

## Australian Military Get Out of the Persian Gulf, East Timor! Hands Off Indonesia!

# Defend Iraq Against U.S./UN/Australian Imperialist Attack!

FEBRUARY 9—On 23 January Liberal PM, John Howard, and Australian Labor Party (ALP) opposition leader, Simon Crean, farewelled the naval transport ship *HMAS Kanimbla* and 350 troops from Sydney's Garden Island. This "advance deployment" will join two Australian naval vessels already in the Persian Gulf, part of a 2,000-strong Australian force Howard has committed to war on Iraq including 150 Special Air Service (SAS) killers, a navy diving team, an "Incident Response Team" specialising in chemical and biological warfare as well as F/A 18 aircraft. While 150,000 American troops are being deployed to the Persian Gulf region, an article in the *Los Angeles Times* (26 January) reports that the U.S. "is preparing for the possible use of nuclear weapons against Iraq." The U.S. imperialists and their British, Australian and other allies are preparing a massive slaughter of the Iraqi people.

Howard has backed U.S. president George W. Bush's crazed war drive all the way. His government believes that protecting Australian imperialist pillage in the Asia-Pacific region is best served by being loyal jackals for Australia's big-brother U.S. ally and fully supporting its war plans against Iraq. But both in this country and internationally, trade unions have voted resolutions oppositional to the war drive, while large numbers of people have marched in rallies against war on Iraq. In the U.S. and Australia, university and high-school students are planning student strikes against the war for 5 March. The 18 January protests in Washington, San Francisco and other U.S. cities were the largest anti-war demonstrations in the U.S. since the Vietnam War. In Europe, hundreds of thousands have marched in the protests. The Bush administration's naked assertion of Washington's "right," without even a fig leaf of pretext or provocation, to "preemptively" attack any country perceived as challenging U.S. power and prerogatives has shocked and horrified people, and governments, around the world.



AP



no credit

U.S. troops in Kuwait (top) prepare for war. SAS special force killers (above) are among 2,000 Australian troops sent to take part in new slaughter of Iraqi people.

This is the shape of the "new world order" emerging from the restoration of capitalism in the Soviet Union. Without Soviet military might to stay its hand, U.S. imperialism has been riding roughshod over and expanding its military presence on every continent. Imperialist rivalries that were usually

subordinated to the common cause of destroying the Soviet Union have now come to the fore. The rift between Europe and the U.S. is sharper today than it has been for decades.

Some sections of the Australian capitalist class worry that unless the government pursues a "foreign policy" more

independent of the U.S., it will breed resentment, particularly in Asia, threatening lucrative investment and trade opportunities. Reflecting this fear and the widespread unpopularity of the war, the ALP, Democrats and Greens-controlled Senate passed a no-confidence motion against Howard over his handling of Iraq—the first successful censure motion against a prime minister in the Senate's 102-year history.

In his "godspeed" address to departing troops on 23 January, Crean opposed the "deployment of troops to Iraq ahead of the United Nations determining it" adding, "I do support our troops and always will." Crean merely wants the bloody racist military to have the fig-leaf cover of the UN when participating in a U.S.-led war against Iraq. Indeed, it was the Hawke Labor government that enthusiastically sent Australian forces to the first Gulf War slaughter in 1991.

In part because of their anti-war posture, the bourgeois Greens have been rapidly gaining electoral support. But the Greens say "Yes to the United Nations as the means of preventing war" (*No to war on Iraq*, undated statement by the NSW Greens). They even support UN "weapons inspectors" who are not only spies for the imperialists but are in Iraq to provide a pretext for war! The UN operates solely to perpetuate and enforce the world's domination by the major imperialist powers. Since the UN launched its starvation blockade of Iraq in 1990, which is led today by Australian naval ships, an estimated 1.7 million children have died from preventable diseases.

With or without UN backing, the war against Iraq will be a predatory war of conquest, while on the Iraqi side it will be a just war of national defence. Every victory for the imperialists in their predatory wars encourages further military adventures; every setback serves to assist the struggles of working people and oppressed throughout the world. *Down with the UN starvation blockade! What*

*continued on page 8*

## For Class Struggle Against the Capitalist Rulers at Home!

# For a Class-Struggle Fight For Aboriginal Rights!

## Racist Terror in Outback Queensland

We reprint below a letter from a reader, and our reply, coming off events in the outback Queensland (Qld) town of St George late last year. In the early hours of 3 November, 26-year-old local Aboriginal man, Patrick Cordrey, was killed—reportedly strangled—at the Australian Hotel. His family are angry about being denied information relating to his death. Meanwhile the publican, who is charged with his murder, continued to

run the pub after being granted bail. Angered over his ongoing presence in town, relatives and friends collected dozens of letters of concern from residents to present at the next court hearing. However, on 12 December, after making a two-hour bus trip to attend court, they found police had “mixed up” the dates and the hearing had taken place the previous day! That evening up to 60 people marched on the hotel in protest. Cor-

drey’s mother, Dulcie, observed: “I think the indigenous community made a statement last night” (*Courier Mail*, 14 December 2002). Although no-one was injured, at least two people have been charged with “rioting” under draconian and rarely invoked sections of the Criminal Code. One faces additional charges. If convicted, they could face life sentences. This is a racist outrage! We demand the charges against the St George protesters be dropped!

Brisbane, Qld  
18 December 2002

Comrades,

You may have heard of a riot at the town of St George, 450 km west of Brisbane, where a hotel was ransacked by Aborigines over the murder of a local Aborigine. Sorry I could not include earlier cuttings which would give more detail of this incident but the *Courier Mail* described it as a race riot. The Aborigines were particularly incensed when the publican returned to live in the town after bail.

I think this whole incident involves and highlights institutionalised and community racism. Note the sections of the Criminal Code they are charged under. A possible scenario is the two rioters receiving, if found guilty under sections

63 and 65, as long or longer sentences than the publican. Given other Appeal Court decisions here in Qld, particularly involving ethnic or other so-called low status individuals, murder could become a relatively minor offence. As in much of Australia there is anti-crime hysteria and the state Labor government is more than willing to go along with it.

I will be following this St George incident with considerable interest in the future. Of course the St George riot was a plebeian but understandable outburst of anger from a very repressed and unorganised minority.

Regards,  
David B.

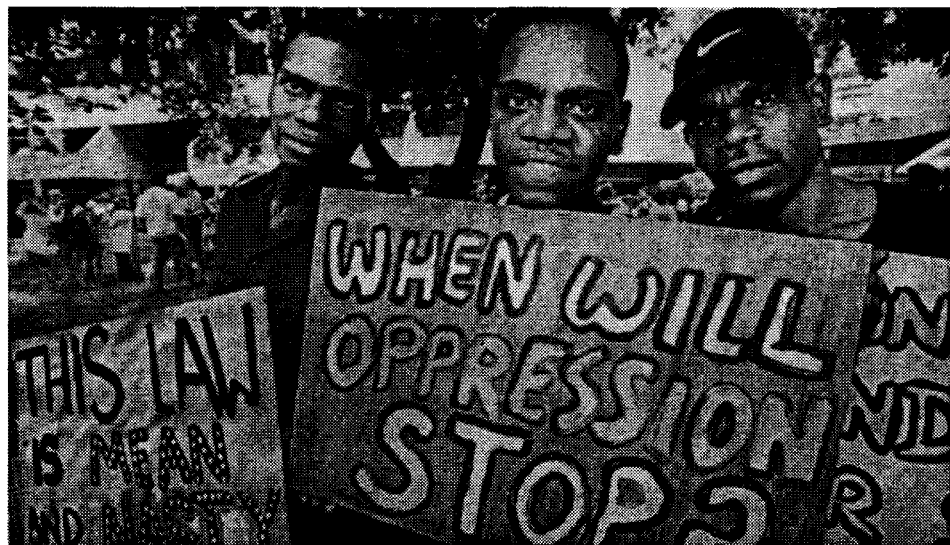
**ASp Replies:**

We thank David for his letter on the racist murder and subsequent upheaval in St George. We appreciate his eyes and ears there. Unlike the Keating years, when the ruling class posed as cleaning up its racist “image,” the better to “enmesh with Asia,” the unrelenting brutal oppression of Aboriginal people is barely reported today and rarely beyond the local area.

The *Courier Mail*’s reported portrayal of the Aboriginal action in St George as a “race riot” and the labeling of those involved, a violent “mob,” is outrageous! We know all too well living in Sydney that the heavily-armed and racist police riot against Aboriginal communities like inner-city Redfern. As we have pointed out, and as shown by the targeting of those who protested Patrick Cordrey’s killing, the bosses’ “reconciliation” is a racist fraud.

The Beattie ALP government’s first act in coming to office was to enshrine Howard’s anti-land rights *Wik* legislation. Last year, it insultingly offered Aboriginal people the sum of \$55.6 million—capped at a miserable \$4,000 per individual—in compensation for \$500 million in wages stolen by the capitalist state over more than seventy years. In fact, it has been Labor governments, such as the Carr, Bracks and Goss/Beattie state Labor governments, who have been at the forefront of whipping up racist “anti-crime” hysteria under the banner of vitriolic “law and order” campaigns, which above all strengthen the powers of the police. Racist state terror has in turn emboldened racist thugs on the streets, leading to attacks such as the murderous assault on members of Townsville’s Happy Valley Aboriginal community last May by Ku Klux Klan fascist scum.

We fight to mobilise the social power of the integrated, organised labour movement, independent of the capitalist state, to defend Aboriginal people against racist terror and to consistently champion their rights. The capitalist state—whether run by Liberal or Labor—serves a profit system that is racist to the core. Only the destruction of capitalism through successful workers revolution can begin to address the centuries of injustice and oppression of the Aboriginal people. ■



David Hancock

**Darwin: Aboriginal youth protest racist mandatory sentencing laws. Brutal state oppression of Aboriginal people fuels racist terror on the streets.**

## Immigrant Detention Hellholes Erupt: Drop the Charges Against Protesters!

*The Partisan Defence Committee, the class-struggle, non-sectarian legal and social defence organisation associated with the Spartacist League, faxed the following protest letter to Daryl Williams, the federal attorney-general on 20 January.*

We condemn the vicious repression against those incarcerated at Australia’s barbaric immigrant detention centres following courageous New Year’s protests and breakout attempts by detainees. During the protests, fires burnt down parts of the concentration camps at Christmas Island, Villawood in Sydney, Port Hedland in Western Australia as well as Baxter and Woomera in South Australia.

The desperate protests were met with a brutal crackdown and a violence-baiting witchhunt orchestrated by the federal Liberal/National government and the Rann South Australian state Labor government. Detainees were tear-gassed at Woomera and at the new, hi-tech, Baxter hellhole—where detainees have been justifiably outraged at being

subjected to a full body search every time they want to walk from one part of the compound to another. On New Year’s Day at Woomera, the racist Australian Federal Police officers and Australasian Correctional Management guards herded the entire camp population onto an outdoor basketball court where, handcuffed and denied access to water, they scorched in the hot desert sun for at least seven hours. All of the approximately 130 men, women and children remained handcuffed for at least 48 hours.

Forty immigrant protesters are incarcerated at police lock-ups and state prisons and reportedly nine already face charges including attempting to escape custody, threatening a Commonwealth officer, arson and malicious damage. Among those charged are Ahmed Ebdah, Hoang Tho Pham, Wen Wai Cai, Hong Zhen Li and Darren McCreadie from Villawood and Mehran Shojaee from Woomera. We demand: Drop all the charges! Free all the refugees and immigrants! Close the concentration camps!

Many of the detention centre protesters are asylum seekers who your government

seeks to deport back to Afghanistan and Iraq—countries that the Australian imperialist military has either taken part in the recent destruction of or is about to join a full-scale U.S.-led assault against. The brutal state attacks against those struggling against their racist imprisonment comes only weeks after a combined force of the UN/Australian police force and the UN-controlled East Timorese police opened fire on, and massacred, high-school students in East Timor who were protesting against police violence. Imperialist terror against the peoples of the neocolonial countries and racist repression against minorities at home goes hand in hand with stepped-up capitalist state attacks against the trade unions. We say: Drop the charges against the anti-detention centre protesters! No deportations! Full citizenship rights for all immigrants! ■

Australasian

**SPARTACIST**



For a workers republic of Australia, part of a socialist Asia!

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EDITOR: P. Balasubramanian

CIRCULATION MANAGER: Mike Wallace

PRODUCTION MANAGER: Phillipa Newman

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**Spartacist Forums**

**Australian Military Get Out of Persian Gulf, East Timor! Hands Off Indonesia!**

**Defend Iraq Against U.S./UN/Australian Imperialist Attack!**

**For Class Struggle Against the Capitalist Rulers at Home!**

**MELBOURNE**

**SYDNEY**

**5.30 p.m., Friday 7 March**  
Meeting Room C & D, Building 8,  
Level 3, RMIT (Swanston St Campus)

**7 p.m., Friday 14 March**  
George Hunt Room, Trades Hall  
4 Goulburn St, Sydney

For information call (03) 9654 4315, write to  
GPO Box 2339, Melbourne Vic 3001, or e-mail  
melb.spartacist@bigpond.com

For information call (02) 9281 2181, write to  
GPO Box 3473, Sydney NSW 2001, or e-mail  
spartacist@bigpond.com



# Young Spartacus

## The Vietnam War, Class Struggle and the Capitalist Whitlam Government

Today, in the weeks the U.S. and its allies, including Australia, are planning to launch a full-scale attack on Iraq as part of the imperialist "War On Terror"—promised by U.S. vice president Dick Cheney to be a "war without end"—we are seeing mobilisations on the streets of major cities around the world against the war. Many young people, sickened by the stark possibility of mass slaughter in a country already devastated by years of routine bombing raids and the UN starvation blockade, are joining the growing anti-war movement in the search for a way to put a stop to the imperialists' hell-bent course towards war.

