, has called for civilian review of the cops. Such a call pushes the deadly illusion that the police, the armed fist of the capitalist state, can be directed by the community to serve the interests of workers and the oppressed. It can only serve to legitimise the bourgeois state. Likewise, government-sponsored community policing of areas like The Block would be used to cover for racist repression and is but another means by which some Aborigines become complicit in the oppression of

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# Repression...

(continued from page 5)

class. Despite Britain's industrial decline, the City is still a hub for international capital. Share prices tumbled the day of the bombs, which in its own way shows that the workforce in the Underground and buses has tremendous social power—the City banks and stock exchange are dependent on the transport system. It is this social power that must be brought to bear in a class-struggle fight in defence of immigrants, minorities and the unions themselves against the racist “war on terror”. As revolutionary internationalists we took a side in the war, calling for defence of Iraq, without giving any political support to the Saddam Hussein regime. So too must the proletariat be mobilised in defence of the Iraqi peoples against the savage British and US occupation forces through class struggle against the British imperialist rulers at home! **ALL US/British troops out of Iraq now! Down with the racist “war on terror”! Full citizenship rights for all immigrants! No deportations! For trade union/minority mobilisations against fascist terror!**

We vehemently oppose the appeals for the “unity” of all classes, which only serves to strengthen the hand of the imperialist rulers by binding the working class and oppressed to their very exploiters and oppressors. Not so the Socialist Party which blatantly appeals to mobilise the proletariat behind the so-called “war on terror”, calling on the unions and the Stop the War Coalition to organise a mass protest on the slogan “no to terrorism, no to war”. This dovetails with the politics of “anti-war” Labour MPs like Alice Mahon who opposes Blair's invasion of Iraq, from the standpoint that it is not in the best interests of British imperialism at present, while arguing that it's a diversion from the “war on terror” at home.

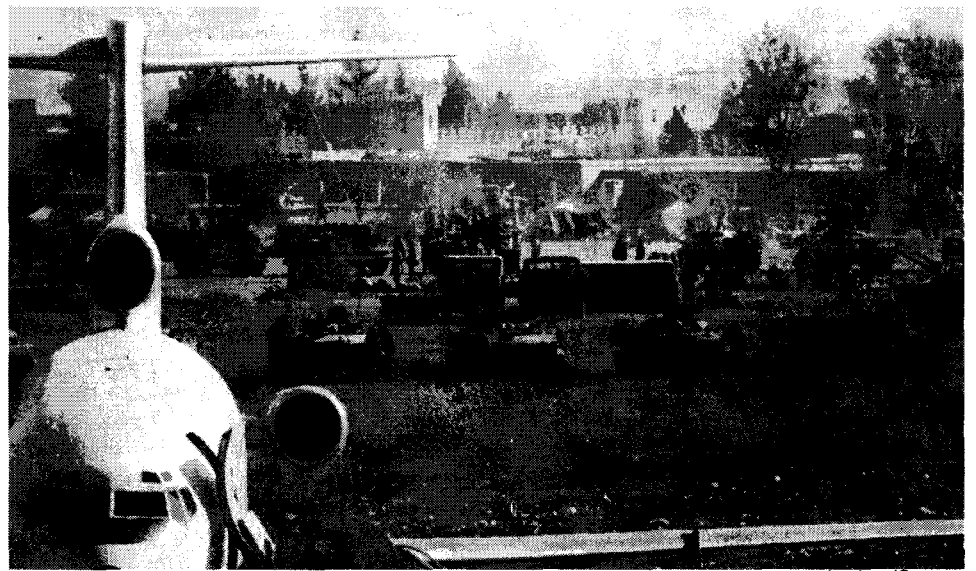
As Marxists we oppose terrorism as a strategy, even when it derives from real, if misguided, anti-imperialist impulses and targets genuine institutions of state repression—which the London bombing clearly did not. Substituting individual acts against the symbols of imperialist exploitation and oppression is directly counterposed to the task of mobilising the working class for the revolutionary overthrow of the capitalist system. But the Socialist Party's declared opposition to “terrorism” is nothing more than an appeal to mobilise the proletariat behind the government's “war on terror”. Placing an equals sign between the imperialist powers and the Islamic terrorists, the Socialist Party is in fact capitulating to British and US imperialism, who constitute the mightiest and most dangerous terrorist forces on this planet. This is not particularly surprising coming from an organisation which prides itself on *not* calling for British troops out of Northern Ireland now—a call which is the most elementary act of opposition to British imperialism.

