



Palm Island Explodes

Stand With Militant Aborigines! For Union Actions!

DECEMBER 6—Early on the morning of 19 November, 36-year-old Aborigine Cameron Doomadgee, a happy-go-lucky guy and one of Palm Island's top hunters, was out crabbing on the island located 65 kilometres north-east of Townsville, in Queensland's north. Hours later, after having been arrested by police for singing on the street, Doomadgee lay dead in the police lockup with horrific injuries including four broken ribs and a ruptured liver, portal vein and spleen. Doomadgee's mother Doris, who is dying of cancer, said, "I loved my son so much and now I have lost him and I can't understand how he could die while in custody. He was a quiet and gentle son" (*Koori Mail*, 1 December).

Days later, in dramatic events reminiscent of the heroic defensive struggle against racist police terror by Aborigines in Redfern last February, the Aboriginal people of Palm Island exploded in grief and rage after a whitewash coroner's report supported the police story that Doomadgee's death was caused by a "scuffle" at the local watch-house. Some scuffle! In fact two other prisoners said they saw police assault

Doomadgee. Islander Roy Branwell, who was in an adjoining cell, stated he saw police sitting on Doomadgee's chest punching him and calling out, "Have you had enough now Doomadgee, have you had enough?" (*Australian*, 26-27 November).

Hundreds of long-suffering Aborigines, outraged at the cover-up and speaking of Doomadgee's cold-blooded murder, decided enough was enough and torched the hated local police station, police residences and courthouse, institutions of racist state repression. For once on the receiving end, the cops fled and barricaded themselves in the nearby hospital. Others fled the island altogether.

The Beattie state Labor government immediately flew in 80 gun-toting Tactical Response Group cops by Chinook helicopter. They occupied the local school, and set about terrorising the 4,000-strong Aboriginal community, the majority of the island's population. Armed with semi-automatic weapons

and dressed in full battle armour, they stormed homes, kicking down doors, using stun guns, making summary arrests and holding children at gunpoint. Reminiscent of imperialist-occupied Iraq, vehicle loads of armed police patrolled the streets. One Aboriginal leader described how police acted like

stormtroopers: "They deliberately closed off the island while they practised their terrorist drills on unarmed Palm Islanders" (*Australian*, 29 November). *The Palm Island militants must not be left to stand alone! Trade-union power must be brought to bear—for a class-struggle fight for Aboriginal rights! There needs to be working-class-centred mobilisations in the major cities to demand: Police* *continued on page 2*



Townsville, 9 December: Elizabeth Doomadgee (second from left) leads 1,200 marchers protesting cop killing of her brother. Stewart McLean

Bosses Escalate War on Unions, Minorities

For a Class-Struggle Fight Against Racist Capitalism!

The sweeping 9 October federal election victory for the right-wing Liberal/National Coalition, shortly followed by the re-election of the crazed Bush regime in the United States, has the Australian capitalist class in a belligerent mood. The ruling class is already pumped by the "success" of Australian-led colonial expeditions to East Timor and the Solomon Islands. And by the fact that while the brutal U.S.-led occupation of Iraq is going badly for the imperialists, its own military has not taken troop losses there. Now Australian police are in operation in Papua New Guinea enforcing the neocolonial subjugation of its impoverished people.

At home this arrogant ruling class is aggressively seeking to stop any resistance to its drive to boost its rate of profit. It aims to attack the defensive organisations of the working class, the unions, and to divide the working people through fomenting the deepest racist and social reaction. Meanwhile, the Australian rulers, acting under the cover of their counterrevolutionary alliance with the U.S. (the world's only superpower),



Ian Currie

25 November: Thousands of unionists march in Melbourne demanding freedom for jailed Victorian union leader Craig Johnston.

threaten "pre-emptive strikes" in the Asia-Pacific region.

Egged on by anti-union heavies such as Patrick waterfront chief, Chris Corriegan, and Perth builder, Len Buckeridge, the Howard government is preparing to ram through laws that would deprive

workers employed in small businesses of any legal protection against sackings, expand individual work contracts, and further restrict union representatives from entering worksites. The government aims to smash the militant CFMEU construction union and cripple other unions such

as the tertiary education (NTEU) and manufacturing (AMWU) unions.

Key to the Howard government's ideological preparation for further union-busting and colonial military intervention is promoting pride in the "achievements" and "values" of capitalist White Australia. This includes a vicious campaign to justify and intensify the dispossession of this country's original inhabitants. Howard's program of "mutual obligation" for Aborigines, including threatening to slash welfare and impose curfews for Aboriginal kids, is a rewrap of the vicious, racist paternalism of the first half of last century when "Aboriginal protectors" dominated and controlled, apartheid-style, the lives of Aboriginal people.

In the lead-up to the elections both Howard and Latham aggressively promoted "family values" reinforcing stifling dependence on this institution which is both the central source of women's oppression and an integral prop of the bourgeois order. Both Tories and Labor supported the reactionary ban on gay

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Protest Massacre of Philippine Strikers

On 16 November, the Philippine police and army attacked a strike of sugar workers at the Hacienda Luisita, killing seven and arresting over 100 strikers. The U.S. Partisan Defense Committee (PDC) issued a protest statement to president Arroyo and sent a message of solidarity to the two unions organising the striking workers. We reprint below the 24 November PDC letter of solidarity to the Central Azucarera de Tarlac Labor Union and the United Luisita Workers Union.