The Spartacist League (SL/A) and Spartacus Youth Club (SYC) call to defend Iraq against U.S., British and Australian and allied imperialist attack and seek to mobilise the working masses against imperialist war through class struggle *at home*. In 2001, Japanese dock workers at Sasebo refused to load military equipment and supplies bound for imperialist use in the U.S.-led war against besieged Afghanistan. More recently, a handful of train drivers in Scotland refused to transport British war material headed to assist the imperialist war drive on Iraq. These exemplary actions give a glimpse of the potential might of the working class and demonstrate the necessary strategy in defending Iraq. The main obstacle to generalising such struggles, however, is the patriotic pro-capitalist leaders of the working class. Our internationalist, proletarian and revolutionary defence of Iraq sets us apart from other left groups in Australia, such as Socialist Alternative, the International Socialist Organisation and the Democratic Socialist Party, who are catching the attention of anti-war youth with antics such as petitioning the government not to go to war and petitioning the Labor Party to oppose the war! This does nothing but reinforce the dangerously false belief that the capitalist state—which exists to enforce the profit-driven rule of the capitalist ruling class—will listen to, and act according to, the wishes of the masses. When we point this out to members of these groups, they have the nerve to say "but remember Vietnam," implying that it was the anti-war movement in the imperialist centres that convinced the imperialist governments to pull their troops out of Vietnam. But it

was the North Vietnamese army and the National Liberation Front (NLF) soldiers who "convinced" the imperialists to pull their troops out by *defeating them on the battlefield!*

We called for the military victory of the NLF and said: All Indochina must go Communist!

As Marxists we understand that you cannot end imperialist war without ending the capitalist system that creates the drive for war. Why? Because the nature

of imperialism—the need for competing capitalist states to conquer new markets, spheres of exploitation and control of natural resources—means that war under this system is inevitable. It is only when the international proletariat smashes the capitalist states and takes control of production, building a collectivised economy according to need not profit, that war will be stopped for good. But as long as the working class is misled to have faith in capitalist governments, they will be fodder for exploitation and the battlefield—working, killing and dying in the service of their capitalist masters.



Victorious NLF/DRV troops take Saigon, 1975. Military victory over imperialists and South Vietnamese puppet regime brought about social revolution.

The lie that the anti-war movement demonstrations in the 1960s led to the withdrawal of U.S. and Australian imperialist troops from Vietnam is linked to a mythology currently being repeated: that the Whitlam Labor government of 1972-75 was somehow socialist and anti-

war. This creates and maintains faith in bourgeois parliament and especially the ALP bourgeois workers party—as if the ALP government could be pressured to change the bloody predatory nature of Australian imperialism. The "socialists" who promote the myth about the Vietnam anti-war movement are Laborite reformists. In contrast, we seek to split the Labor Party's working-class base from its bourgeois tops—to organise workers for revolution as the only solu-

tion to end war and exploitation. This article on that period of history, including the Whitlam "socialist" legacy, is dedicated to debunking illusions in the Australian Labor Party and in the ability to reform capitalism to a more "humane" system. The 1960s and '70s were an era of heightened working-class struggle in many countries worldwide. Conditioned in part by the Vietnam War and internal turmoil racking the U.S., not least the black liberation struggle, the late 1960s/early 1970s saw a series of prerevolutionary and revolutionary situations in Europe—France 1968, Italy 1969, Portugal 1974-75. Workers were rising up against their oppression. These represented the best opportunities for proletarian revolutions in the advanced capitalist countries since the immediate post-WWII period. The Stalinist Communist Parties' betrayals of the workers' struggles in these countries, and the absence of a genuine revolutionary (i.e., Trotskyist) leadership were the critical factors in these opportunities being lost and going down to defeat.

In Australia, class struggle did not actually reach a prerevolutionary scale but rather peaked with the near-general strike in Victoria and beyond in 1969. This strike—a response to the jailing of Tramways Union official Clarrie O'Shea, who had refused to pay Arbitration Court fines—effectively buried the anti-union penal powers of the bosses' Arbitration system for over a decade. In that period, maritime unions refused to ship military equipment to be used by Australian forces in Vietnam. Against this background, in the early seventies the Australian bourgeoisie conceded some dramatic reforms

to the Australian working class. Credit for these reforms is typically given to the then-Australian Labor Party government of Gough Whitlam, which was, and still is, painted by the bourgeois media and those who want to restore the Labor Party's credibility, as a progressive "anti-war" government. In reality, it was the heroic and victorious Vietnamese peasants—the soldiers of the Communist Viet Minh-led Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV, a.k.a. North Vietnam) together with the guerrilla fighters of South Vietnam's National Liberation Front whose victory over U.S.-led imperialist forces inspired workers' struggle worldwide. In this context, the militarily defeated and panicked Australian bourgeoisie ceded concessions to the working class. The defeat of the imperialists and the radicalising effect this had on class-conscious workers and leftist youth provided an important opportunity for a communist vanguard to intervene to seek to bring revolutionary consciousness to the proletariat and further the building of a revolutionary workers party.

### The Heroic and Inspiring DRV and NLF Victory Over Imperialism

In 1975, after decades of war, the combined forces of the DRV and NLF reached military victory when U.S.-led imperialist forces were expelled from Vietnam along with the Vietnamese bourgeoisie.

Even before definitively driving out the U.S.-led forces, the determination of the DRV and NLF soldiers was demonstrated time and again. The 1968 general strikes in France were directly inspired by the nation-wide Tet Offensive: 80,000 Vietnamese men and women in a coordinated nationwide attack against the imperialists.

By 1975, the North Vietnamese and NLF fighters had faced every weapon in the Pentagon arsenal, with only the shield of the Soviet Union preventing nuclear annihilation. The Vietnamese had been the guinea pigs for previously untested weapons such as cluster bombs and chemical poisons like Agent Orange. They had more bomb tonnage dropped on them than was dropped by all the combatants of World War II! Against this, they won. And what made the DRV/NLF victory all the more resounding was the fact of their relative isolation in the face of imperialist might. The Soviet Union, itself a degenerated workers state, offered minimal and very grudging aid. Modern Soviet weapons, which could have easily defended North Vietnam from the lengthy U.S. bombing offensive, were sold instead to bourgeois Egypt because of the Soviet bureaucracy's eagerness to gain advantage in the Near East.

This Soviet betrayal of a country in revolution was the result of the Stalinist ideology of "socialism in one country" and "peaceful coexistence" with imperialism. It was not the first or last time that a Stalinist bureaucracy has made such a betrayal, indeed, it was typical. The Soviet and Chinese Stalinist bureaucracies

*continued on page 4*



Maritime unions' refusal to ship Australian military equipment frustrated imperialist war on Vietnam.

## Whitlam...

(continued from page 3)

undermined the struggles of the Vietnamese workers and peasants right from the start. They aided imperialism after the French were defeated in 1954 by pressuring the Viet Minh to make a retreat back into North Vietnam. This left the South under the control of a vicious U.S. puppet regime. The North Vietnamese Stalinist bureaucracy accepted "socialism" in half a country, and initially took charge of the South's resistance movement—the National Liberation Front—in order to appease the imperialists by keeping the NLF in check.

Thus it was in spite of the Stalinist leadership, not because of it, that the forces of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and the NLF secured the defeat of imperialism and of the South Vietnamese bourgeoisie. In 1975, the leading stories in *Workers Vanguard* were jubilant but also cautionary:

"On April 30 the armed forces of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV) and the National Liberation Front (NLF) rode triumphantly into Saigon as leaders of the defeated puppet regime and the South Vietnamese bourgeoisie fled the country by every available means. The military victory of the DRV/NLF marks the end of 30 years of civil war against colonialism and imperialism and their local allies. It means the overthrow of capitalist rule in South Vietnam, a historic conquest for the working people of the entire world and one which must be unconditionally defended by class-conscious workers against imperialist attack.

"We hail this stunning defeat of U.S. imperialism, the first in a major war during this century, and greet the victory of our class brothers and sisters in Indochina with internationalist proletarian solidarity. The struggle against the imperialists' Vietnam war has also been a major task of socialists in the imperialist centers, dominating the political experience of a whole generation of young aspiring revolutionaries. And it is as fellow combatants in the international class struggle that we warn the Indochinese masses that they must place no confidence in their Stalinist leaders."

—"Capitalist Class Rule Smashed in Vietnam, Cambodia!" *Workers Vanguard* No. 68, 9 May 1975

### Defend and Extend the Gains of the Vietnamese Revolution!

In 1975 when images flashed across the world of the gates of the U.S. embassy in Saigon being driven down by an NLF tank, it was not just the end of a long and bloody war where over three million Vietnamese were slaughtered. It was a social revolution—changing the fundamental property forms in the country. The means of production went from being owned by the bosses (in whose interests the brutal, repressive South Vietnamese puppet-regime acted), to being collectively owned by the workers and peasants of Vietnam. The Vietnamese Revolution was bureaucratically deformed from the outset because it was peasant-based and led by Stalinists with a petty-bourgeois nationalist outlook. What actually happened in 1975 was the South Vietnamese cities were liberated from without (the guerrilla strategy) and the working class, locked out of all political decision-making, were subjected to military-bureaucratic rule. Nonetheless, the victorious Vietnamese peasants threw out the imperialists and overthrew the capitalist state. This overthrow of the capitalist state and its replacement by a state defending collectivised ownership of the means of production made it a social revolution.

Today the SL/A and SYCs call for the unconditional military defence of Vietnam and the other deformed workers states of China, Cuba and North Korea. This is the real litmus test for revolutionaries—to recognise and defend the gains that the international proletariat has won historically. We say it is the duty of every worker in the imperialist countries of the world to defend the deformed

workers states, this point being all the more crucial now that the Soviet Union has been destroyed by capitalist counter-revolution. That counterrevolution was a historic defeat for the international working class. It leaves Vietnam, Cuba, North Korea and China so much more vulnerable to the depredations of the imperialists who want to re-enslave them.

In Vietnam, as in North Korea, the existence of the Soviet Union meant that the petty-bourgeois (i.e., not working class, but not capitalist) peasants were capable of creating a bureaucratically deformed workers state. That is, a state of the same order as that issuing out of the political counterrevolution of Stalin in the Soviet Union: an anti-working-class regime which suppressed Vietnam's further development in the direction of socialism and blocked the possibilities to extend the social revolution to countries elsewhere. To place the working class in political power and open the road to socialist development requires a supplemental workers *political* revolution to oust the parasitic bureaucracy. It takes a Trotskyist party to lead such a revolution.

With the destruction of the Soviet degenerated workers state and consequently no readily available lifeline against imperialist depredations, the narrow historical opening in which petty-bourgeois forces were able to overturn local capitalist rule has been closed. The partial character of the anti-capitalist revolutions in the colonial world leads us to reaffirm the Marxist-Leninist understanding that the proletariat is the only social force capable of making the socialist revolution.

### Australian Imperialists Burned—Time For Whitlam

It was not only U.S. imperialism that waged war in Vietnam. The racist Australian imperialists were themselves eager to fight against the Vietnamese revolutionaries, and they deployed their troops in Vietnam from 1962 to 1972. So what happened to make the Australian bourgeoisie decide to pull its imperialist troops out of their dirty, anti-communist crusade in Vietnam?

We wrote in *Australasian Spartacist* at the time of the 1991 Gulf War slaughter, in "Lefts' Tie Peace Protests to ALP":

"The reformists say Whitlam got Australia out of Vietnam. The Labor Party initially supported the imperialist war in Vietnam. In 1966 Labor leader Calwell briefly campaigned for Australian withdrawal, but after their election debacle, the new leader Whitlam in 1967 dropped all opposition to the war, alienating radical youth from the ALP. By early 1968, the stunning blow dealt by the NLF/North Vietnamese Tet offensive jolted decisive sections of the U.S. ruling class into realising that the war was unwinnable, and that it had to cut its losses and get out.... Only after the emergence of a defeatist wing of the U.S. bourgeoisie did the Whitlam ALP leadership in 1969 come out again for withdrawal of Australian troops. This imperialist alternative became 'viable' as a result of the brutal 1965 CIA-abetted anti-communist holocaust in Indonesia which

killed over half a million people, making the region 'stable' for imperialism. When Labor entered government in 1972 the main Australian forces had already been withdrawn; Whitlam merely removed the remaining 'advisers.' Once conscription was abolished and the last Australian troops were withdrawn in 1973, the anti-war movement collapsed two years before the final victory. The missing ingredient was a revolutionary Trotskyist party. In its absence, the radicalisation of thousands of youth and workers was channelled back into the ALP and trade union bureaucracy or dissipated in the deadend of New Leftism/Maoism."