Class independence of the working class is the precondition for any genuine socialist opposition to imperialism—both against imperialist war and attacks on the working class and minorities at home. But the whole premise of the SWP-built anti-war protests is based on peddling another version of “national unity”—between the working class and oppressed who oppose the occupation of Iraq, and a more “rational” wing of the ruling class that believes British imperialism's interests are being damaged by acting simply as a “pillion passenger” behind the Bush White House. For the reformist SWP, the solution lies not in the overthrow of capitalism but in persuading the British government to break with Bush. An SWP statement (13 July) argues: “There has to be a dramatic reverse in policy, at home and abroad. Pulling the troops out of Iraq

will begin to drain the swamp of bitterness that nurtures terrorism”, adding that “the majority of people in the US have turned against Bush's war—we must intensify the pressure on the British government to break from him as well.”

It is ludicrous to suggest that Britain can somehow “opt out” of the world system of imperialism, short of workers revolution and the establishment of a workers state that expropriates the capitalist class. It is downright grotesque to blame the alliance with the US for British imperialism's brutality. Although today reduced to a decrepit junior partner of the US, when they did have the economic and military clout the British imperialists wrote the book on racist divide-and-rule and ruthless exploitation of their colonial “subjects”. The “spirit of the Blitz” in World War II that has been invoked almost daily since the terrorist bombings in London is a persistent Labourite myth that all classes were united behind King and country in a common defence of British “democracy”. Far from a war for “democracy”, for the British imperialists this was a scramble to protect their imperialist “interests”—among which India was a prized possession. Thus they denied India its right to independence and even caused a famine in Bengal, while the Labour Party played a vital role in whipping up patriotic “unity” at home. And contrary to the main myth propagated about the “democratic” allies, it was the Soviet Red Army that smashed Hitler's fascism, at a cost of well over 20 million Soviet citizens' lives.

Moreover, the British imperialists hardly need any lessons from the Ameri-



Lochon/Gamma

**Soviet forces at Kabul airport, December 1979. Trotskyists hailed Red Army intervention in Afghanistan against Islamic reactionaries backed by U.S., British and Australian imperialism.**

tionaries, including Bin Laden, for a *jihād* in Afghanistan against the Soviet Union. The SWP, the Socialist Party and most of the so-called socialist left were in the camp of the imperialists against the USSR. We hailed the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan, noting that this was a progressive act by the Stalinist bureaucracy that offered the possibility of extending the gains of the 1917 Russian Revolution to the Afghan peoples, particularly to the hideously oppressed women. Following counterrevolution in the Soviet Union, when imperialist funding to the Islamists dried up, the latter turned on their erstwhile backers, most dramatically in the

outlook: it parallels that of Christian fundamentalists who bomb abortion clinics in the US; the Protestant bigots who justify “ethnic cleansing” against Catholics in Northern Ireland, and the Zionists who seek to “cleanse” the Palestinians from what they deem to be the Jewish “holy land”. Terrorist attacks in the name of nationalist or religious forces tend to be aimed at the indiscriminate slaughter of as many of the ordinary, multiethnic working-class people as possible. It is unlikely you would find the remotest representative of the upper classes of this country on the London Underground or buses. Moreover, two of the bombings were in heavily Muslim areas. So whoever perpetrated these attacks, the message can only be that Muslims should go back to their “own” countries.

In Britain Islamic fundamentalism has grown, nurtured by international factors as well as the prevalence of Islamophobia and economic decline. In 2001, Asian youth in Oldham, Bradford and Leeds had to fight pitched battles to defend their homes from fascists who, backed by the police, laid siege to neighbourhoods. In these former textile towns, the factories once provided a degree of racial integration, but economic decline and factory closures have increased the polarisation between rich and poor and led to a level of racial segregation which has been compared to the American South before the civil rights movement.