The Partisan Defense Committee—the legal and social defense organization associated with the Spartacist League/U.S., section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist)—denounces in the strongest terms the savage violence of the Philippine National Police and Philippine Army on Tuesday, November 16, 2004 against striking workers of the Central Azucarera de Tarlac Labor Union (CATLU) and the United Luisita Workers Union (ULWU) at the sprawling Hacienda Luisita of the sugar barons of the Cojuangco family, including former President Corazon Cojuangco Aquino.

The multiple acts of cold blooded murder by the Philippine National Police and

units of the Philippine Armed Forces who fired on thousands of striking CATLU and ULWU workers and their supporters with tear gas and high-powered rifles, repeatedly charged the strikers' barricade with armed personnel carriers and waded into the strikers swinging their truncheons with wanton brutality, leaving seven dead, including one child, and hundreds injured and wounded, were acts of savage brutality which should be condemned by working people the world over. Now the over 100 arrested strikers imprisoned as a result of these attacks face dangerous government/police frame-up charges that they instigated the violence! Among others, Lieutenant General Romeo Dominguez, chief of the Armed Forces' Northern Luzon Command has retailed the dangerous lie that "The police recovered firearms in the vicinity where unidentified armed men, believed to be communist, had fired at random." This crude frame-up is carried out to set up the arrested for long prison terms and the union pickets and supporters for further armed attacks. Free the CATLU/ULWU striker prisoners! Drop all the charges! Hands off the Luisita strikers! Reinstate the 327 fired workers!

We greatly admire the courage of your members who continue the strike and the pickets at the Hacienda Luisita despite facing the state's brutal armed force and the constant threat of government murder and imprisonment. We say: Victory to the (CATLU) and (ULWU) strikers!

We know that the real source of the violence in the Philippines is the blood-drenched capitalist regime dedicated to further grinding down the living conditions of the workers and peasants of this impoverished country in the interest of the sugar oligarchs, the International Monetary Fund and the country's semicolonial masters in Washington. Presently presided over by aristocrat President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, the fragile system of parliamentary democracy is a paper-thin cover for brutal exploitation and savage state repression against the Philippine working class and peasantry, and their unions and political organizations, perpetrated in an unbroken line from "people power"



Tarlac province, Philippines, 16 November 2004: Hacienda Luisita strikers flee from military and police gunfire.

president Corazon Aquino to Fidel Ramos, Joseph Estrada and now Arroyo, differing in form only from the dictatorial regime of the hated Ferdinand Marcos. In addition, Arroyo has for years welcomed the increase in the number of U.S. troops in the Philippines under cover of the supposed "war against terror" being carried out by the murderous madmen in Washington. Down with the Arroyo/Washington terror against the workers, peasants and minorities of the Philippines! Down with the Visiting Forces Agreement! U.S. military out of the Philippines!

Victory to the Hacienda Luisita strike!

Enclosed please find our letter of protest to President Arroyo. In addition, we are mailing a \$100 donation to you for the Hacienda Luisita strike. ■

Palm Island...

(continued from page 1)

occupation forces out of Palm Island! Down with racist state terror!

Twenty-six people have been arrested in Palm Island and shipped off to Townsville where they face charges including riot, serious assault and arson. One solicitor described how a conviction of riot that includes destruction of a building could equate to a life sentence.

A spokesman for the police has demanded that attempted murder charges be laid against those who torched the police station. With the ever-increasing number of cop killings of Aborigines, this is nothing less than a racist provocation and an incitement to further deadly racist violence. Only days later, Aboriginal youths faced Klan-style terror at the hands of white farm workers near Goondiwindi, with two youths tortured and at least one of them dragged by a rope that was tied in a noose around his neck. Meanwhile the Aboriginal populations of northern Queensland have been confronting Ku Klux Klan terror in Klan-infested rural areas around Townsville.

But Aboriginal communities in Palm Island, Townsville, Brisbane and elsewhere have not been cowed by this vicious state repression and fascist terror. Militants are seething about this latest cop killing. The Brisbane Aboriginal community is planning a march at 10 a.m. on Saturday 11 December at Roma

Street Forum. *Trade-union contingents, leftists and immigrant groups must be there in solidarity with Aborigines against police terror. Free the Palm Island Aboriginal militants—drop the charges now! Drop the charges against the Redfern black militants!*

It is the same capitalist state—the cops, courts and prisons—which has systematically killed and dispossessed Aborigines for more than two hundred years, which today also targets immigrants, workers pickets and trade-union militants, such as the recently imprisoned union leader Craig Johnston. In February 1993, 350 striking workers picketed Australian Meat Holdings near Townsville and faced down scabs and strikebreaking cops for three weeks to win the reinstatement of Aboriginal stockman and unionist, Eddie Alley. This powerful strike of an integrated worksite gave a glimpse of the potential social power of the multiracial organised labour movement to champion the rights of the specially oppressed Aboriginal people suffering under racist Australian capitalism.

At a mass meeting in Brisbane on 1 December, the Murri indigenous community responded to events on Palm Island with a series of demands, subsequently supported by the reformist Socialist Alliance. These demands rightly call for the release of the Palm Island militants and the dropping of charges against them. However, the fifth and final demand places trust in the United Nations (UN) including asking it to send an inves-

tigative team to examine the evidence. While this is seen as a way to place the horrendous oppression of Aborigines under an international spotlight, we nevertheless warn that the UN is no friend of subjugated peoples.