—ASp No. 140, February/March 1991

The Australian imperialists feared the Vietnamese revolutionaries. For them, losing in Vietnam meant not only a loss against the DRV and NLF. It also meant a victory for all those struggling against the oppression of capitalism, including the greatest potential enemy of the Australian bourgeoisie: the Australian working class. Returning defeated from Vietnam did not put the bosses in a good position to face off the workers. Measures were needed, both against the working class at home, and against the deformed workers states themselves. Against the proven ineptitude of the Liberal/Country Party coalition and amidst social turmoil inspired by the Vietnamese Revolution, the bosses enlisted the reformist Whitlam to head the capitalist government. His job was to buy back the confidence of the workers and oppressed and then return things to business as usual.

### Whitlam's Reforms and the Bourgeois War on Workers

Before the Tet Offensive, the Australian and American bourgeoisies had largely subscribed to John Foster Dulles' "falling domino" theory of communism. The gist of this theory was that:

"...the fall of Indo-China would lead to the fall of Burma, Thailand, Malaya and Indonesia; India would then be hemmed in by Communism and Australia, New Zealand, the Philippines, Formosa and Japan would all be gravely threatened."

—David Horowitz, *From Yalta to Vietnam: American Foreign Policy in the Cold War* (1965)

Dulles' answer to this communist "threat" was to instigate a "maximum deterrent" against the workers states. Dulles was expressing the paranoid and not uncommon fear amongst the bourgeoisie, that all of Asia could soon be lost for imperialist exploitation, just as the most populous nation in the world—China—had been, and that this must be prevented at all costs. Unfortunately for the rest of the exploited and oppressed masses of Southeast Asia, Dulles' fear did not materialise.

So despite the "socialist" and "anti-war" tags attached to the Whitlam government, it was actually a capitalist government, which sought to ameliorate the excesses of capitalist exploitation. They also had an agenda to modernise Australia, which was notoriously racist, misogynist, insular and backward.

The ALP always has and always will serve the interests of the capitalist ruling



no credit  
Vietnamese workers and peasants inflicted humiliating defeat on U.S./Australian imperialists.

class, while it pretends to serve those of the working class on which it is historically based (through trade-union affiliations and funding). It is a bourgeois workers party. This is the very reason why the ALP is so useful to the bosses. Some bourgeois press magnates promoted the ALP in the 1969 and 1972 federal election campaigns. At a time when Australia faced class struggle at home and in the region, the capitalists looked to Whitlam's ALP to restore working-class loyalty to the capitalist system. This is how convincingly Whitlam argued his capability to reorganise and restore to health the failing capitalist system. It also helped that he stated directly, before being elected in 1972, that taxes on the rich and on corporations were quite high enough already, and that he had no intention to nationalise anything, but rather to add the national health-care services of Medibank to the existing private health-care sector.

The parliament (the so-called "democratic" institution of Australian politics) belongs to the capitalists—it's part of the state, along with the courts, prisons and military, which exists to enforce the rule of a tiny capitalist class over the exploited masses. Like all those before and since, the racist ALP parliamentary and union misleaders of Whitlam's time maintained allegiance to the capitalist state as an ALP government which in this case instituted reforms. In a global climate of revolution and imperialist defeat, the ALP needed to do an exceptional job of fooling the working class, and Whitlam was the required master of reformist mythology.

Under great working-class pressure at home and abroad, the Australian bourgeoisie had to give some ground to chill out the workers, women and racial minorities who were quickly losing faith in the system (or those like the Aborigines, who maybe never had any). Whitlam was conscious that, for the sake of appearances, he would need to bring a veritable whirlwind of change with him when he came to power. John Pilger portrays a sense of this change in his book *A Secret Country*:

"Conscription was ended immediately and the last Australian troops were ordered home from Vietnam. Young men imprisoned for draft evasion were freed unconditionally. The Federal Government assumed responsibility for Aboriginal health, education and welfare and the first land rights legislation was drafted; the Aboriginal people were drawn into administration of their own affairs for the first time. Racially-selected sporting teams were banned from entering Australia.



Workers Vanguard  
Boston U.S., 1972: Spartacist contingent fought for class struggle; took side with embattled working people of Vietnam.



"Equal pay for women was introduced. Wages, pensions and unemployment benefits rose. A national health service was established, open to all. Spending on education was doubled and university and college fees abolished. Censorship was ended and the divorce laws reformed, with the establishment of the world's first 'family courts.' Legal aid became a universal right. A range of cultural initiatives for Aborigines, women and immigrants were encouraged and funded; 'access' and ethnic radio networks were set up."

In the field of foreign policy: independence was granted to Papua New Guinea, and there was liberalised immigration for Asians and Pacific Islanders. Whitlam also recognised the People's Republic of China.

Relatively free health care and education were a very good thing. Indeed, these reforms were real enough for the bourgeoisie to quickly begin taking them back again, after less than two years. We made the point in 1973: "While significant, these changes hardly touch the real needs of the masses and in fact disarm them by helping to prepare the way for the very harsh measures Whitlam will be forced to institute for the benefit of Australian capitalism" ("Capital's Labor Trustee: Australian Labor Party Elected," *Workers Vanguard* No. 17, March 1973). And this is exactly what happened. Workers and oppressed were disarmed by Whitlam's reforms and rhetoric. When the cutbacks began in earnest in 1974, working-class dissent reached nowhere near the levels of the late '60s.

Many other "reforms" amounted to nothing more than token and deceptive gestures. Equal pay for women was only promised for the public sector, and was to be phased in over three years. It was never achieved. The essential requirements for women to enjoy true equality—free 24-hour childcare and free, safe abortion on demand—were never even on the cards. While relatively free health care and free education were momentarily enjoyed, free housing is another basic right of the working and oppressed masses, and the capitalist class would never have allowed this to even be suggested. Legislation portrayed as attending to the needs of Aborigines did nothing to prevent the massive increase in the number of Aborigines killed by cops and screws under the Hawke ALP government eight years later. Hawke was ACTU misleader in the 1970s, Whitlam's close partner in treachery against the working class and oppressed, and no friend of the Aboriginal peoples. Likewise, the liberalisation of immigration laws for Asians and Pacific Islanders—heralded as the end of the White Australia Policy—has done nothing for the thousands of refugees and "illegal" immigrants locked up in the racist and brutal detention centres that Hawke oversaw the construction of.

It was not the massive marches and idealised "Moratoriums" against the war that forced Whitlam's government to withdraw troops from Vietnam. Imperialist forces were clearly losing in Vietnam from 1968 onwards, and it was for this reason that Whitlam pulled troops out and ended conscription. Whitlam's view on troops in Vietnam had been far different in 1966, before the Tet Offensive. Parliamentary golem Laurie Oakes, in his biography of Whitlam, describes how the then-Labor leader Calwell's line of "immediate and unconditional withdrawal" of troops did not fit "comfortably" with Whitlam. In fact, up until 1968, Whitlam believed Australian troops should remain in Vietnam.

Later, announcing the withdrawal of troops from Vietnam, one of Whitlam's very first decisions made as prime minister was that there should be, as Oakes put it, "new benefits for the armed forces." As deputy leader of the ALP in opposition in 1963, Whitlam supported the construction of the U.S. spy base at North-West Cape in Western Australia, the central

purpose of which was to communicate with U.S. missile-carrying submarines in the Indian Ocean. This hawkish position was in the context of the Cold War—the Australian ruling class standing firmly with their allies in the U.S. against the degenerated workers state of the Soviet Union (along with the Chinese and other deformed workers states). This was indeed the prime aim of the proposed spy base: to target the countries that had overthrown capitalism. These revolutions made huge gains for the working class that capitalism can never achieve and made those parts of the world off limits for imperialist subjugation.

Perhaps the most sickening of all Whitlam's bloody and anti-socialist deeds, was his *congratulatory* message to the then-Indonesian president Suharto after the latter oversaw the massacre of about one million Indonesian Communists and ostensible Communist sympathisers in 1965. Whitlam decided that there should be stronger ties between Australia and Indonesia from that point on, considering what good anti-Communists the Indonesian leaders were.

In power, the Whitlam government expressed interest in supplying troops in a "peacekeeping" capacity to Cyprus and the Middle East. "Peacekeeping" is, of course, code for terrorising and stealing from the peoples of other nations, as the East Timorese are finding out the hard way. Australian "peacekeepers" have been stationed in East Timor since 1999, during which time East Timor has become firmly cemented as the poorest nation in Southeast Asia, unarmed demonstrators have been shot at and killed, and Australian companies such as Woodside Petroleum are making huge profits from East Timor's oil. In 1975 at the time of the Indonesian military's invasion of East Timor, Whitlam's racist response was reported in former-senator John Button's memoir: "What are you worried about them for, comrade? They're all mulattos" (*Age*, 22 October 1998).

Whitlam was aware that while the White Australia Policy (invented and promoted by the ALP since Federation) stood, it was an obstacle to the imperialists increasing their interests in the region. According to bourgeois academic Albinski, the end of the White Australia Policy:

"...was part of Labor's new nationalist conception for Australia. The image of an Australia conscientiously challenging racialism helped to cultivate an image that would enhance the nation's standing and influence abroad, especially among Third World Nations. Racialism could be the cause of pernicious, dislocative international tension. This could work contrary to Australia's interests, both at large and close to home. Australia was a white nation with a conspicuous history of racism. If it did not make its anti-racist position abundantly clear, it was conceivable that, should there be strife in the region, its racial attitude could be bluntly called into question."

—Henry S. Albinski, *Australian External Policy Under Labor* (1977)

Thus, apart from the strategy of deceiving the masses by throwing them large scraps from the imperialists' table, Whitlam's "reforms" were often direct attempts to promote the international interests of the Australian bourgeoisie. The ALP's working-class guise, however, was vital. If the workers didn't buy the reforms, then Labor was useless to Australian capitalists. As the 1969 wild-cat strike had shown, workers were ready to act. The DRV and NLF soldiers were fighting imperialist oppression and winning. And the Australian masses were watching them all the way.

### Capitalism Can Never Afford the Workers Needs

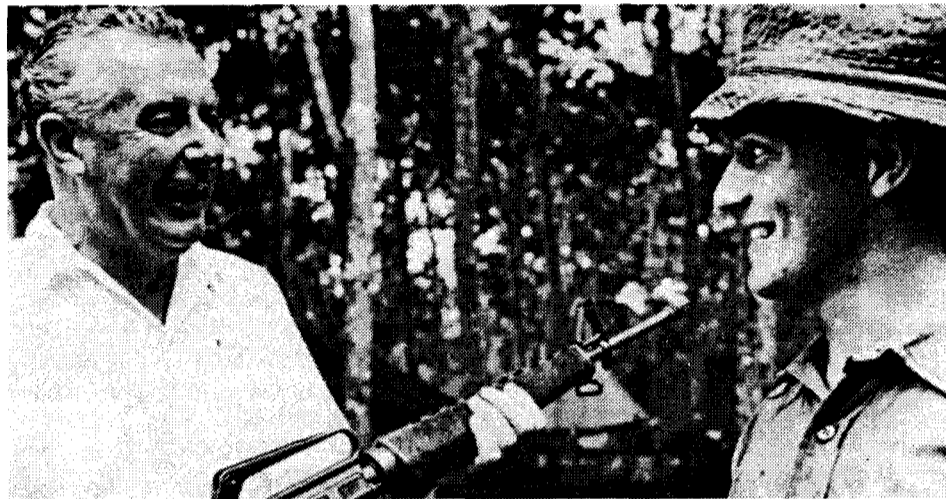
Whitlam quickly achieved his task of re-tying the working class to the ALP. Workers had deep illusions in "their" party and its leadership, and the bour-

geoisie now felt that they could safely get away with using the well-trusted Whitlam to begin taking the reforms back. A recession hit, as is guaranteed in the inevitable boom-bust cycle of capitalism, and Whitlam told workers that reforms were no longer affordable. With the help of the ACTU sell-out leadership of Bob Hawke, Whitlam made significant cuts to the original reforms. By the 1974 election campaign he was appearing more openly on the side of the bosses, but the ALP/ACTU partnership of treachery against the workers was now on shaky ground. Despite deep-set illusions in Labor, the working class succeeded in gaining wage rises to catch up with inflation in 1974. In 1975, Whitlam blamed the wage rises for inflation and unemployment, and called for restraint.

The bosses' use for the ALP at that time was wearing thin. Whitlam's time

ited and temporary. While the capitalists will cede reforms in the imperialist centres when that is necessary to regain and maintain the class peace, the working class can only keep any reforms won under capitalism through fighting against the profiteers' attempts to roll them back. Given this, and without placing any reliance on the bourgeois parliament, we staunchly fight to retain and extend any reforms that have been won.