For the imperialist rulers “Islamic terrorism” has become the surrogate for the war against “Godless communism”, the new enemy against which they seek to rally the population in support of imperialist terror abroad and increased state repression at home. Our purpose is to fight to infuse the working class with the consciousness that it has the class interests and the social power to eradicate the system of capitalist imperialism. The 1984-85 British miners strike, among whose most stalwart supporters were blacks and Asians, gave a palpable sense of how class struggle can unite all of the oppressed behind the power of the proletariat. We seek to forge a multiethnic revolutionary workers party which can take this power forward to victory through proletarian socialist revolution which alone can lay the material basis for ending racism, oppression, exploitation and war. ■



Workers Vanguard

**Oakland, California, 9 February 2002: Labour-centred mobilisation initiated by Bay Area Labor Black League and Partisan Defense Committee, both associated with Spartacist League. Unionists, immigrants and blacks rallied against “anti-terror” national unity, broke down divisions amongst oppressed.**

cans on police-state repression, having inflicted it for many years on the oppressed Catholics in Northern Ireland. Similar to today's anti-Muslim hysteria, “anti-terrorism” campaigns of the 1970s led to outrageous frame-ups of innocent people such as the Birmingham Six, the Maguire Seven and the Guildford Four, who were wrongly convicted in a wave of anti-Irish hysteria following civilian bombing atrocities in British city centres.

## Imperialist Hypocrisy and Islamic Fundamentalism

The British press is in a lather about the fact that this “democratic” country could produce “home grown” Islamic terrorists. Ken Livingstone stated the obvious when he said: “I suspect the real problem was that we funded these people as long as they were killing Russians. We gave no thought to the fact that when they stopped killing Russians they might start killing us” (*Daily Telegraph*, 20 July). For “we”, read the British imperialists who, together with the US and the Pakistan authorities, pulled off the largest covert operation in the CIA's history throughout the 1980s to boost the most extreme Islamic reac-

criminal attack on the World Trade Center. Counterrevolution in the former Soviet Union gave an enormous boost to the forces of religious reaction around the globe, while also leading to a “one superpower world” in which US imperialism and its allies feel they have free rein to ravage the semi-colonial world.

The perpetrators of acts such as the London bombing, whoever they may be, demonstrate the mindset typical of religious zealots who believe they have a God-given right to exterminate all non-believers. Islam has no monopoly on this

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# Aboriginal...

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their own people. The examples of this are numerous: the Native Police who hunted down Aboriginal people during the killing times (which in some states lasted into the 1930s) or the mob on Howard's National Indigenous Council or Mick Mundine who has welcomed cop raids on The Block. The state cannot be reformed, but must be dismantled through victorious workers revolution.

## Make the Unions Weapons of Struggle!

The key obstacle to unleashing the power of the integrated working class in defence of themselves and all the oppressed is the current pro-capitalist Laborite leadership of the unions. These misleaders subordinate workers to the bosses' capitalist state including by pushing racism and nationalism to the ranks, often peddling poisonous anti-Asian protectionism with the lie of a "partnership" between workers and their bosses in Australia. The ruling class uses racism to divide and paralyse the working class, to kill effective worker struggle against capitalist rule.

A vivid example of the pernicious role of the union bureaucrats was their response to the 19 August 1996 storming of parliament house in Canberra. Workers at this demonstration came to the

to mobilise organised labour in defence of the especially oppressed people in the population, such as Aborigines.

## Red History in the Deep North

In April, as part of the SL's annual subscription drive, a team including myself made a trip to Townsville in Northern Queensland, less than one hundred kilometres from Palm Island. Townsville, which has a population of over 100,000 in the greater area, is today a launching place and training area for the Australian military and has long been a hotbed of redneck racism and suffocating social reaction.