To the contrary, the UN is essentially a den of imperialist thieves, that is, a bunch of John Howards and Peter Beatties, and their servants in the neocolonies—like the Papua New Guinea (PNG) government which has just accepted racist Australian cops into PNG. It has served since its inception as a "legal" fig leaf for imperialist slaughter and oppression. For example, a UN intervention force into the African state of Somalia in 1993, supposedly to provide aid, resulted in U.S. helicopter gunships massacring hundreds of black residents in the capital, Mogadishu. It is now well known that more than a decade of UN sanctions on Iraq left up to one-and-a-half million women and children dead. Working-class militants and anti-colonial fighters around the globe rightly hate the UN. Thus the struggle to mobilise workers around the globe—the true international allies of all downtrodden peoples—in solidarity with struggles for Aboriginal rights is undercut by UN involvement. Furthermore, the truth of racist police violence in this country has been repeatedly written in blood for more than two centuries and does not need to be further verified. What is needed is mass union/black/minority mobilisations to oppose racist state terror. *For international working-class protests in defence of Aboriginal people!*

Palm Island: Racist Terror and Resistance

For almost a century Palm Island has epitomised the genocidal impulse of the white Australian capitalist rulers against the continent's original inhabitants. Before the white invasion of northern Queensland the island belonged to the Manbarra people. Then in 1918 the Queensland government decreed that Palm Island would become a place to confine "uncontrollable" Aborigines and Islanders. Over the next two decades approximately 1,600 people from more than 40 different tribal and language groups across Queensland were snatched from their homes and families and imprisoned on the island.

For decades the island was run under apartheid-style laws. Blacks and whites lived in different areas. Aborigines were not allowed to speak their own languages, or drink alcohol in their homes. Those Aborigines that got work had their wages stolen. Indeed, until the 1950s, residents slaved for no pay at all! No one could leave the island without a permit from the superintendent who also censored mail. While notorious laws enshrining such conditions have been modified, the institutionalised racism very much remains. Today, the unemployment rate for the island's Aborigines is 90 percent and life expectancy is around 50 years. Islanders have had to fight for the most elementary rights. Racist government rule on Palm Island has twice been punctured by courageous strike actions; the first in 1957 against a wage cut and brutal treatment of Aboriginal women, and the second in 1974 against the sacking of the local community council.

During a recent feisty demonstration outside Townsville court where the Palm Island defendants were appearing, an elderly lady, Auntie Agnes, said: "a tidal wave is gonna flush out the guilt and the racism. We want justice. An earthquake has started..." We Marxists of the Spartacist League say that the tsunami, which will confront racism and all manifestations of capitalist repression is the revolutionary mobilisation of the multiracial working class, standing at the head of all the oppressed. But to unleash this force requires breaking workers away from the racist, pro-capitalist ALP, which preaches loyalty to the capitalist system, and forging a class-struggle leadership of the unions linked to an authentic communist party. The path to elementary justice, for Aboriginal people and all the oppressed and exploited, will be opened when industry and agriculture is expropriated from the profit-hungry capitalists through workers revolution.

We will not forget Cameron Dooma-gee who now joins the long list of Aborigines, from Eddie Murray to Daniel Yock, killed at the hands of the capitalist state and countless other victims of White Australian imperialism from Vietnam to Iraq. *Defend the Palm Island Aboriginal militants against racist state terror! For union actions now!* ■

Australasian

SPARTACIST



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

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EDITOR: P. Balasubramaniam

YOUNG SPARTACUS EDITOR: D. van Scheveningen

CIRCULATION MANAGER: Mike Wallace

PRODUCTION MANAGER: Glenn Blackall

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Drop the Charges Now!

Support for Redfern Aboriginal Militants

DECEMBER 7—In angry meetings in Queensland over the racist cop terror in Palm Island, Aboriginal activists have been drawing parallels to the explosive February events in Redfern, Sydney. On the night of 15 February, residents in the area known as The Block defiantly defended their community from racist cop terror after a 17-year-old Kamilaroi youth was killed at the hands of police. With great courage and acumen, Aboriginal youth and their supporters waged a nine-hour pitched battle against marauding cops. Since then, a police operation ordered by the Carr NSW state Labor government has rounded up some 35 militants who are now facing charges. *We say there should be united-front protests and actions to defend the heroic Redfern and Palm Island militants. Trade unions, Aboriginal activists, leftists and immigrant youth must be brought together in struggle to demand: Drop all the charges!* On 24 August, a Spartacist League (SL) leaflet broadcast a call by the Partisan Defence Committee (a class-struggle defence organisation associated with the SL) for protest statements to be sent to the NSW Attorney-General demanding the dropping of the charges.

Since then, support for the Redfern defendants has broadened. Protest statements include those by well-known Aboriginal activists, by the prisoners' rights group Justice Action, and by the Freedom Socialist Party (FSP). A 7 December statement by long-time black activist, Jenny Munro, noted that "the local Aboriginal community do support those people arrested" and added her "voice to that of my husband Lyall's to say to those

Partisan Defence Committee
The Aboriginal protest group from the Partisan Defence Committee was based in the NSW Attorney General's office, Sydney, on 17 August.