One of the greatest lessons from Whitlam's time as prime minister, and from its aftermath, is that reforms to the capitalist system can only be fleeting and pale glimpses of what it is possible to achieve once workers have overthrown capitalism. When still in power, Whitlam's ALP had made its own attempt to impose a levy to make workers pay for Medicare. Fraser's 1976 mini-budget introduced such a levy, while slashing programs for



Gough Whitlam with Australian soldier in Vietnam. Only in face of defeat did he pull troops out.

was running out. The bourgeoisie was eager to bring wages under control and bring in a government more to their taste. Whitlam was finally sacked in November 1975 by the governor-general, Sir John Kerr. This was an unprecedented action in which the CIA and MI5 (secret intelligence agencies of U.S. and British imperialism respectively) played a key role. They were worried about Whitlam's meddling with CIA operations at the super-secret Pine Gap base at Alice Springs. As we said in *Australian Spartacist* (No. 101, April 1983):

"Whitlam was an imperialist politician *par excellence*, but from the outset of his government the links of his Labor lefts, particularly anti-Vietnam Moratorium leader and deputy PM Jim Cairns, to Stalinist or CPA-influenced trade unions was seen as highly dubious by the Nixon administration, its CIA spooks and their Australian ASIO apprentices."

The 1975-1983 Fraser Liberal government, popularly known as "the razor gang," was successful in slashing many of the reforms. The workers fought the cuts militantly, and succeeded in retaining some of what they had won. So the ALP was needed again, this time under the leadership of ex-ACTU president Bob Hawke. The Hawke/Keating 13-year reign got away with cuts that Fraser could have only dreamed of. The Prices and Incomes Accord was put in place, whereby workers were essentially told that whenever "Australia" does well, the ALP would ensure that the bosses would pass the profits on to them, but that "Australia" could only do well if workers did more for less. This is the nationalist jingoism the ALP used to achieve increased productivity for the bosses. Throughout the 1980s and into the '90s, when Paul Keating was ALP leader, workers were gradually required to work longer hours for less pay, with less if any sick leave, fewer days off, and loss of job security.

As Marxists who have a class perspective of the world in which we live, we understand that any reforms granted under capitalism are by their nature won through hard class struggle, but are lim-

urban and regional development, Aborigines and transport. By 1977, there was no money at all for women's health centres and refuges. Next, when the ALP had regained power, the bourgeoisie took the opportunity to introduce the Higher Education Contribution Scheme, making university again largely the realm of the wealthy, to continue health care privatisation, and to build the sickening refugee detention centres that imprison so many people today.

### Myths Must Be Dispelled

That Whitlam was "anti-war" is a myth. He pulled troops out of Vietnam because the imperialists were losing. That Whitlam was a socialist is also a myth. He was a leader of the racist ALP, a social-democratic party founded on the White Australia Policy and racist protectionism, which worked to keep the working class in chains when the Vietnamese Revolution saw the working class at home and internationally exercising its social power. Reforms Whitlam introduced in health and education were temporary, limited and were clawed back by the bosses, not least through the Hawke/Keating government and the sell-outs of the Laborite trade-union bureaucracy.

It is only when the international proletariat takes power that we will secure basic rights, and much more, including an end to imperialist war. The SYCs are a training ground for young revolutionaries struggling to build the kind of party necessary to make a workers revolution, to build a world where reforms are no longer necessary, because the wealth will belong to those who create it. ■

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# Japan: Abolish the Monarchy —For a Workers Republic!

We print below a translation of an article from *Spartacist No. 26* (September 2002), publication of the *Spartacist Group Japan*, section of the *International Communist League*.

## スパルタシスト

The debate over whether or not a female heir can ascend to the imperial throne, intensified after the birth of the “royal baby” last December, has brought together supposedly diverse elements, ranging from the anti-woman, ultranationalist [Prime Minister] Koizumi to bourgeois feminists to Doi Takako, leader of the Social Democratic Party [SDP]. This thoroughly reactionary debate has nothing to do with “gender equality,” as anyone who lives in this deeply entrenched and revoltingly male chauvinist society should know. Rather it is about how best to salvage the “imperial household” and recast the blood-stained emperor system as a “monarchy for the masses.” If word of this debate were to reach Kanno Suga, executed by the government in 1911 [for plotting to assassinate the emperor], she would be writhing in her grave.

It was under the name of the emperor that Japanese imperialism and its military committed monstrous crimes during the Pacific War [World War II]—the Nanjing Massacre, the Nazi-like biological military Unit 731, the brutal colonization and subjugation of half the Asian continent, the enslavement of the *ianfu* [comfort women] and forced laborers, and the massive roundups and imprisonment of burakumin [descendants of feudal-era outcasts] and the heroic men and women of this country who fought against social injustice. We call for the abolition of this reactionary institution and the establishment of a workers republic.

It doesn't matter if the monarch's chromosomes are XY or XX—the emperor system is a feudal anachronism that should have been swept away a long time ago. Its ideological purpose is as a popular focus for national chauvinism and reaction. Only in a country where women are so oppressed would any woman find the prospect of an empress appealing. One need only look at Britain which has a

queen to see that gender is no impediment to the ruthless pursuit of the imperialist, anti-working-class goals of the British capitalist class. In this country, women's oppression is deeply intertwined with the perpetuation of the emperor system, whose purpose is to sanctify social and sexual hierarchy, the family, private property and the “glory” of the Japanese state.

If the emperor system were abolished, women would still not be liberated. We would still have a capitalist system in which women are oppressed. The ever-present degradation, inequalities and superstitions that target women can only be rooted out by a workers revolution that dislodges the capitalists and their kings (or queens) and places the proletariat in power. That's why we fight for socialist revolution. The fight for women's rights goes hand in hand with the struggles of the organized working class as a whole against an exploiting class that considers its rule an “immutable right.” The tremendous wealth in this country is produced by the sweat and toil of its working people—both female and male. Those who labor must rule!

### Rallying Symbol for Reaction

The overriding concern of the ruling class is that in the last few decades only daughters have been born to the imperial family. Journalist Keiko Tatsuta bluntly summed up the anxiety: “If no boys are born in the future, the Imperial Household itself would theoretically no longer exist” (*Japan Times*, 24 November 2001). It is not just for ideological purposes that the emperor system is important for Japanese capitalism. The monarchy has always been the bourgeoisie's favored institution in periods of social turmoil. The leaders of the Meiji Restoration used the emperor as a “divine umbrella” to legitimize their rule. After Japan's defeat in the Pacific War, the emperor system was preserved through a bargain between the Japanese ruling class and the U.S. occupation forces for the single purpose of clamping down on working-class struggle at a time when social revolution was a real possibility. Today, in the midst of mass unemployment, welfare cuts and homelessness, privatizations and an increasingly strong state mounting an offensive to remilitarize the country, the continued, orches-

trated “royal baby watch” is intended to unite the nation around a common cause.

The emperor system is not merely an affront to the proletariat of this country and Asia. According to the constitution, the emperor's role is supposedly limited to such things as acting as adviser and spokesman for the ruling class, performing

ponent in suppressing working-class anger and opposition to this feudal remnant. Since its inception as the Japan Socialist Party, the SDP has embraced this reactionary institution, ending its founding conference in 1945 with the three banzai shouts [“Long live the emperor!”]. In April 2001 in the shadow



Ethan Hoffman

Women employees bow to businessman at typical Tokyo reception, symbolising intense male chauvinism in Japan.

certain functions of state like putting his “divine” seal of approval on a new prime minister. The existence of these limits obscures the real danger to the proletariat the monarchy could once again become. In recent years, the emperor has been acting more and more like the head of state, and several attempts have been made to bring back laws against *lèse majesté*. The emperor system is the rallying cry of the fascistic and militaristic right wing, who have become more emboldened since official recognition of the *hinomaru* and *kimigayo* [flag and anthem], both symbols of the emperor and imperial Japan. In any deep future crisis of the bourgeois order, the emperor would be wielded as a buttress to reactionary mobilizations and a sign of “legitimacy” for a government of extreme reaction.

### The Left and the Emperor System

The politics of the reformist left consists of oppositional activity within the framework of bourgeois society, characterized by Trotsky as “the training of the masses to become imbued with the inviolability of the bourgeois state.” The emperor system continues unimpeded by the fake left in this country. The primary responsibility for this lies with the SDP and Communist Party (JCP), both mass bourgeois-workers parties with a pro-capitalist leadership and program, and a predominantly working-class membership. As part of their general commitment to capitalism, they help prop up this symbol of privilege. When Hirohito [emperor during World War II] died in 1989, Doi Takako signed the condolence book and attended the funeral. In the summer of 2000, JCP leader Fuwa sent condolences on the death of the Empress Dowager because they grew up during the same years! Loyal opposition parties indeed.

The SDP and JCP's shameless acceptance of the emperor system is a key com-

of the crown princess's pregnancy, the SDP leadership met, whereby “Doi Takako took a positive posture toward a female emperor on the basis of gender equality. However, within the party, this question is not completely resolved” (*Women's Information*, January 2002). What was resolved eight months later was “to send congratulations on the birth of a child who has been anticipated. We hope for her healthy growth.”

When the Communist Party thought they had an opportunity to administer a capitalist Japan in 1998, they revised their long-held position of opposition to the emperor system. As reported in the *Japan Press Weekly* (8 December 2001), “JCP Secretariat Head Ichida Tadayoshi said, ‘Parliament can give a congratulatory



AFF

April 2002: Prime Minister Koizumi, led by Shinto priest, visits chauvinist memorial to Japanese imperialist soldiers.



Toshiki Sawaguchi

February 1994: Japanese nurses protest overtime, staff shortages and subsidy cuts, demand better health care for all.

For Women's Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!



message as a form of courtesy on a festive event of the family which is referred to as the symbol of the state by the Constitution.... The JCP envisages a future in which the *Tenno* [emperor] system will end based on the people's consensus. At the present, the JCP is committed to defending every clause of the Constitution!" This was echoed by party head Shii a few days later when he said, "The birth of any new life is equally delightful" (*Women's Information*, January, 2002). Sharing in the so-called democratic happiness over a new life is quite a bitter pill to swallow for its membership, which understands well that all life is hardly equal in a capitalist society.

### Bourgeois Panic over Falling Marriage, Birth Rates

Hirohito's death was like a gift for the imperial family, lifting it from its "tainted" history. Today, it is presented as the "nation's first family, united with the people in warmth and affection." No longer surrounded by the aura of divinity, the imperial family is supposed to mirror a "modern, democratic, middle-class Japan." Now we are being saturated with news stories about the royal family as if they lived in the neighboring apartment complex, or the three-generation house next door.

The Empress Michiko is portrayed as a "commoner" who raised her own children and "assumed some of the typical duties of a housewife." Princess Masako, a "Harvard educated woman who gave up her career to settle down and have a family," is held up as a role model for women who are increasingly postponing both marriage and having children. This is the borrowed womb [women whose "function" is to produce an heir] and good wife/wise mother recast for the 21st century.

The police crackdown on high school girls hanging out in Shibuya and Ikebukuro [districts of Tokyo], the media smear campaign against young women, labeling them as selfish "parasite singles," the stigma and laws against illegitimate children, the one surname per family rule, the refusal to give pensions to divorced women, the cutting of subsidies for single mothers are all frontal assaults against women in an attempt to bolster the sanctity of the nuclear family for the "good of the nation."

With the lowest birthrate of almost any nation, the population agency in the Health, Labor and Welfare Ministry has been working overtime, churning out scare stories that within 100 years the population of Japan would not even fill the Tokyo Dome [baseball park]. A recent survey found that more than half the women in their 20s are not married, and have no plans to do so, prompting Cabinet Secretary "Japan must go nuclear" Fukuda to promote the recent marriage of teenage pop diva Utada Hikaru by saying, "We want lots of people to get married and have many children" (BBC, 6 September).

Responding to the government's hysteria, the local government of Aji, a small town in Kagawa Prefecture, has started organizing *omiai* [marriage introductions] to deal with its dwindling population. Chibu in Shimane Prefecture was the first village to begin a "cash for babies" program. In the early 1990s they began offering ten calves to every farming family that had a child. Around the same time, Kawano in Fukui Prefecture instituted its "give birth and nurture incentive program," which offers 100,000 yen [about \$1,350] for the first and second children, ¥1 million for the third and a whopping ¥1.5 million for each subsequent child. The program notes that if a couple "produces" 15 children, they would be entitled to more than ¥19 million. We note, that is if the couple can find the energy to do so after being almost *karoshi*-ed [overworked] to death, and if they can find the privacy for those few moments of intimacy that are so sorely lacking for most families in this country. Not surprisingly, the instigator of this program, which is reminiscent of World War II campaign slogans to procreate, was formerly in the *kempeitai* [pre-war military thought-police].

The JCP jumped on this reactionary baby bandwagon in 1999 when they announced that a high birthrate is an index of social equality for women. The next year they noted that their "proposal for economic reforms to correct 'capitalism without rules' is closely connected with the task of overcoming the 'low birthrates'" ("Draft Resolution of the 22nd Congress of the Japanese Communist Party," 2000). We wonder whether their next step will be to hand out "medals for motherhood," just like Joseph Stalin did.