But it is important to know that the history of North Queensland is not one of seamless racist reaction. It also has a significant internationalist Communist and leftist history. Most of this information is from Diane Menghetti's book *The Red North*. During World War I, the ALP split over the issue of conscription. Among the Laborite anti-conscriptionists, some were pro-war (these were mostly parliamentary ALPers allied with the Catholic Church). However, the *anti-war* anti-conscriptionists included members of the International Workers of the World (IWW) who were intransigent anti-racist fighters embracing workers of all nationalities and races, and the Russian Association, which was formed by political refugees from Russian Tsarism.

Russians, who worked at smelters and meatworks in the area, dominated the Cairns chapter of the IWW, founded in



Eric Fried

**Russian cane cutters in 1916 including Russian Bolshevik supporter Alexander Zuzenko (centre) later arrested and deported from Australia following loyalist riots against revolutionaries and internationalists.**

defence of Aborigines whose contingent was attacked by police. It was a fierce protest, pushing up against the doors like human battering rams, some workers climbing in through a window, running the gauntlet of cops on the other side. They hoisted the red Soviet flag and the Aboriginal flag over the coat of arms on the roof! An exciting day.

The ACTU tops not only refused to defend their members but also joined the ensuing government violence-baiting witchhunt, dobbing in militants to the state. In doing so they acted to cut off the hand that reached out from the organised working class to the Aborigines. Such treachery laid the basis for today's silence from the union tops on defence of the Redfern and Palm Island Aboriginal militants. Along with Craig Johnston, these militants have been the most important class-war political prisoners in this country for more than a decade.

As Russian Revolutionary leader V.I. Lenin explained there can't be a successful workers revolution unless the current misleaders of the working class are exposed, discredited and ousted. Building a class-struggle leadership of the unions, which is linked to a revolutionary party, demands a sharp struggle against racist Laborism in the workers movement. A vital part of this struggle will be fighting

1915, and links were formed with Australian-born militants during the anti-conscription campaign. Some North Queensland Russians, such as F.A. Sergayeff, who became a member of the Central Committee of the Bolsheviks, returned to Russia to help build the Revolution in 1917. They regularly sent news back to Queensland supporters on the progress of the Revolution. In 1925 Russian families in the region each donated the huge sum of £50 (up to one third of their total annual income) to buy, with U.S. comrades, a tractor for a Soviet collective farm! By then two thirds of Russian families in Townsville had joined the Australian Communist Party, even though they had little English.

After WWI ended, the Russian Association joined with other left and labour organisations in a series of demonstrations in Brisbane against the imperialists' counterrevolutionary military invasion of the Soviet Union. Frequently involving several thousand people, these protests usually concluded with three cheers for the Bolsheviks and the red flag, often in the face of violent nationalist counter-demonstrations and state repression. At a demo in March 1919 people were arrested and charged with unfurling the red flag—that was a jailable offence. At least 15 people including four Russian



Michael Jones

**Canberra, 19 August 1996: Massive multiracial protest against Howard government's attacks on unions and welfare. In exemplary act, workers defended Aboriginal protesters from cop attack, leading to spectacular storming of bosses' parliament.**

nationals were imprisoned. The Russian Association's chairman was deported.

The Queensland Communist Group published Australia's first Communist newspaper in 1920. By 1923 the ALP expelled all known Communists and the newly formed Australian Communist Party had a secret membership list. When comrades visited Townsville in 1993, we sold a subscription to the son of an Aboriginal mother and a Russian Association father. Links to this red past are still living there, as is the history of racist oppression experienced by the different nationalities that worked the Queensland sugar fields during the 19th and 20th centuries.

The Chinese originally built the sugar industry, but their businesses and other property were taken from them in a period of racist hysteria at the time of the adoption of the White Australia policy. Pacific Islanders, who had been kidnapped from places like the Solomons to work as slave labour on the sugar fields, were later also expelled under the White Australia policy. Then Italians, some of them trade unionists, leftists and anti-fascist fighters, who took over working the industry were rounded up and interned in camps during WWII. These examples illustrate that oppressed Aborigines, immigrants and workers share a common enemy in the racist capitalist rulers. This remains very true today and, with the capitalist rulers jacking up racist reaction and anti-union attacks, fascist groups are increasingly emboldened.