Freedom Socialist Party
Solidarity Saloon, 580 Sydney Road, Brunswick Vic 3056
Postal: PO Box 266, West Brunswick Vic 3055
Phone/fax: 03-9388-0062 • www.socialism.com
18 September 2004
NSW Attorney General

Justice Action
Justice Action fully supports the Aboriginal community and the dropping of all charges against the young Black militants. We believe that, instead of state repression, the community deserves health, education and decent housing in accordance with their needs and requests.
With thanks,
Justice Action
September 23 2004

Handwritten Note:
We demand that every person who has been arrested and charged with any offence in relation to the community reaction to the killing of TJ, be immediately set free and the charges dropped.
**SO SAY US NOW,
SO SAY US ALL,
ONETIME !!**
**SAM WATSON
SENIOR MAN
THE BRISBANE ABORIGINAL COMMUNITY**
I highlight these issues in particular to demonstrate that the local Aboriginal community do support those people arrested in relation to the riot of 15.2.04 and to add my voice to that of my husband Lyall's to say to those charged "they are brave young people we are immensely proud of."
My final note to the powers that be in NSW is you can ignore us, you can pretend that your token elders speak for us, and you can use more paternalistic and racist solutions to solve the black "problem" than has been used in the past.
But be warned, we are not going anywhere but here, because it is home.
but until you deal with your racism and accept you are

**Jenny Munro
Community Activist.**

stated that the killing "of TJ Hickey on the streets of Redfern on the 15th of February and the subsequent brutal repression of the Redfern indigenous community by the state Police, is a clear and terrifying statement that nothing has changed within this racist land and that indeed—the colonial genocide goes on!" Noting the killing of black children by the police and prison guards, Watson's 15 October letter pointedly stated that "the courts and the parliaments have been parties to each and every attack on our people."

But while Sam Watson was a Socialist Alliance (SA) senate candidate in the recent federal elections and the FSP is a component of SA, SA has, to date, failed

government's latest sinister plans to drive Aboriginal tenants off The Block in order to boost property prices in the Redfern-Waterloo area.

Key to defending the Redfern militants is the struggle to win union support for this cause. It is the organised working class—through its ability to shut down capitalist profit by withdrawing its labour—that has the social power to defeat campaigns of state repression. And the proletariat must champion the rights of the Aboriginal people in order to achieve the fighting unity necessary to confront an increasingly confident capitalist ruling class. Many of the most politically-conscious Maori, Asian, Arab and Turkish workers living in racist White Australia identify with the struggles of Aboriginal people. Meanwhile leftist and worker militants in the neocolonial countries of Asia and the Pacific see in the brutal oppression of Aboriginal people a mirror of their own subjugation under U.S., Japanese and Australian imperialism. To unite across race lines in this country and to win the trust of, and hence a crucial fighting alliance with, the workers of the Asia-Pacific region, the proletariat must show determined opposition to the racist campaigns of the White Australia capitalist rulers.

No Illusions in the Capitalist State!

In response to incessant cop brutality, some left groups and Aboriginal leaders have raised calls for some form of "civilian review" of the police or for governments to "empower" and resource policing of areas like The Block by elders in the black community. For example, a 25 August letter to the *Koori Mail* by the FSP proposes "the establishment of independent elected civilian review boards" as a "mechanism of accountability" of the police. But the police, along with the military, courts and prisons are at the core of the capitalist state which was created, exists, and is replenished for the very purpose of enforcing the rule of the racist exploiting class over the workers and dispossessed. While it is possible, through social struggle, to win temporary concessions from the capitalists such as wage increases or greater access to social services, the bourgeoisie are no more going to cede control of their armed thugs, the police, than they are going to hand over power to the toiling masses. Any pretence of "civilian review" of the cops invariably

serves to simply legitimise the police by propagating the deadly illusion that they are serving and being directed by the whole community.

Similarly, any "community policing" of areas like The Block that is set up and financed by the ruling class will be used by it to legitimise racist repression and make complicit some Aborigines in the oppression of their own people. And the only elders whom the bourgeoisie would "empower" to police their communities would be those that the capitalists seek to buy off or those who have already shown themselves willing to be allies of the racist rulers—like the people who have accepted invitations to join Howard's hand-picked Aboriginal "advisory" council or Mick Mundine, who has welcomed racist cop raids targeting The Block.

What is needed is a program of union/black/minority action against racist terror as part of a class-struggle fightback against the all-sided capitalist attacks on the unions, the poor, women, Aborigines and immigrants. To realise this perspective requires a political struggle to break (in the first instance, the most class-conscious) workers from illusions in the potential reformability of the capitalist state and to expose the Laborite misleaders who tie the working class to the bosses' state. We need an authentic Leninist-Trotskyist party to lead the proletariat and its allies in a socialist revolution to sweep the racist capitalist system into the dustbin of history. On the way to this goal we need to defend all those who have courageously stood against the atrocities of racist capitalism: *Drop the charges against the Redfern and Palm Island black militants!*

* * *

Fax protest statements demanding the dropping of charges against the Redfern defendants to the NSW Attorney-General, Robert Debus on (02) 9228 3166. Fax copies to the Partisan Defence Committee on (02) 9281 2185.