Decisions concerning whether to marry or not, to have children or not, the sex of one's companion or who one sleeps with are individual and consensual matters, and none of the government's nor the JCP's business. What is needed is the teaching of reproductive biology in the schools; education on AIDS; free, safe birth control for all who want it; free, 24-hour day-care centers and nursing care for the elderly; free education and a living stipend for all students; and affordable housing. These are transitional demands, most of which will not be met under capitalism, but are a bridge between today's conditions and the consciousness of wide layers of the working class which lead to one final conclusion: the conquest of power by the proletariat.

### Women's Oppression and Class Society

Women's oppression is rooted in the institution of the family and has been a feature of all class societies. The family is a key social unit for the maintenance of capitalism. For the capitalists, the family provides the basis for passing on accumulated wealth. And where there is no property to pass on, the institutionalized family serves to raise the next generation of workers, care for the sick and aged, and instill conservative social values and obedience to authority. It is the family—and the necessity to control sexual access to the woman to ensure that the man knows who his real heir is—which generates the morality codified in and reinforced by religion. It is the family that throughout a woman's life gives definition to her oppressed state: as daughter, as wife, as mother. As 19th century revolutionary Friedrich Engels wrote in *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State* (1884): "The overthrow of mother right was the world historical defeat of the female sex. The man took command in the home also; the woman was degraded and became a mere instrument for the production of children."

Engels went on to explain that "the first premise for the emancipation of women is the reintroduction of the entire female sex into public industry." For genuine communists, the rate of women's participation in the labor force is a real index of their social status, and the higher the better. We understand and appreciate that the social conditions under which working people live are determined in struggle against the capitalist class. The fight for the full integration of women into the workforce is literally a life and death question for the Japanese working class, which is either unemployed, literally working itself to death, or committing *karojisatsu* [suicide brought on by too much overtime]. Women and minority and immigrant laborers are a key ally in the fight for a shorter work week.

Among the results of a union misleadership that won't fight for women's rights are weak unions that don't defend any of their members and an uncontested misogynist climate in society as a whole. The leadership of all three union federations has refused to fight against the exclusion of women and minorities from full-time employment in major industries. They also refuse to organize part-time, non-lifetime and so-called contingent workers, all of whom are predominantly female. Women comprise less than 20 percent of the union membership in this country, and less than 5 percent of the executive union posts. In desperation, several separate women's unions have been formed, only further dividing and weakening the working class.

The only effective response to the cap-



U.S. imperialist butcher General Douglas MacArthur with Emperor Hirohito during post-World War II American occupation of Japan.

italists' offensive is united class struggle, mobilizing the broadest ranks of labor in the interest of all workers. We fight to organize the unorganized, unionize all "non-regular," minority and immigrant workers into common industrial unions that would fight for the full integration of women into the workforce; for equal pay for equal work; and for equal access to free technical training and job upgrading.

### The 1917 Russian Revolution: Committed to Full Social Equality for Women

The 1917 October Revolution was the first—and to date the only—successful socialist revolution in history. After the working class seized power in its own name led by the Bolshevik Party, the new Soviet government under Lenin and Trotsky took immediate steps to alleviate the oppression of women. The aim of the Soviet legislation was the replacement of the nuclear family as a social and economic unit through the socialization of household labor and the equalization of educational and vocational opportunities. These two goals were key to the undermining of the capitalist social order and to the construction of a new society. The government took steps toward replacing women's household drudgery by setting up cafeterias, laundries, and childcare centers to allow women to enter productive employment.

Illegitimacy was abolished in law, eliminating discrimination against children born outside of marriage and freeing mothers from the burden of a double standard which had punished them for the consequences of having had the child. Subsequent legislation declared marriage to be a contract between free and equal individuals that could be dissolved at the request of either partner, eliminated all discrimination against homosexuals, established hundreds of institutions devoted to the care of mothers and children (at no cost), made abortion legal, free and available on demand, assured equal pay for equal work, and opened up unheard of opportunities for women in

industry, the professions, the party and government. Thousands of schools were opened to women for the first time on the basis of preferential admissions. These sweeping gains were possible because the working class expropriated the property of the capitalists and established a planned, collectivized economy.

The Bolsheviks were limited in what they could actually implement in the way of replacing the functions of the family by collective social institutions in a relatively backward country, mainly peasant in its composition, which had been materially devastated by World War I and the ensuing civil war. Still, their example points the way to what could be accomplished under the rule of the proletariat in a far more economically and technologically advanced country like Japan.

The October Russian Revolution has been undone and its gains destroyed. Surrounded and pounded by the imperialists for seven decades, the Soviet Union was destroyed by capitalist counterrevolution in 1991-92. We fought for unconditional military defense of the USSR against imperialist attack and internal counterrevolution up until the very last barricade. The responsibility for the Soviet counterrevolution lies primarily with the Stalinist bureaucracy which usurped political power from the working class in 1923-24 and betrayed the revolutionary purpose of Lenin and Trotsky's Bolshevik Party and the revolutionary Communist International that they founded. Not the least of the Stalinists' crimes were the glorification of the family and the reversal of many gains for women. We called for a proletarian political revolution to oust the Stalinist bureaucracy and return to the road of Lenin and Trotsky.

### The Struggle for an Egalitarian Socialist World

The woman question is a lever for revolution. The liberation of women is central to our program and we consider the question of women's participation in the revolutionary struggle as a strategic question. In short, this means that without the participation of women, without women leading and organizing the work and the struggles, the working class and its revolutionary party would fail in its historic tasks.

Liberating women from family servitude and the myriad of feudally derived traditions tied to the continued existence of the emperor system is a central task of a Japanese workers republic. The emancipation of women requires a socialist revolution and the creation of a planned economy in which women will have full access to participation in the productive forces of society, and the institution of the family will be replaced with collective childcare and housework. Marxists fight to rip the means of production out of the hands of the capitalists in order to put them at the service of the needs of the working people who create the wealth. The program of communism is for a classless society in which the family is transcended by superior sexual and social relations which will be free of moral or economic coercion. Our slogan is: "For women's liberation through socialist revolution!"

For new October Revolutions to free the working class from the tyranny of capital—and the monarchy! ■

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# Iraq...

(continued from page 1)

is needed is proletarian class-struggle opposition to the Australian imperialist rulers! For the military defence of semi-colonial Iraq! This entails no political support to the regime of Saddam Hussein, the bloody butcher of Iraqi workers, leftists, Shi'ite Muslims, Kurds and others. For decades Hussein was a close ally and client of U.S. imperialism before he made a grab for Kuwait in 1990. Now the U.S. wants a more pliant regime and tighter control of Near East oil supplies, not least to put its imperialist economic rivals like Japan and Germany, who are more dependent on Near East oil, on rations.

## Defend the North Korean Deformed Workers State!

As in the 1991 Gulf War, the joint U.S./Australia spy satellite ground station at Pine Gap will be a key Australian military contribution to this war. As well as being used against small, weak countries like Iraq, Serbia and Afghanistan, Pine Gap will be used to pinpoint targets in any future U.S. nuclear missile strike on the North Korean and Chinese deformed workers states. It is clear that, after Iraq, North Korea is next in the gun-sights of the Bush White House (see article page 12). The strategic goal of the imperialists is to return capitalist exploitation to China, North Korea, Vietnam and Cuba by smashing the collectivised property forms upon which these states are based. They seek to achieve this through a combination of imperialist economic penetration—fostered by the Stalinist misrulers' pro-capitalist market reforms—and overt military pressure.

North Korea has responded to the threat of an imperialist attack by withdrawing from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and proclaiming its right to develop nuclear weapons. This has been met by increased belligerence by the U.S. and Australian imperialists including preparation by the U.S. to deploy 24 long-range bombers to its air base in Guam, south-east of the Korean peninsula. Fighting against imperialism and fighting to strengthen the proletarian class that can defeat it, means opposition to the imperialists' drive to destroy the bureaucratically deformed workers states. *For the right of North Korea to develop nuclear weapons to defend itself from the bloodthirsty, imperialist nuclear cowboys! Close Pine Gap! Smash the counterrevolutionary U.S./Australia alliance! For unconditional military defence of China, North Korea, Vietnam and Cuba!*

In Australia, the Labor Party and the Greens have been the most bellicose against North Korea. Both have coupled "anti-war" rhetoric over Iraq with the cry that...Howard is not belligerent enough

towards North Korea! Greens leader Bob Brown ranted that:

"We know that North Korea has rockets that can reach north Australia. They may or may not already have nuclear warheads and they are a much more serious threat to Australia than Iraq."  
—Sydney Morning Herald,  
13 January

## For Principled Opposition to Australian Imperialism!

The social-democratic ALP and bourgeois Greens and Democrats offer themselves as representatives of those sections of the bourgeoisie who worry that going to war with Iraq is counterposed to both tightening the vice on the embattled Asian workers states and ensuring that adequate military resources are directed to enforcing the ruling class' predatory interests in its "own backyard." The White Australia capitalists are the chief imperialist exploiters and bloody racist overlords of Papua New Guinea, East

Network (VPN) and the Sydney Walk Against the War Coalition. These cross-class alliances include trade unions, religious groups and bourgeois parties like the Greens. Prominent in these coalitions are various reformist left groups. The VPN for example includes the International Socialist Organisation (ISO), Democratic Socialist Party (DSP) and Socialist Alternative. The chief slogans pushed by these coalitions and their constituents are "No War on Iraq!" and "No Australian Involvement!" These pacifist slogans avoid taking a side for the military defence of semicolonial Iraq. Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU) president Sharan Burrow spelt out the political thrust of the slogans when she stated opposition "to Australian involvement in a war that is not in the national interest" (*ACTU News*, 23 January). But "national interest" always means the interests of the capitalist exploiters who hold state power.

war aims. But for the reformist left groups, the call for "No Australian involvement" is the nationalist glue that binds them together in anti-war coalitions with the likes of the bourgeois Greens, who want the bloody imperialist state freed up to be *more involved* in the Asia-Pacific. You cannot genuinely oppose Australian imperialist terror against the people of Iraq if you support or promote those who support the murderous imperialist military elsewhere!

The struggle against imperialist war must be waged on a program of class-struggle opposition to the capitalist system that causes such wars. Therefore it necessarily cannot be based on a common movement with any representatives of *any* wing of the capitalist exploiting class. Rather, the fight against imperialist war must be based on the perspective of fighting for the revolutionary seizure of power by the working class—the class that uniquely has the social power and historic interest to sweep away the barbaric capitalist order. Thus there cannot be a common "program against war" with non-revolutionists, since that would not be based on the one strategy that can really stop imperialist war—the program for workers revolution.

To prepare for revolution it is necessary to intervene into social struggles to bring revolutionary consciousness to the most politically advanced layers of the proletariat and youth and to build the instrument to fight for this, the revolutionary party. This means a fight to break illusions in the bourgeois Greens and a programmatic struggle to turn the working-class base of the Labor Party against its pro-imperialist tops. It means a struggle to win leftist workers and youth revolted at the impending imperialist slaughter to take a side with semicolonial Iraq in this war and to stand in consistent opposition to Australian imperialism. To this end the Spartacist League and Spartacus Youth Club are building a contingent to intervene in the 16 February anti-war demonstration in Sydney based on the slogans: *For class struggle against the Australian capitalist rulers! Defend Iraq against U.S./UN/Australian imperialist attack! Racist Australian military get out of the Persian Gulf and East Timor! Hands off Indonesia! Defend North Korea's right to nuclear weapons!* March in this revolutionary, internationalist contingent!

## Anti-Imperialism Abroad Means Class Struggle at Home!

The bourgeoisie have used the pretext of "fighting terrorism" to ram through repressive new legislation and to whip up patriotic fervour and xenophobic fear. Yet many are not buying the racist jingoism as evidenced in the very large anti-war rallies, a reflection of popular discontent with both the right-wing federal Liberal government and racist state



Baghdad, 1998: Women demonstrate against UN starvation sanctions.

Timor and Fiji and also reap massive profits from plundering natural resources and superexploiting workers in Indonesia and other Asian neocolonies.

All wings of the ruling class have been concerned by increased "instability" in the Asia-Pacific region with student and worker protests in Indonesia against IMF-dictated fuel and energy price hikes, protests in East Timor against the bloody Australian/UN neocolonial occupation, and fragile imperialist-dictated "peace" deals in economically imploding Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands. Howard seized on the criminal Bali bombing last year to proclaim Australia's right to unilaterally send its military into Asian countries, causing a regional diplomatic storm.