## Fascist Terror in Townsville

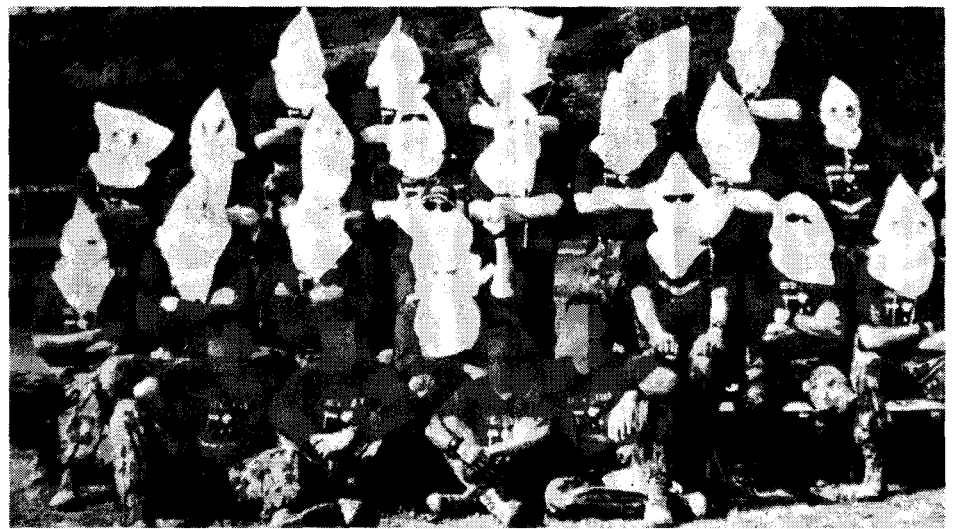
While in Townsville we went to Happy Valley, a cluster of shelters on the edge of town. A hot, dusty piece of land, poor like many Aboriginal communities, but in some ways better off than others—they

have electricity there now. I'm not sure if they have running water. There we met Dawn who's from Palm and cousin-sister to Mulrunji Doomadgee's de facto wife, now widow. While rocking and weeping, she told us about him.

Dawn took us to meet the apparent matriarch of Happy Valley. Sitting in the roofed shelter she's made home, this woman told us about the Ku Klux Klansmen who sit in cars on the road at the entrance to the settlement. They don't drive into the community any more after Happy Valley residents bravely defended themselves one night. When dogs bark at night she yells "They're here! Get up!" and the residents come out to fight.

On 4 May 2001, her 21-year-old son—two months out of jail, his first child just born—was bundled into a car by fascists. It was the last time she saw him alive. He was found sitting up "hanged" on a nearby football field. This young man liked to box and wore a single crepe bandage wrapped around his hand. His mother suspects he was strangled with it. Despite four years of demanding it, she has never been given access to the autopsy report. The young man wasn't depressed, he was happy about the birth of his baby girl. He'd stated emphatically his opposition to suicide. But the state called it suicide. The day of her son's funeral, skinheads tried to pull her into a car at the local shops. She ran into traffic to get away.

In Townsville, just as in Redfern when TJ was killed, cars are instruments of killing. Townsville youth Errol Wyles Junior was killed last year when a car was deliberately reversed over him and his friends *repeatedly*. His family are still campaigning for justice. We heard about a young woman, Yasman Rae Sturt, who



Australian

**Soldiers from Lavarack Barracks in Townsville in fascist Ku Klux Klan hoods, humiliate dark-skinned soldiers (seated). A cesspool of racist and sexist reaction, the Australian military is feared and hated by many local Aborigines.**

was probably killed the same way in 2003. These stories give a glimpse of the ongoing brutal racist reality and torture perpetrated against Aboriginal people under Australian capitalism. Some solid independently organised union defence of Aboriginal communities (like Happy Valley) to teach the fascist scum a lesson, would strike a blow not only for Aborigines but for the multiracial working class as a whole.