Asp photo

Opposition to racist cop presence in Redfern emblazoned on part of the Aboriginal Tent Embassy in Canberra. Activists have themselves defied repeated violent attacks to maintain embassy.

charged "they are brave young people we are immensely proud of." In a speech at a 24 September Sydney rally in defence of jailed trade-union leader Craig Johnston, Justice Action leader, Brett Collins raised the case of the Redfern militants. An SL supporter was met with applause when he called for the dropping of charges against the black defendants at a 31 July refugee rights rally outside Sydney's Villawood immigrant detention centre. And earlier, in a small but important victory for all who solidarise with the Redfern struggles, the Police Association was defeated in its manoeuvres to stop a 31 March SL public forum in Melbourne "Defend Redfern Aborigines—Mobilise Union Power!", after unionists and leftists joined in a campaign of exposure initiated by the SL.

In a protest letter in defence of the Redfern militants, Sam Watson, in his capacity as a long-time prominent figure in the Brisbane Aboriginal community,

to in its own name publicly call for the dropping of charges against the Redfern defendants. Those groups and individuals that have taken up the defence of the Aboriginal militants must now redouble their efforts to publicise this case and broaden support for the defendants. A struggle to defend the Redfern and Palm Island militants is not only a way of solidarising with their struggles but a way to push back the tide of racist attacks being faced by Aboriginal people and non-white immigrants. While state Labor governments throughout the country administer brutal and daily racist cop terror, the bigoted federal Howard government is planning to make welfare payments for Aboriginal people conditional on their "behaviour." Under this openly racist, apartheid-style policy, payment cards may be used to set limits on what Aboriginal people can buy using government benefits! Meanwhile new details have emerged of the NSW state

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Israel Out of the Occupied Territories!

Defend the Palestinian People!

We reprint below an article from *Workers Vanguard* (No. 834, 15 October), newspaper of the *Spartacist League/U.S.* This article was written prior to the death of long-time Palestinian nationalist leader Yasir Arafat.

WORKERS VANGUARD

In a murderous rampage paralleling that in Jenin two years ago, Israel's rulers have slaughtered some one hundred Palestinian men, women and children in the densely populated and impoverished Gaza Strip in less than two weeks. The targets of the Israeli offensive: a kindergarten serving about 500 of the children of Jabaliya refugee camp, bulldozed to the ground; stores serving Palestinian workers, demolished; swaths of orchards, farmland, water wells and greenhouses, destroyed; roads, power lines and possibly hundreds of homes, leveled. One teenage girl was shot in the head as she baked bread with her mother, another as she swept the floor in front of her door. Nine small children were wounded when an Israeli shell careened into the house where families had assembled them for safety, while a deaf-mute man was shot and killed when he tried to look out his window.

The pretext for the latest round of Zionist mass murder—"Operation Days of Penitence"—is the killing of four Israelis by makeshift rockets fired from Gaza. The bitter reality of Sharon's promise to evacuate Gaza has been an increasing number of Palestinians killed. Surrounded by the desert, the sea and an electrified fence, Gaza resembles a giant concentration camp where over 1.4 million Palestinians languish in destitution. It is symptomatic of how frequent the Israeli mass killings of Palestinians have become that there is barely a pretense of condemnation by the "international community" and virtually no protest on the streets, either in the Near East or elsewhere. The situation cries out for labor-centered protest internationally against the Zionist murder machine. **Defend the Palestinians! All Israeli troops and settlers out of the Occupied Territories!**

In the midst of the Israeli terror operation, on October 7 three bombing attacks at Sinai vacation resorts near Egypt's border with Israel killed at least 33 and wounded some 150 people, mostly vacationing Israelis. Whoever carried out these bombings, these were criminal acts of indiscriminate terror: the enemy of the Palestinians is not the Hebrew-speaking people, but the Israeli capitalist rulers whose tanks are firing into their homes. Indiscriminate attacks on innocent Israeli citizens are not only abhorrent, but serve to ideologically drive the Hebrew-speaking population toward its own ruling class.

Though the Zionist butchers have the whip hand, the Near East provides ample evidence of the genocidal logic of all nationalism. What drives the bloody cycle of Zionist slaughter and Palestinian defiance and despair is the root cause of this conflict: two peoples lay claim to the same land. There can be no equitable resolution to the conflicting national claims of the Palestinian Arab and Hebrew-speaking peoples under capitalism. The Zionist state was created through the expulsion of some 700,000 Arabs in 1948—"The Catastrophe" (*Al Naqba*), commemorated to this day by Palestinians.

The current invasion of Gaza takes place against the backdrop of growing support within Israel for the forcible expulsion of all Palestinians from



Reuters photos

Israeli tank on edge of Gaza, 6 October. Palestinian medics with children injured when tank shell struck their home in Beit Lahia, northern Gaza.



"Greater Israel." A *New York Times* (10 October) article quotes a doctor treating the wounded at a Gaza hospital: "The catastrophe of 1948 will not be repeated. We say, 'We will die here, but we will not leave here.'" The only way to ultimately prevent yet more catastrophes on the scale of 1948—and to realize the national rights of the Palestinians without denying those of the Hebrew-speaking people—lies in workers revolutions to smash all the capitalist regimes in the region.

Those who look to seemingly more "realistic" solutions like the United Nations—which on this occasion as on countless others considered and, after a U.S. veto, rejected a call to halt the Zionist offensive—only ignore the horrific lessons of the history of the Near East. The UN is an assembly of the imperialist powers and their semicolonial victims. It was the UN that presided over the establishment of the state of Israel at the expense of the dispossessed Palestinian people in 1948. Countless imperialist-inspired "peace plans" since, far from opening up any vista of liberation for the Palestinians, have served only to deepen their subjugation under the Zionist jackboot.