But it is the Greens and ALP who have been pushing hardest for a more aggressive military deployment within the region. While Brown calls for "regional defence," ALP foreign affairs spokesman, Kevin Rudd, pushes for Australia's SAS killers to be deployed in Southeast Asia rather than Iraq. Rudd's program for "scarce military resources" is:

"Let's concentrate our resources here because we've got a major threat on our doorstep and we've got to act."  
—ABC Online, 28 October 2002

In particular, Rudd has called for the government to be more energetic over East Timor. What this means in reality was seen in the heinous 4 December massacre in East Timor's capital, Dili. The combined forces of the UN/Australian police force and the UN-controlled East Timorese police fired upon unarmed high-school students protesting against cop violence. Eighteen demonstrators were shot with reportedly five killed. We say: *Australian military out of the Persian Gulf, East Timor, Papua New Guinea, Bougainville and the Solomon Islands! Not one person, not one cent for the Australian imperialist military!*

But opposition to the Australian imperialist military is far from the program of the coalitions that have led the anti-war rallies — like the Victoria Peace

In reality the appeal for "No Australian involvement" is a call for the Australian bourgeoisie to pursue a different "foreign policy." However, whatever "foreign policy" strategies are pursued by Australia's capitalist rulers, they would necessarily be predatory. This is capitalism at its highest stage of development, imperialism. Through its very inner workings, capitalism compels the bourgeoisies of the richer countries to grab natural resources, markets and sources of cheap labour in the neocolonial countries. This inevitably means predatory wars to enforce the pillage of these weaker nations and ultimately world wars fought between the major capitalist powers to redivide spheres of exploitation.

Slogans appealing to the best interests of the capitalist nation serve only to tie the working people to their predatory exploiters and are counterposed to mobilising the working class *against* the bloodthirsty imperialist rulers and their

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ALP governments. Working people face longer hours, deeper debt, casualisation of full-time jobs and shredding of conditions, while leaders of militant unions—like the CFMEU construction union and the AMWU manufacturing union—face state persecution. Public health, education and transport systems are being dangerously run down and gutted. The racist “war on terror” and anti-immigrant campaigns—including vicious police assaults targeting everyone from desperate, isolated asylum seekers to the prominent Sydney Muslim leader, Sheikh al-Hilali—have provoked outrage among minorities and anti-racist youth.

It is important that the CFMEU, AMWU and other unions have had significant contingents at anti-war rallies. In Western Australia, unions representing construction, manufacturing, schools, finance and hospital workers agreed on a plan of industrial action the minute a military strike on Iraq is launched. The anti-war strikes and demonstrations are planned to go ahead even if a war on Iraq is UN backed. *Political strikes against the war* are indeed called for. When the 1991 Gulf War began, waterside workers on Australia’s east coast walked off the job, shutting down the docks to attend anti-war rallies and meetings. We also look to the example of Scottish train drivers, who engaged in an expressly

ist Alternative (SA) group embrace such patriotism through their membership in the VPN and by the fact of being in this coalition with the “regional defence” Greens. But this does not stop SA from posturing as the “Un-Australian and Proud”-wing of the anti-war movement. Unlike the DSP, ISO and Communist Party of Australia, SA does claim to support “the Iraqi people’s struggle” against imperialism. No doubt noting the SL/SYC’s demonstration that caused army recruiters to abandon their RMIT campus stall in Melbourne last year, they have been campaigning for actions to kick the army off the campuses. They are also posturing as opponents of Australian imperialist depredations in this region.

But let’s see where SA concretely stand on the key question of the Australian imperialist intervention into East Timor, which they now themselves describe as “a turning point.” In the February 2003 edition of *Socialist Alternative*, they attack “most of the left” for having “cheered on Australian troops as they set off to ‘liberate’ East Timor,” noting that “the slogan ‘Troops in NOW!’ had been taken up by tens of thousands on demonstrations” in September 1999. They go on to claim that “Socialist Alternative was one of a very few groups on the left who opposed the deployment of Australian troops.”



ASP photo  
Above: Socialist Alternative (placard at left) were prominent at September 1999, Sydney, pro-imperialist rally which called for Australian troops to East Timor. Right: Body of protester shot dead during 4 December, 2002 massacre in Dili by combined forces of UN/Australian police force and East Timorese police.



Lirio da Fonseca/Reuters

Japan and Australia had immediately announced stiff economic sanctions,” they wrote, “the atrocities could well have been brought to a halt before the devastation was so complete” (*Socialist Alternative*, September 1999).

It takes some chutzpah for SA to now quote the *Australian Financial Review*’s correct observation that the “Troops in NOW!” demonstrations have “for the first time in decades, given broad legitimacy to the proposition that Australia should be able to intervene militarily outside its territory” (*Socialist Alternative*, February 2003). To this day SA, like the ISO, have never called for Australian troops to get out of East Timor. From the very outset we Spartacists forthrightly opposed the Australian imperialist invasion of East Timor. When we invited SA to participate in a 21 August 2002, Sydney University united-front protest “Down with Australian Imperialism’s Plunder of East Timor’s Oil/Gas! Australian/UN Troops out of East Timor!” that we had initiated, SA refused. One of their cadre even labeled the event a “stunt,” saying ... the issue is not pressing! Less than four months later the 4 December massacre of student protesters occurred in Dili.

Again in lockstep with the pro-capitalist ALP tops, SA and the ISO aid the imperialists’ counterrevolutionary drive to destroy the North Korean and Chinese workers states by corralling leftist youth to oppose these states on the basis of the fraudulent “theory” that they are, and have always been, “state capitalist.” In fact the ISO and SA (a 1995 clique split from the former), originate from a tendency that was rightly expelled from the Trotskyist Fourth International for its refusal to defend North Korea and China against U.S., British and Australian imperialism during the 1950-53 Korean War. These fake-socialists, led by the late Tony Cliff’s Socialist Workers Party in

Britain, went on to side with every force aimed at destroying the Soviet degenerated workers state. Those who side with the imperialists’ drive to recapture areas of exploitation that they have lost to the proletariat, are incapable of fighting against imperialist depredations anywhere.

### Workers Power: Talks Left, Walks Right

Another group seeking to position itself at the left wing of the anti-war movement is the Workers Power (WP) group, part of the League for a Revolutionary Communist International. WP call for “the defence of Iraq and its people and the defeat of our own Australian troops when they go to the Gulf” (*Workers Power*, October 2002). Simultaneously they are part of the Socialist Alliance lash-up—which includes the DSP, ISO and Freedom Socialist Party—which actively campaigns for a vote to the pro-UN Greens and refuses to call for the defence of Iraq. WP even states that Socialist Alliance’s “current position is for no Australian involvement, and that’s a good demand.” They add that:

“There’s nothing wrong in the Socialist Alliance’s position on paper; what’s wrong is that it doesn’t go far enough because once the shooting war starts, there’s a whole lot more that it will need to say in order not to be swallowed into the reformist swamp of pacifism, UN solutions and the politics of the Greens and the Labor Party.”

This is a classic WP fudge. On the one hand WP has the orthodox demand for the defence of Iraq to attract the most left-wing elements. On the other, no doubt where their actual work on the ground is at, WP capitulate to the Greens, the Laborite union bureaucrats and their partners in Socialist Alliance by promoting the nationalist call for the Australian bourgeoisie to not get “involved” in this

*continued on page 10*



Chris Pavlich

Sydney, October 2001: Nurses rally demanding better pay, conditions. Fight against imperialist war must be linked to struggles of working people, minorities against capitalist oppression.

anti-war class-struggle action last month by refusing to deliver war materials slated for the largest NATO weapons depot in Europe.

But the ACTU union tops are derailing anti-war sentiment by promoting UN “weapons inspection” and making pathetic appeals to the Australian imperialist government to “work” for “peace.” This reflects the fundamental role of the ALP trade-union and parliamentary leaders: to subordinate the working class to the racist capitalist order through the lie that it is possible to have a government—especially a Labor one—that will administer the bourgeois state in the interest of the working class. It was ALP governments that sent workers off to die in the terrible slaughters of WWI and WWII.

The ALP is a bourgeois workers party, thoroughly pro-capitalist in its program and leadership but based on the mass organisations of the working class. Reflective of widespread working-class opposition to war on Iraq, on 6 February 16 Labor members of parliament publicly rebuffed Crean’s line by signing a statement opposing war on Iraq under any circumstances. Such left-Laborites seek to put themselves at the head of mass opposition to the war, ensuring that it is diverted into channels that are loyal to Australian imperialism. In political struggle against all wings of Laborism, a revolutionary workers party must be built. Such a party will champion the cause of all the oppressed—standing for full citizenship rights for all immigrants and opposing the racist “war on terror”—and fight for class-struggle opposition to imperialist adventures as part of the struggle against the capitalist system.

### Socialist Alternative Rewrite Their History on East Timor

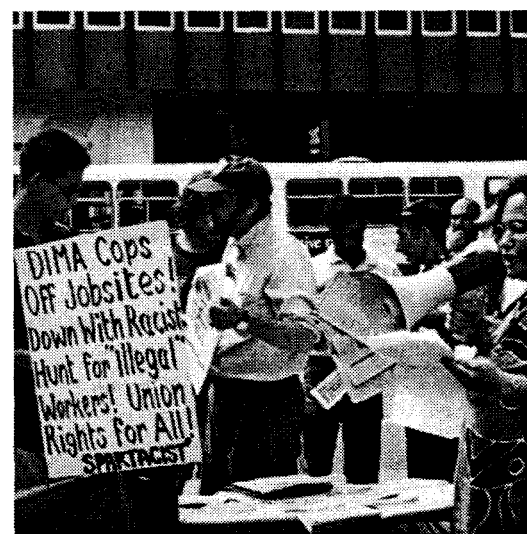
In its Fact Sheet # 2, “Why we oppose a war on Iraq,” the Victoria Peace Network gives as one of its reasons it is “Not in Australia’s interest.” The Social-

What a lie! Despite writing that “peacekeepers are not the answer,” SA themselves joined the Labor Party, Greens, DSP, ISO and Socialist Party in enthusiastically participating in these very demonstrations for “Troops in NOW!” They even called to “accelerate the campaign of industrial action that the union movement has initiated and build bigger and more militant demonstrations in the streets” (*Socialist Alternative*, September 1999). The industrial actions that they refer to were pro-imperialist anti-Indonesian bans led by the Laborite union bureaucracy which were *explicitly* and *solely* designed to hurry Australian military intervention into East Timor. In fact SA had wanted these bans extended—by the imperialists! “If the US,

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## Korea...

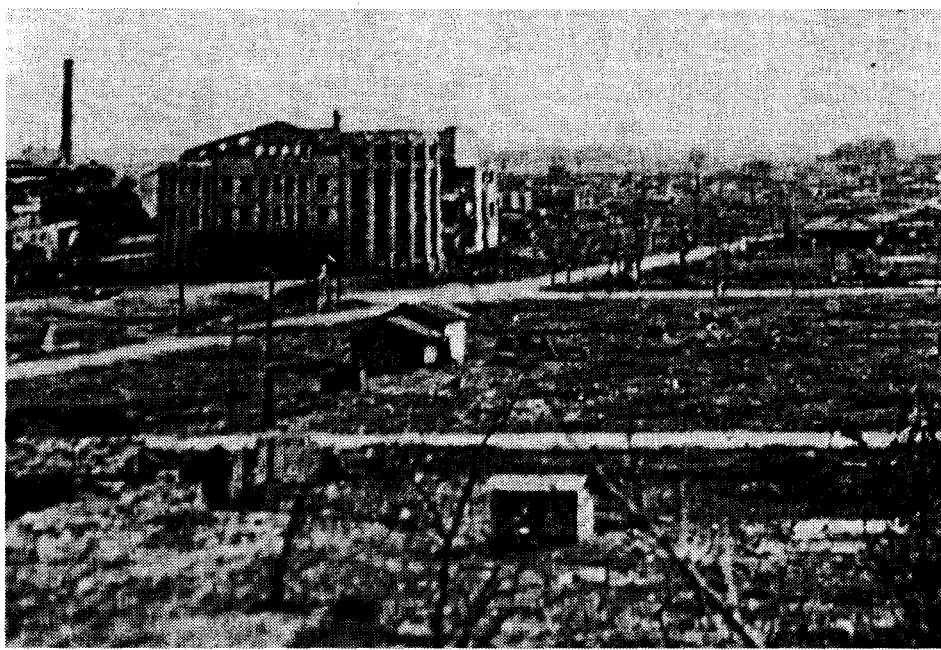
(continued from page 12)

international socialist revolution. Capitalist counterrevolution can only bring even more extreme hardship and misery to the people of North Korea. Anyone who doubts that can cast a glance at the devastating statistics of life in post-Soviet Russia. By every measure of human progress—infant mortality, life expectancy, income, literacy—the diverse peoples of the former Soviet Union have been brutally hurled back. And given the present economic and industrial backwardness of North Korea, the effects of capitalist restoration there could only be far worse. What is desperately needed is the forging of a Leninist-Trotskyist party to lead the struggle for the *revolutionary reunification of Korea*—for socialist revolution in the South and workers political revolution to oust the Stalinist bureaucrats in the North. The fight for revolutionary reunification must be linked to the struggle for proletarian political revolution in China and the extension of proletarian power to Japan, the industrial heartland of Asia.

A central aim of America's rulers remains the restoration of capitalism in those countries where it was overthrown—mainly China but also North Korea as well as Vietnam and Cuba. For its part, China's ruling bureaucracy has repeatedly emphasized agreement with the imperialists' demands for a "non-nuclear Korean peninsula," and has sought to lean on the Pyongyang regime to "moderate" its policies. Such criminal appeasement, denying North Korea the right to defend itself by acquiring nuclear weapons, simply emboldens the rapacious U.S. imperialists in their drive to foment counterrevolution in China itself.