### Capitalist Theft and Repression: Stolen Wages and the Aboriginal Protection Acts

Yvonne Butler is an instigator and sustainer of the Stolen Wages campaign to retrieve literally hundreds of millions of dollars in unpaid wages, stolen from Aboriginal workers last century. Researcher Dr Rosalind Kidd has documented how from 1919 Aborigines on missions worked solely for rations; those not on missions had their wages taken by the government "in trust." In 1985 seven Palm Island workers began an action in the Human Rights Commission to reclaim their wages. After the Queensland government lost the case in 1996, it initially refused to pay compensation of \$7,000 to each of six workers. Then in 2000, the miserly Queensland state Labor government made \$25 million available to pay Aboriginal workers but refused to include mission workers—a major component of Queensland Aboriginal workers before the mid-70s—in the payout!

Since then the Queensland Aboriginal and Islander Legal Service Secretariat has collected testimony from over 2,000 people to act against the government for unpaid wages, misused trust funds, unpaid child endowment, workers' compensation and deceased estates. Added to this history, there are cases today where Aboriginal families are forced to pay "outstanding debts" of earlier times. It was recently reported that Aboriginal Olympic athlete Cathy Freeman's family was forced to pay a \$1,000 outstanding fee for her great grandmother's pauper's grave before they could bury a young family member in Townsville. Cathy's great grandmother worked all her life, but the minimal cost of her grave was never paid by the government "protector" who stole her wages 50 years ago. Now, grieving over the death of yet another young Indigenous woman, the family had to pay the original cost plus massive interest!

In 2002 the Beattie Labor government offered a miserable \$55.6 million as settlement for *all* claims of Aboriginal workers, with \$4,000 offered to some and \$2,000 to others. Out of 20,000 claimants, only 7,600 people—mainly those who don't expect to live much longer—have claimed this money. Yvonne, who qualified for the compensation, justly describes the government offer as an insult. While many have campaigned tirelessly and there have been some union protests, what's necessary is broad union mobilisations and strike actions to demand full reparations with interest for stolen wages, benefits and other misappropriated funds!

The SL also supports any attempts by Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders to claw back land which has been stolen from them and to get whatever financial compensation they can from the tight-fisted ruling class. But there can be no real justice under racist capitalism and neither is it possible to return to the old ways of life, not least because the vibrant pre-European culture has been irreparably damaged under centuries of systematic racist attacks. Redressing the grievances of more than two hundred years of brutal oppression is something that only a revolutionary workers state will address. As we explain in our 1998 programmatic statement, *For a Workers Republic of Australia, Part of a Socialist Asia!*, "Elementary justice—not only for the dispossessed Aboriginal people, but for all the exploited and oppressed—demands not

some limited, ultimately reversible, concessions in the bosses' courts but the *expropriation* of industry and agriculture through proletarian revolution."

Theft of land, of wages and entitlements, as well as of children, are all part of the systematic White Australia state subjugation of Aboriginal people as was the violent suppression of Aboriginal opposition. Up to 20,000 Aborigines died in direct military conflict fighting against white colonial invasion. Yvonne Butler describes the Aboriginal Protection Act—still operating in the 1970s—as Queensland's version of slavery and describes herself as a runaway slave. "We were conditioned to believe we didn't have any rights to make even the simplest decisions for ourselves," Yvonne said. "My life was controlled by police." In working as a

people have been expected to reconcile themselves to a life of relentless immiseration under the iron heel of capitalist state repression.

Today the federal government is on a heightened ideological offensive in which, obscenely, Aboriginal people are supposed to blame themselves for their oppression. The Howard Liberal/National coalition, with the help of so-called Aboriginal leaders like Noel Pearson, have been promulgating the patronising and racist myth that Aboriginal people need state intervention to combat the social pathologies that develop from systematic racist oppression and deprivation. The government is also on the warpath against Aboriginal organisations. They aim to silence even the most minimal pretence of an independent Aboriginal voice. Thus

struggle against racist oppression at home and imperialist marauding abroad. We demand: Australian imperialist troops/cops out of the Pacific, Southeast Asia and Iraq now! We stand for asylum rights for all refugees and full citizenship rights for all immigrants. For a class-struggle fight for Aboriginal rights!