Down With the Colonial Occupation of Iraq!

As their Israeli junior partners carry out a murderous assault on the population of Gaza, the U.S. imperialists, assisted by their puppet Iraqi army, storm and bomb cities and regions across Iraq. Najaf has been pummeled; it is now described as largely in ruins. U.S. forces have also been carrying out virtually nightly bombing raids in Falluja, home to about 350,000 people. The U.S. forces have retaken Samarra, a city of about 250,000 people north of Baghdad, killing at least 150 people and wounding unknown numbers.

With this military offensive, the Bush administration is clearly intent on displaying, not least to the American popu-

lace which will be casting votes for president in less than a month, that Iraq is under control and striding toward "democratic" elections in January. But as one resident of Samarra, whose wife and two children were killed by the U.S. invaders, said bitterly: "I've lost my entire family. Why should I trust this government? Why should I vote at all?" (*New York Times*, 11 October).

Bush's glib assurances to the contrary, nothing can conceal the fact that Iraq is on fire, and that the U.S. offensive is only throwing oil on the flames. Each area "stabilized" by the U.S. has insurgent counterparts in cities and towns across the country, and can itself re-erupt in fighting at any time.

To the extent that the various Shi'ite and Sunni militias, which seem to be engaged in most of the fighting, aim their blows against the occupation, we take their side against U.S. imperialism. However, it must be understood that these mutually hostile clerical forces are deeply reactionary; are murderously opposed to women's rights and those of other peoples like the Kurds; and are utterly opposed to the most basic conception of human progress. Among the near-infinite crimes of U.S. imperialism must be added the fact that it has turned Iraq—the cradle of human civilization and a country that was until recently among the most secular in the Near East—into an inferno where women have been driven in fear back into their homes and nearly every day innocent citizens from various countries perish in suicide- or car-bombings or are beheaded in the name of god.

In desperation over the absence of any class struggle against the imperialist occupation—either in Iraq or in the U.S.—some look to the "Iraqi resistance" as the only way to drive out the U.S. imperialists. Such illusions are reinforced by a host of reformist left groups in the U.S. and Europe, who prettify the Sunni and Shi'ite religious gangs as "anti-imperialist." In fact, as we have warned:

"In the absence of working-class struggle in Iraq and internationally against the occupation, the victory of one or another of the reactionary clerical forces is more likely to come about through an alliance with U.S. imperialism" (WV No. 830, 6 August). Typically, Shi'ite leader Moktada al-Sadr, whose Mahdi Army has twice staged a rebellion against the occupation forces in Najaf, is now again dealing with the U.S. for a place in a future neocolonial puppet government.

Political support to the Islamist (or bourgeois nationalist) forces in Iraq is counterposed to the only real perspective for liberating Iraq and the rest of the Near East from the yoke of imperialist domination—socialist revolution. In neighboring Iran, for example, there is a young and powerful proletariat, chafing under the suffocating grip of a reactionary and increasingly discredited Islamic theocracy. A socialist revolution in Iran would be a direct blow for the emancipation of women and national and religious minorities in that prison house of peoples. It would also open up the possibility of a revolutionary transformation of the entire region, offering a vista of proletarian internationalism even to the seemingly intractable national divide in Israel/Palestine. But it is patently obvious that to mobilize the masses of Iran (or those of the Arab countries) on the road of social revolution requires an intransigent opposition to Islamic fundamentalism as well as Western imperialism. Leninist vanguard parties must be built in opposition to all manner of bourgeois nationalism and religious fundamentalism.

As Iraq burns and Bush's Republican Party tries to prove that stability is gaining hold, the Democrats are working frantically to prove that their candidate, John Kerry, would better "finish the job" in Iraq. The Democrats and Republicans step up their sparring with each other every four years, each hoping to demonstrate that theirs is the party that will best represent the "American people." This year, notwithstanding the mostly leaden performance of the Kerry-Edwards campaign, there is more intense fervor than usual to defeat the Republicans, which is hardly surprising: the Bush cabal is a truly frightening administration that has antagonized the U.S.'s erstwhile imperialist allies through its god-invoking crusade in Iraq and created a lot of genuine loathing at home.

The fact is there is no significant difference in policy between these parties over Iraq—only a difference of opinion as to tactics. And when it comes to U.S. support to Zionist Israel, there aren't even tactical differences. Both Democrats and Republicans agree on the need for U.S. imperialist control over the Near East and its oil spigot.

More fundamentally, the U.S. is a class-divided society in which the interests of working people are counterposed to those of the capitalist rulers. The ruling class derives its fabulous wealth from the exploitation of the working people at home and imperialist plunder abroad. The capitalists have two major parties—the Democrats and Republicans—each committed to maintaining imperialism for them. We need a revolutionary workers party that fights to sweep away the imperialist system that breeds poverty, racism and war.

Oslo "Peace" Accord Paved Way to Ghetto

In the most immediate sense, the desperate situation the Palestinians face today is the result of the 1993 Oslo "peace" accords brokered by U.S.

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Defend China, North Korea!