Imperialist belligerence against North Korea is hardly exclusive to the Republicans. It was Democratic president Harry Truman who launched the Korean War. And it was Bill Clinton who in the midst of the 1994 Korean nuclear crisis moved stealth bombers into South Korea. As he boastfully recalled last month: "We actually drew up plans to attack North Korea and destroy their reactors, and we told them we would attack unless they ended their nuclear program" (*New York Times*, 19 December 2002).

Washington rants about "weapons of mass destruction," but it was the U.S. imperialists who actually used nuclear bombs against the civilian populations of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945. In an article titled "North Korea in the Vice" in



Vitali S. Latov

**North Korean capital of Pyongyang devastated by U.S. bombing during 1950-53 Korean War.**

*New Left Review* (November/December 2002), Gavan McCormack notes:

"North Korea has few cards in its pack. The nuclear one has been its joker for at least a decade. It should be recalled that the country is well acquainted with nuclear terror, having been at its receiving end for over half a century. In the winter of 1950 General MacArthur sought permission to drop 'between thirty and fifty atomic bombs,' laying a belt of radioactive cobalt across the neck of the Korean peninsula. During the Korean War the Joint Chiefs of Staff deliberated about using the bomb, and came close to it several times. In Operation Hudson Harbour, late in 1951, a solitary B52 was dispatched to Pyongyang as if on a nuclear run, designed to cause terror—as it undoubtedly did. From 1957, the Americans kept a stockpile of nuclear weapons close to the Demilitarized Zone, designed to intimidate the then non-nuclear North. It was only withdrawn in 1991, under pressure from the South Korean peace movement; but the US continued its rehearsals for a long-range nuclear bombing strike on North Korea at least up to 1998, and probably to this very day....

"North Korea knows that the world is full of nuclear hypocrisy. Non-nuclear countries bow to the prerogative of the great powers that possess the bomb, while resenting their monopoly. They recognize that entry into the 'nuclear club' paradoxically earns the respect of current club members—at the same time as it threatens annihilation for those outside."

In today's world, where the nuclear madmen in Washington declare their "right" to carry out "pre-emptive" strikes against anyone at any time, the only measure of real sovereignty left is possession of nukes. Indeed, we regret that North Korea's current facilities for nuclear

development are exceedingly modest.

### South Korea: Mass Protests Against U.S. Troops

Increased American belligerence toward North Korea comes in the context of unprecedented mass demonstrations in South Korea against the presence of 37,000 American troops in that country. The protests were touched off after soldiers driving an American armored personnel carrier killed two schoolgirls during a training exercise last summer, then escalated when a U.S. military court acquitted the soldiers. Hundreds of thousands gathered in Seoul and other cities in early December for the largest anti-American demonstrations in the country's history. The wave of protests formed the backdrop to that month's presidential elections, which were won by Roh Moo Hyun, who beat the U.S.-backed candidate by pledging to renegotiate South Korea's military pact with the U.S.

The substantial U.S. military presence in South Korea is not only a dagger aimed at the North Korean and Chinese deformed workers states but an assertion of American interests in the region against potential rivals in Asia, chiefly Japan. It also serves as a warning to South Korea's combative union movement, threatening to drown in blood any challenge to the capitalist order. From its suppression of the "autumn harvest" rising in 1946 to orchestrating the bloody Kwangju massacre of 1980, in which some 2,000 people were killed to put down an insurrectionary revolt, the U.S. military has been a

key force for counterrevolutionary repression on the peninsula.

During the Cold War, the U.S. as well as Japan aided in the rapid economic growth of South Korea as an anti-Communist bulwark against North Korea, China and the Soviet Union. With the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union in 1991-92, the interests of the U.S. in the peninsula have shifted. Counterrevolution in North Korea remains one of its goals, but a stronger South Korean bourgeoisie is not. When South Korea's rulers pleaded for assistance from Washington and Tokyo during the 1997 Asian financial crisis, they had the door slammed in their faces. Indeed, the door to the imperialists' elite club was slammed shut by the 1890s and not since reopened.

According to press reports, the recent wave of demonstrations in South Korea has been accompanied by a growing sympathy for the North. A *New York Times* (28 December 2002) article quoted one protester saying, "If North Korea would be threatened by the United States with nuclear weapons, North Korea can also have them." But it is vital to distinguish between solidarity with North Korea on a class basis—defense of the deformed workers state against South Korea and the U.S. and Japanese imperialist powers—and solidarity on the basis of Korean nationalism.

Much of the radical student movement in South Korea has supported the North Korean regime as the most consistent purveyor of Korean nationalism against the U.S. and Japanese imperialists. However, nationalist ideology serves to tie the potentially powerful South Korean proletariat to its own ruling class, buttressing the latter's aspirations for a united capitalist Korea.

The combativity of the working class has been demonstrated repeatedly, not least in the enormous struggles of the 1970s and '80s which broke the stranglehold of the CIA-sponsored, corporatist Korean Federation of Trade Unions and gave rise to independent unions, now grouped in the Korean Confederation of Trade Unions (KCTU). These struggles also helped put an end to open military rule in the late 1980s. But the KCTU leadership has increasingly sought to channel the militancy of the workers into support for political representatives of the rapacious South Korean bourgeoisie.

U.S. imperialist belligerence toward North Korea nearly capsized the "Sunshine Policy" of South Korean president Kim Dae Jung, whose attempts at "engaging" Pyongyang were aimed at

## Iraq...

(continued from page 9)

U.S.-led war. Similarly during the thoroughly one-sided U.S./Australia onslaught against impoverished Afghanistan in late 2001, WP sounded oh-sored in words by calling for "Defend Afghanistan. Defeat Imperialism" while on the ground they were marching around

with placards such as "Stop the Bombing Now! NO to Ground Troops, YES to Aid," which pushed dangerous illusions in the potential benevolence of the imperialists. They were also busy campaigning for a vote to the war-mongering ALP.

Such a gulf between word and deed is the definitive expression of centrism. Most grotesque in this respect was the fact that in late 1999, WP in words called

for UN troops out of East Timor, while simultaneously marching in the demonstrations screaming for Australian/UN troops to East Timor, which they hailed as "solidarity with East Timor."

### For International Socialist Revolution!

When French president Jacques Chirac and German chancellor Gerhard Schröder announced last month that they would not support an immediate war against Iraq, it provoked a frenzied response by the Bush administration. At the same time, the complaints of the European governments about American "unilateralism" are merely the squeals of less powerful states who want a bigger cut of the loot (including of a post-Saddam Iraq) and would prefer to be treated less rudely. Even as they condemn an American war against Iraq, the French government has sent warships to the Gulf.

Yet the European pseudo-socialist left kowtows to the various labour and social-democratic parties, historic "left" enemies of proletarian revolution. In doing so, the fake left acts in the service of the more "humane" pretensions of their own rulers, whose appetites are currently restrained by the military ascendancy of U.S. imperialism. Last year, a whole raft of European leftists including

the Italian Rifondazione Comunista and the British Socialist Workers Party and Workers Power issued a "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." Far from advancing a struggle for "peace," these putative leftists who appeal to their own bourgeoisies against U.S. imperialism promote the resurgent chauvinism that paves the way for a future inter-imperialist war.

As in Europe and elsewhere, the struggle in this country to mobilise the working class against the capitalist rulers and their predatory wars requires a fight first and foremost to unshackle the proletariat and radicalised youth from all wings of the bourgeoisie and its social-democratic lackeys. The 1917 October Revolution in Russia, led by Lenin and Trotsky's Bolsheviks, showed the way for successful proletarian struggle against war. It brought the working class to power in a socialist revolution and pulled Russia out of World War I. It was the opening shot of the international proletarian struggle against all the imperialist warmongers and the rule of capital worldwide. *For a party of the Bolshevik type to fight for new October Revolutions!* ■



Melbourne, March 2002: Spartacist-led protest causes army recruiters to abandon RMIT campus stall.



undermining the deformed workers state through capitalist economic penetration. But Roh won the presidential election vowing to continue Kim's policy.

For their part, the North Korean Stalinists have long called for "peaceful reunification" with the South. This is a recipe for reunification on the basis of capitalist wage slavery and the annexation of the North by the *chaebol*, the giant conglomerates that dominate South Korean capitalism. In an attempt to attract capital investment from South Korea and elsewhere, the Pyongyang regime is now promoting the construction of two large free-trade zones and has made other moves toward Chinese-style "market reforms." Despite continuing severe food shortages, rationing was abolished and housing rents and utility charges have been introduced. Meanwhile, Pyongyang's pleas for the U.S., Japan and other imperialist powers to adopt policies of "non-aggression" foster dangerous illusions that these imperialists can be appeased.

Western left groups like the U.S. Workers World Party (WWP) which act as cheerleaders for the North Korean regime also play into the hands of the South Korean bourgeoisie and U.S. imperialism. *Workers World* (9 January) hails the Pyongyang rulers' "skill at defending the socialist base of their society even while opening political and commercial relations with the south." Meanwhile on the ground in the U.S., WWP fosters illusions that the Democratic Party is in some way a progressive alternative to the Republicans, most recently by building platforms for Democratic politicians at rallies against Bush's threatened war on Iraq. Yet if anything, the Democrats today have a *harder* posture toward North Korea than Bush's Republicans. Thus Warren Christopher, former secretary of state in the Clinton administration, recently called on Bush to "step back from his fixation on attacking Iraq" because "the threats from North Korea and from international terrorism are more imminent" (*New York Times*, 31 December 2002).

#### Democratic Labor Party: Left Cover for Korean Nationalism

During last month's South Korean elections, various left groups in South Korea and abroad touted Kwon Young Kil's new Democratic Labor Party (DLP) as an alternative to both the traditional right wing and bourgeois liberals like Kim Dae Jung and Roh Moo Hyun. In the 1997 elections, Kwon, a former KCTU leader, ran for president under the rubric "People's Victory 21." This was a class-collaborationist lash-up with various liberal groups that promoted nationalist opposition to "foreign interference" and similar rhetoric seeking to deflect class anger away from the domestic exploiters. This time, Kwon won 3.9 percent of the vote as the DLP's presidential candidate. While the DLP is based in large part on the KCTU union federation, Kwon from the outset defined it as a "party of progressives" which sought to create a "coalition of liberal forces" with groups such as the Green Party (*Joong Ang Ilbo*, 29 June 2002).

Echoing the reformist verbiage traditionally associated with West European social-democratic parties, the DLP's fundamental role is to act as a pressure group on the "liberal" wing of the South Korean bourgeoisie. Thus, Kwon saluted former president Kim Dae Jung's "Sunshine Policy," saying: "He achieved historic feats such as reducing military tension on the Korean peninsula and setting the foundation for a peace regime between the two Koreas." The DLP also cosigned a June 2002 "Solidarity Message for Peace from Korean Peace Groups" which stated that "North Korea's nuclear and missile development must be settled to build [a] peaceful Korean Peninsula." Such calls for disarmament of the North and "peaceful relations" ultimately reflect the interests of South Korea's *chaebol* bourgeoisie and its drive for capitalist reunification.

The International Socialists of South Korea (ISSK), affiliated to the late Tony

Cliff's Socialist Workers Party in Britain, supported Kwon's 1997 candidacy and has more recently liquidated its forces into the DLP. An article on the South Korean elections in the 11 January British *Socialist Worker* (which is entirely uncritical of Roh) states: "The division of the Korean peninsula into two states is a relic of the Cold War." And the Cliffites would like nothing more than to get rid of that "relic" through "democratic" counterrevolution.

In fact, the origins of the Cliffite tendency lie in its refusal to defend the North Korean workers state against the counter-revolutionary invasion by U.S., British and other imperialist troops in 1950-53, for which it was rightly expelled from the Trotskyist movement. Under the rubric "Neither Washington nor Moscow," the Cliffites went on to embrace every conceivable CIA-backed anti-Soviet force, from Lech Walesa's *Solidarność* in Poland to the Islamic fundamentalist *mujahedin* who fought the Red Army in Afghanistan to the Yeltsin-led counterrevolution in the Soviet Union itself.

In South Korea, the Cliffites have long gone out of their way to make clear that they share the *chaebol* bourgeoisie's hatred for the North Korean deformed workers state. The ISSK demonstrated this in 1993 even as their own comrades were dragged off to prison under the National Security Law (see "Free Choi Il Bung and All South Korean Class War Prisoners!" *WV* No. 574, 23 April 1993). They assured the deeply anti-Communist regime that ISSK leader Choi "had not broken the National Security Law by reading banned literature from the North or belonging to a foreign organization. On the contrary, he had published books critical of regimes like North Korea" (*Socialist Worker* [U.S.], February 1993).