### Build a Workers Party—Tribune of the People

It will take a socialist revolution to destroy capitalism and open the road to a fundamentally different kind of system. And there is no shortage of people who have a real interest in building a socialist society: students fed up with exorbitant fees; youth facing unemployment, trapped in repressive family situations, or fearful of becoming cannon fodder in imperialist war; immigrants with relatives and friends languishing in detention camps and facing deportation; disabled and injured workers denied decent healthcare; mothers unable to get childcare; women stuck in violent or unhappy marriages through economic dependence; the growing numbers of homeless people begging on the streets.

But the only power the bosses are bound to respect is that of the working class in struggle. By withdrawing their labour, the organised working class can not only push back the capitalist attacks, easing immediate survival under capitalism, they can shut the whole system down. Organised at the head of all the oppressed, the working class has the capacity and interest to take power through socialist revolution and begin to organise the building of a new society! The key to working-class revolution in this country will be to win the proletariat to consistently and forthrightly take up the defence of all the oppressed. This will require breaking workers from Laborite nationalism and loyalty to the capitalist state. As Russian revolutionary leader Lenin and his Bolsheviks proved, it requires the construction of a vanguard party, cohered around and fighting for a revolutionary, proletarian and internationalist program to lead the working class to victory.

In a small but powerful example of the kind of struggle a revolutionary party would wage, in 1993 we initiated a successful, integrated action by building and other unionists with Aborigines and students which broke a racist ban on Aborigines drinking at the Student Prince Hotel, then operating near Sydney Uni. We fight to weld the social power of the working class to the just anger of the oppressed as part of fighting for proletarian revolution to sweep away capitalism. For a workers republic of Australia, part of a socialist Asia! We fight for a communist world in which the diversity of human cultures will not be an excuse for division, contempt and violence, but a source of pleasure and enrichment. If you want that too, you should join us. ■

Indigenous people in Townsville seek to recoup stolen wages from tight-fisted Queensland state Labor government.



domestic servant, Yvonne was given \$2 a week, until she ran away in 1968. Staying away from social gatherings for years, Yvonne said "I was scared the police would find me" (*Cairns Post*, 16 April).

There were three such Queensland Acts: 1897, 1965 and 1971. They condemned most people of Aboriginal descent to be virtual prisoners on reserves or church-run missions. Those not on reserves were forbidden contact with family who were. Health, housing, employment, marriage, care of children, all were subject to the mission-keeper or reserve manager. The power to remove people to or from reserves and the stealing of wages earned were central to the Act, destroying many lives. Today, Palm Island is a classic product of the Act.

While some laws have changed, racist oppression and intense social degradation remain. Aborigines are systematically denied decent healthcare, education, housing and employment and are imprisoned at a rate far above the national average. Through various government policies—"smooth the dying pillow" (the ideology of the later killing times), "assimilation," the co-option of "self-determination" and the hoax of "reconciliation"—Aboriginal

despite its loyal service to capitalist governments ATSIC has been axed, with the backing of the ALP.

The ongoing campaign against Aborigines is also part of the government's attempts to foment white Australian "national pride" and dovetails with the current racist "war on terror" which the government is using to constrict the democratic rights of *everyone*.

Patriotic jingoism and reactionary laws serve as ideological and legislative preparation for further attacks against the working class at home, like the recent anti-union legislation, and to line up the population in support of predatory military expeditions abroad. Today the bloody Australian imperialists are part of the murderous U.S. occupation of Iraq and have headed up colonial interventions in impoverished places like East Timor and the Solomon Islands. The cruel oppression meted out to Aboriginal people at home is indicative of what the peoples of East Timor and Pacific island neocolonies like Papua New Guinea and Fiji have endured under Australian imperialism.

A fight must be waged within the workers movement to combine class-struggle opposition to attacks on workers with the



Sydney, May 1993: Students, Aborigines, unionists celebrate following Spartacist-initiated integrated union/minority/black action which broke racist ban against Aborigines at Student Prince Hotel.