Japanese Trotskyists Oppose Anti-Chinese Chauvinist Outburst

As part of our unconditional military defence of the Chinese, North Korean and Vietnamese deformed workers states we reprint below a leaflet issued by the Spartacist Group Japan against an anti-Chinese chauvinist outburst following the Asia Cup soccer tournament in China. We reprint this 31 August article in the midst of a growing campaign by the U.S. and Australian imperialists against North Korea, and ultimately aimed at China. The escalating bellicosity, including the threat of sanctions, are aimed at the total nuclear disarmament of North Korea as part of the imperialists' plan to claw back North Korea and China for unbridled capitalist exploitation. Along with our comrades internationally, we Trotskyists of the Spartacist League/Australia intransigently defend the right of the Chinese and North Korean deformed workers states to develop and hold nuclear weapons as an act of elementary military defence against the imperialist terror bombers.

As the leaflet notes, our Japanese comrades solidarise with the outrage expressed by Chinese soccer fans towards symbols of Japanese imperialism while opposing the misdirected nationalist harassment and intimidation of the Japanese team members and fans. As our comrades explain, the events surrounding the Asia Cup were shaped by memories of the terror of the Pacific theatre of World War II, centrally a fight between the imperialist powers over who got to rape China.

Tens of millions died in the slaughterhouse of World War II with racist atrocities committed by all the capitalist powers, from the German Nazi holocaust, to the rape of Nanjing by Japanese forces, to the firebombing of Dresden by the British. And there was the horrific nuclear incineration of an estimated 200,000 Japanese civilians in the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki beginning on 6 August 1945 by the U.S. imperialists fully backed and applauded by the White Australian capitalist rulers. Indeed, during World War II the international working class had nothing to gain from the victory of any of the imperialist contenders. Rather, what was necessary in all the imperialist countries was a program of revolutionary defeatism; that is for the proletariats of each country to fight through class-struggle means for the defeat of its "own" capitalist rulers. The world proletariat did have a side with the defence of the Soviet workers state, formed out of the victorious 1917 Bolshevik Revolution. It also had a side with the uprisings in the horribly oppressed colonies from Egypt to Vietnam, which were seeking to tear off the chains of direct imperialist subjugation.

It is not only the Japanese and U.S. imperialists who are despised by the Asian and Pacific workers and rural toilers but also the U.S.'s Australian ally. The Australian imperialists were Washington's junior partners in their murderous counterrevolutionary wars in Korea and Vietnam. Today, with colonial-style jackbooting from East Timor to the Solomon Islands, the Australian capitalist rulers are again ramping up military aggression in the region. Meanwhile, the vicious brutality of successive Australian governments against Aboriginal people and the bald anti-Asian racism in this country are notorious in Southeast Asia.

The Howard Government's statements about Australian pre-emptive strikes into Asian countries without their approval (combined with Australia's recent purchase of cruise missiles) has alarmed many Asian and Pacific countries. Some members of the Association of South-East Asian Nations even sought a non-aggression pact with Australia. Under the cover of the U.S. alliance, the strutting Australian foreign affairs minister,

president of Taiwan, and also the Japanese Communist Party in the 10 August issue of *Shinbun Akahata*. The Communist Party denounced the actions of the Chinese fans, which they claim "injured not just the feelings of sports lovers, but also injured the friendly feelings between Japanese and Chinese people." They go on to advise the Japanese bourgeoisie that "Both Japan and China should sit down and peacefully work out a resolution to



Spartacist Japan

Spartacist Group Japan at April 1996 protest against U.S.-Japan military alliance. Signs at centre read: "For the Right of Nuclear and Military Testing for Chinese Workers State!" and "Not One Man, Not One Yen to Imperialist Japanese Military!"

Alexander Downer, not only immediately rejected the request but provocatively reaffirmed pre-emptive strikes in Asian countries. Supposedly this is to prevent terrorist attack but in reality will be to assert by military force Australia's plunder of mineral resources and superexploitation of labour in the region. For their part, the bloody comprador capitalist rulers, in countries like Indonesia and Malaysia, seek a non-aggression pact with the Australian imperialists to ensure a stable anti-Communist environment in which they can take their cut of the superprofits gouged from the Asian masses.

Against the imperialist rulers and their local satraps, we communists in Australia seek class-struggle unity of the working class here with the combative toiling masses of the region, from Jakarta to Seoul. We stand opposed to every attempt by the Australian capitalist class to impose neocolonial domination throughout the region and seek opportunities to forge links with the powerful Japanese working class, which under the leadership of a Leninist/Trotskyist party will play a decisive role in shattering imperialism throughout East Asia and the Pacific.

スパルタシスト

The final match of the Asia Cup soccer tournament was played weeks ago, but still we are being bombarded with "analysis" as to why the Japanese team and fans were not welcomed in the former Japanese colony. Foreign minister Yoriko Kawaguchi thought the behavior of the Chinese fans was "deplorable" and demanded that "Chinese soccer fans think a little more about their anti-Japanese moves" (*Japan Today*, 9 August). Minions in the Foreign Ministry threatened to organise a boycott of the 2008 Olympic Games to be held in Beijing. This threat was echoed by the anti-communist

[historical] problem." The rightwing ideologue Ishihara Shintaro, governor of Tokyo, demanded that the Japanese emperor pay a visit to Yasukuni shrine [of the war dead] on 15 August "to spite its Asian neighbors."