Striking a much more left posture is the British Workers Power (WP) group. While also presenting support for the DLP as a "positive development," WP calls "for the immediate withdrawal of the USA's troops and for scrapping all military treaties with it," and states that "revolutionaries should stand for the unconditional defence of North Korea. This includes its right to possess nuclear reactors and to develop nuclear weapons, if it can" (*Workers Power Global*, 22 December 2002). This principled defencist position on North Korea stands in sharp contrast to WP's refusal to defend China, whose fate is of even greater significance for the international proletariat. WP declared "Capitalist Restoration Triumphs in China" (*Workers Power*, November 2000). Despite massive inroads by overseas Chinese and imperialist capital, encouraged by the venal Stalinist bureaucracy, China remains a deformed workers state based on a collectivized economy. It must be defended against capitalist counterrevolution.

In fact, far from having a principled Trotskyist position in regard to the deformed and degenerated workers states, WP has a history of sashaying back and forth across the class line depending on the prevailing political climate and its own political appetites. With widespread popular opposition among South Korean workers and youth to the American military presence and significant sympathy for the North, WP today calls for defense of North Korea. At the time of the Soviet intervention into Afghanistan in 1979, WP took a step to the left, breaking with its Cliffite origins and acknowledging that the Soviet Union was a degenerated workers state. But in the end what was definitive for WP was the anti-Soviet political climate at home. Thus, WP simultaneously joined with the Cliffites and other social-democratic apologists for imperialism in denouncing the Soviet military intervention. By the late 1980s, WP was apologizing for anti-Soviet Baltic nationalists and touring Russian fascists in Britain. At the time of Yeltsin's pro-imperialist power grab in August 1991, WP *boasted* that one of its supporters stood on the barricades of counter-revolution outside Yeltsin's headquarters in Moscow.

Well to the right of WP's current stance on Korea is an Internet statement by the International Bolshevik Tendency (IBT) titled "South Korean Presidential Election: Vote for the DLP!! Oust Its Reformist Leadership!!" (18 December 2002). The IBT was formed two decades ago by a handful of defectors from the Spartacist tendency who couldn't stomach our hard Soviet-defencist line at the height of Ronald Reagan's Cold War II. In its lengthy treatise, the IBT nowhere calls for U.S. troops to get out of South Korea or for the right of North Korea to possess nuclear weapons!

The IBT admits that the DLP's stand for "reunification of the fatherland" would mean capitalist reunification. But this doesn't stop the IBT from giving "critical support" to a party that advocates capitalist counterrevolution. The IBT has a *pro forma* paragraph saying that reunification of Korea under capitalism "would be a defeat for the proletariat internationally" and noting that "the working class should defend North Korea against the designs of the South Korean and international bourgeoisies to plunder the deformed workers' state." At the same time, the IBT waxes eloquent about the supposed virtues of the South Korean rulers' "Sunshine Policy": "The realization of the 'Sunshine policy' would have removed a major justification for the 37,000 U.S. troops stationed in South Korea. It would have brought about economic advantage to the North Korean regime and closer relationships between it and South Korea, Russia, Japan, China and EU member nations." Seven pages later, the IBT laconically concedes that such policies "aim to exploit Pyongyang's endemic difficulties with the object of capitalist reunification."

However, even its warnings against capitalist reunification are motivated solely by the effect it would have on workers in the capitalist South: "Workers in the South would suffer higher unemployment and suppression of wages, while at the same time bearing the social costs of capitalist reconstruction of the North." It speaks to the IBT's sneering indifference to the fate of the workers state itself that it says not a word about the devastating impact counterrevolution would have on the already impoverished North Korean working masses.

#### Reforge the Fourth International!

The common hostility of U.S. and Japanese imperialism to the North Korean and Chinese deformed workers states does not moderate inter-imperialist rivalry but on the contrary serves as an arena for its intensification, as they jockey over who would get the spoils in the event of capitalist restoration. The fact that Tokyo is currently seeking to counter Washington's bellicosity toward North Korea with attempts to broker a "normalization" of relations does not mean that the Japanese bourgeoisie's approach is in any way "peaceful." This was underlined when the Japanese coast guard one year ago sank a North Korean ship in Chinese waters. While certainly not excluding military confrontation, Tokyo is today concentrating on economic penetration of North Korea. Japan is North Korea's second-largest trading partner, and Japanese capitalists are increasingly entrusting production to North Korean plants, where labor costs are low and the quality of work is high.



Reuters

Seoul: Militant rally last February in support of electrical utility workers strike against privatisation threat.

The right-wing Koizumi government used North Korea's recent admission of the bizarre and senseless kidnapping of Japanese citizens years ago to whip up an atmosphere of anti-Communist, chauvinist hysteria. Revolutionaries in Japan have a special duty to defend the North Korean deformed workers state and to oppose growing Japanese militarism and the bourgeoisie's persecution of Japan's ethnic Korean minority. On December 31, our comrades of the Spartacist Group Japan (SGJ) joined with other Japanese and Korean leftists at a Tokyo demonstration against the U.S. troops in South Korea. Our comrades raised placards calling for U.S. troops out of South Korea, for the right of China and North Korea to have nuclear weapons, for the unconditional military defense of China and North Korea against Japanese imperialism, and for citizenship rights for Koreans, Chinese and all foreign workers in Japan.

Fundamentally, the defense of those states where capitalism has been overthrown requires the extension of proletarian rule to the advanced capitalist countries. Yet it is this perspective that is not only alien but anathema to the nationalist bureaucratic castes that rule in North Korea and China. The Stalinist bureaucrats in Pyongyang and Beijing fear that socialist revolution in South Korea and Japan would quickly inspire proletarian political revolutions that would result in their forced evacuation from their positions of privilege and power. Likewise, a political revolution in China or North Korea would have an enormous impact on South Korea and Japan, the industrial powerhouse of Asia.

What is needed above all is the forging of internationalist proletarian parties around the world. Our comrades of the SGJ are committed to the struggle to forge a Leninist vanguard party to lead the fight for proletarian revolution in Japan. For our part, the Spartacist League/U.S. fights to build a revolutionary workers party—part of a reformed Fourth International—that can lead the multiracial proletariat in socialist revolution to sweep away U.S. imperialism, the most dangerous force on the planet. *U.S. troops out of South Korea now!* ■

## Spartacist League of Australia

E-mail: spartacist@bigpond.com · Web site: www.icl-fi.org

### Melbourne

GPO Box 2339  
Melbourne Vic 3001  
Phone: (03) 9654 4315

### Sydney

GPO Box 3473  
Sydney NSW 2001  
Phone: (02) 9281 2181

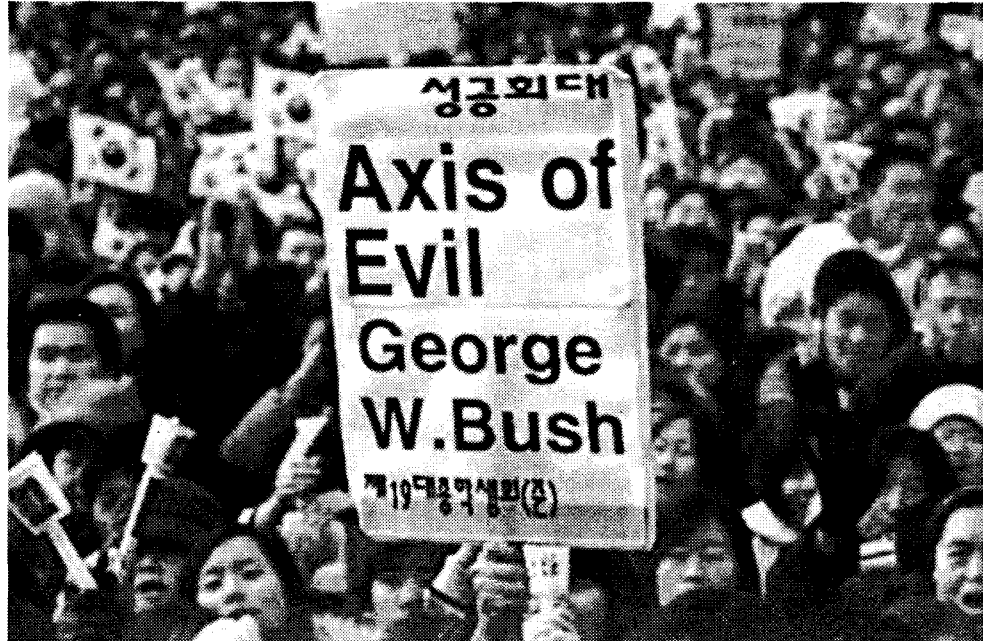
## International Communist League

Box 7429 GPO, New York, NY 10116, USA



Mass Protests in South Korea—U.S. Troops Out!

Reuters



Nordell/JB Pictures



U.S./Australian Imperialism Hands Off North Korea!

The following article is reprinted from Workers Vanguard No. 795, 17 January 2003. The Australian capitalist rulers are playing an active role in pressing upon North Korea the most recent imperialist diktats. The bloody Australian imperialists were first after the U.S. to commit troops to the counterrevolutionary 1950-53 war against the North Korean and Chinese deformed workers states.

JANUARY 13—In the face of Washington's diktats, as revolutionary Marxists we call on the international proletariat to stand for the unconditional military defense of the North Korean deformed workers state against imperialism. This crucially includes the right of North Korea to develop nuclear weapons to defend itself against the American nuclear cowboys. With the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet Union in 1991-92, which removed a vital military counterweight to U.S. imperialism, America's rulers feel free from all constraints to strut around like the unchallenged masters of the world. Had the former Soviet Union not possessed its nuclear arsenal, the U.S. imperialists could very well have turned countries like North Korea and China—countries where capitalist rule has been overthrown—into irradiated rubble.

Last year, Bush declared that North Korea was part of an "axis of evil," and a few months later the Pentagon published a "Nuclear Posture Review" that openly targets that country along with China, Iraq and others for a potential nuclear first strike. It was patently clear that North Korea was next on U.S. imperialism's hit list after Iraq. After the Pyongyang regime pulled out of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty earlier this month, demanding that Washington resume suspended shipments of fuel oil and begin talks on a "non-aggression" treaty, the London Financial Times (12 January) quoted a South Korean official who aptly noted: "North Korea is clearly signalling that it

Defend North Korea's Right to Nuclear Weapons!

wants the US to address these issues now before an Iraqi war starts. The North realizes that if the US succeeds in Iraq, it could confront a more aggressive US."

At the same time, we note that the Bush administration's stated intention of pursuing "peaceful diplomacy" with North Korea exposes the utter hypocrisy of its pretext for war against Iraq. While North Korea has kicked out arms inspectors and openly proclaims its right to develop nuclear weaponry, some 150,000 American troops are already being deployed to

tioned between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in the north and the Republic of Korea in the south, a capitalist police state under American military occupation. Before the outbreak of the 1950-53 Korean War, the South was swept by massive peasant revolts, and when North Korean forces moved in to reunify the country in 1950, they were greeted as liberators. In a failed attempt to destroy North Korea as well as the 1949 Chinese Revolution, U.S. imperialism devastated the peninsula in the

ment and a starvation embargo.

Despite the rule of a nationalist Stalinist bureaucracy, the overthrow of capitalism in the North was a historic defeat for imperialism and a victory for the working people of Asia and the world. The existence of a planned, collectivized economy brought real advances to the working people of North Korea. Until the mid 1970s, North Korea's planned economy significantly outperformed the South, creating a modern industrial infrastructure. At the same time, the situation of a nation bifurcated by a "demilitarized zone" packed with more weaponry per square meter than any place on earth severely distorted the economy in the North. Particularly in the aftermath of the collapse of the Soviet Union, which provided the vast bulk of military and technological aid to North Korea, the situation became dire. In 1992, China cut off shipments of cheap oil to the North as a concession to obtain diplomatic and economic relations with South Korea. Starting in 1995, the country was hit by natural disasters producing a famine of historic proportions.

The disastrous situation in the North has been compounded by the extreme form of economic autarky pushed by the North Korean bureaucracy under the rubric of Juche (self-reliance). The political outlook of the bureaucracy was and is rooted in the Stalinist lie that socialism—a classless, egalitarian society based on material abundance—can be built in one or even half a country. This anti-working-class, nationalist dogma undermines defense of what remains of the collectivized economy and is counterposed to any perspective for international socialist revolution, and particularly to a struggle for workers revolution in the South.

Today, North Korea is ruled by a particularly cultish, nepotistic and bizarre Stalinist regime centered on "Dear Leader" Kim Jong Il. The only road forward for the beleaguered working masses of the North is through the perspective of

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Spartacist Japan

December 31 Tokyo protest against U.S. troops in Korea. Spartacist Group Japan sign on far left reads: "Smash Counterrevolutionary Alliance Between Japanese and American Imperialism Through Workers Revolution!"

wage war against Iraq, which denies possession of any nuclear or biological weapons and has allowed United Nations weapons inspectors in.

The North Korean deformed workers state emerged following the liberation of the northern half of the Korean peninsula from 35 years of Japanese colonialism. Following World War II, Korea was parti-

Korean War, killing more than three million people and obliterating whole cities, including Pyongyang. Following Chinese military intervention, the war ended in a stalemate at the 38th parallel, and ever since the U.S. has maintained a massive military presence in the South, while North Korea has been subjected to decades of imperialist military encircle-