## Liberals/ALP Escalate Racist Attacks

# Defend Aboriginal People— Mobilise Union Power!

The following presentation, here edited and expanded, was given by Spartacist League supporter Nel at a Sydney SL forum in defence of Palm Island and Redfern Aboriginal militants on 18 June. Subsequently, Redfern defendant Mavis Stanley was released from jail. Denied bail after her arrest, she had already spent 17 months incarcerated while awaiting trial. We also note that since this talk was given Bob Carr resigned as premier of New South Wales and was replaced by Morris Iemma.

In this talk I'm not observing the taboos against naming deceased people held by many Indigenous people in the Centre and Top End especially. This talk is full of the names of martyrs and others who have died.

The eruption in Redfern on 15 February 2004 followed a series of cop provocations after the death of 17-year-old Aboriginal youth TJ Hickey. He didn't die by accident. Residents at a Redfern public meeting reported that while being chased by police, TJ's bike was struck by a cop car, throwing him onto a steel fence where he was impaled. The cops then wrenched the youth off the fence, making him bleed badly. They searched him, reportedly pinning him to the ground with their boots. It was up to a witness to call for an ambulance. Then, after he died, cops cruised The Block where people were grieving, spewing racist epithets. By evening, when the police began forming up in military-style phalanxes in full riot gear at the end of the street, people were furious and in fear for their lives.

What followed wasn't a riot, as Carr and his police thugs say, but a determined, well-organised and heroic stand by Aboriginal youth and their supporters defending their community against racist cop attack. Over 35 people were hunted



Stuart McLean

February 24, 2004: Spartacus Youth Club supporters join protest in Redfern following police killing of TJ Hickey (right). December 9, 2004: 1,200 march in protest at cop killing of Mulrunji Doomadgee in Townsville (above).



ASP photo

## Drop the Charges! Free Palm Island and Redfern Aboriginal Militants!

down and arrested over the explosive events. Those arrested faced multiple serious charges including riot and affray. Some were hit with heavy sentences. Many were cruelly denied bail and kept in detention until their trial. This includes Mavis Stanley who is still in jail and goes to court on 18 July. The police continue to trawl the Redfern area making arrests and children are still being taken away at an alarming rate. The Stolen Generations aren't a feature of the past.

### Police Terror on Palm Island

That was February. Then last November on Palm Island, northeast of Townsville in

North Queensland, 36-year-old Mulrunji Doomadgee was savagely killed by police in the local lockup, having been arrested for singing "Who let the dogs out" in the street! Well the dogs sure did come out. It takes a lot of force to tear a person's liver in two. But that's what happened to Mulrunji within hours of his arrest. An explosion of rage and grief by the people at Palm Island followed. Hundreds torched the island's police station, police residences and courthouse—institutions of racist capitalist state repression.

The Beattie state Labor government immediately flew in 80 Tactical Response Group cops. Armed with semi-automatic

weapons and in full battle gear, they terrorised the island population, kicking down doors, making summary arrests and holding children at gunpoint. Indigenous man Lex Wotton was arrested by four carloads of police, who shot him with a taser while he stood with his hands up, guns trained on him. The cops raged through his house and many others. Two pregnant women went into labour prematurely, terrified by the police raids. We Spartacists weren't the only ones who made a comparison between the gun-wielding cops on Palm Island and the actions of the Australian imperialist troops in Iraq. Today many Aboriginal militants from Palm are under draconian vindictive bail conditions and facing severe punishment by the racist capitalist state.

State terror and harassment are also very familiar to the Redfern Aboriginal community. When I worked at a local school 10 or 15 years ago I regularly saw children from The Block who'd been traumatised by brutal raids by police, breaking down doors in the dead of night supposedly searching for "criminals." People said you had to have a receipt to prove you'd bought your kettle, otherwise it was kept as "stolen goods." In 1988 after one such raid we held a spirited demo at nearby Sydney Uni calling for "Mass Labour/Black Mobilisations to Stop Racist Terror!"

I was told cops killed a child down there during a raid in the 1990s. The toddler died after a copper stood on the child's head while rampaging through a house. Leading up to the 2000 Olympics, attempts to force Aborigines out of The

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Stephen Cooper



Sydney Morning Herald

NSW state Labor government has waged war against Aboriginal people of Redfern for years including violent police raid July 2004 (left) and demolition of Aboriginal housing on The Block.