It is with utter hypocrisy that the imperialist rulers of this country rallied against the Chinese "boo boys." All international sporting events are spectacles of patriotism and nationalism. For example, the slogan of the Japanese Olympic baseball team is "for the flag." The justified hatred that many Chinese have for the bloody symbols of Japanese imperialism is not just about the past, it is also about the present. Prime minister Koizumi's visits to Yasukuni shrine are deliberate provocations against the working people of this country and throughout Asia, particularly in the Chinese and North Korean deformed workers states and South Korea. These visits—together with the Ministry of Education's approval of reactionary history and civics textbooks for junior high school students, the bourgeoisie's attempts to revise Article 9 of the constitution, and the deployment of

the Japanese military to Iraq—are messages to Japan's former colonies: Japanese imperialism is on an aggressive campaign to overcome the "defeated nation" syndrome, the Pacific War chapter of Japanese history. The Ministry of Justice's new "turn in a foreigner" website has sent thousands of Chinese immigrants underground. Seventy percent of Chinese students who have applied for visas have been denied and immigration cops are constantly raiding and closing down schools that cater to Chinese students.

Just as we defend the Tokyo school-teachers who recently have been victimised by the state for refusing to sing the *kimigayo* ["The Emperor's Reign" national anthem], and stand together with Japanese anti-war protesters who booed Koizumi in Hiroshima on 6 August, we solidarise with the outrage expressed by the Chinese fans toward the *kimigayo* and *hinomaru* [national flag]. But we oppose the misdirected harassment and intimidation of the Japanese team members and fans. Instead of seeking alliances with the Japanese working class in struggle against Japanese imperialism, Chinese nationalism serves to drive the Japanese working class and youth into the hands of their own bourgeoisie.

While carrying out a chauvinist and murderous campaign domestically, the Japanese bourgeoisie has joined with U.S. imperialism to build a theatre missile defence system whose targets are China and North Korea. The arrest and detention of Chinese nationalists last December for landing on the Senkaku Islands was a message to Beijing that Japan intends to play a greater military role in the Pacific. Meanwhile, the U.S. military just carried out unprecedented naval manoeuvres which both China and North Korea correctly viewed as provocations against them. We stand for the unconditional military defence of the Chinese and North Korean deformed workers states against imperialism and internal counterrevolution. We defend their right to possess nuclear weapons and further develop and expand their nuclear capacities. This Trotskyist program is integral to the task of mobilising the Japanese proletariat for a socialist revolution to sweep away the Japanese capitalist order. Simultaneously we call for a proletarian political revolution to oust the sellout Stalinist bureaucratic

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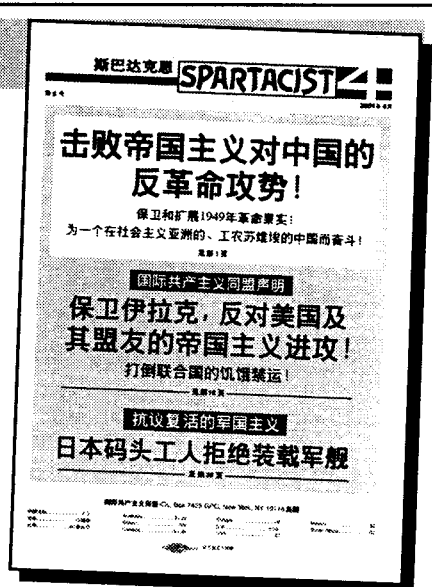
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Statement of the International Communist League, 23 October 2002

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Young Spartacus

Down with ALP/Liberal Anti-Sex, Anti-Porn Witchhunt!

State Out of the Bedroom! Down With Reactionary "Age of Consent" Laws!

In this brutal anti-woman, anti-gay and anti-youth capitalist society dominated by twisted bourgeois morality, any act deemed to be outside the ruling class' dictated sexual "norms" is considered deviant, and those who consensually engage in them suffer persecution, prosecution and vilification at the hands of the vicious state. This was demonstrably shown when Melbourne teacher Karen

Ellis was not as fortunate in avoiding a jail term for the same "offence," was tennis coach Gavin Hopper who earlier this year was sentenced to three-and-a-half years for an, again, *consensual* relationship he had with a student *thirteen* years ago! But neither could jail spare Hopper from the standard plethora of smears synonymous with the charge of "gross indecency with a minor," including being described as a

Pushing the notion that New South Welshmen and Victorians under 16, South Australians and Tasmanians under 17 (repeat: "age of consent" laws are *arbitrary* and *reactionary*) are somehow incapable of rationally deciding what is and isn't in their interests and knowing their "real" desires, the state encourages teenage abstinence and the idea of sex and sin as being synonymous. Youth sexuality is a biological fact and stands in contradiction to "age of consent" laws. As the Spartacist League/U.S. wrote in defence of the North American Man/Boy Love Association (NAMBLA):

"The fact is that age-of-consent laws (which have their roots in the 'bride-price' guarantee of virginity of women in arranged marriages) do not protect children. They are designed to repress the sexuality of youth with the power of the state. They enforce the reactionary morality of the bourgeois nuclear family, an institution at the core of the oppression of women, homosexuals and children. It is within the family that most brutality and rape against children occur."

—"Defend NAMBLA!",
Workers Vanguard No. 321,
14 January 1983

Ultimately, the upholding of the inherently oppressive institution of the family as a powerful tool of regimentation and conservatism, and fostering obedience to authority is what the capitalist state aims for. It's all part of the capitalist rulers' desire for a conformist and compliant youth, unquestioning of their (for the majority) miserable existences, place in society and destiny, be it in the form of flipping hamburgers on slave wages under hazardous conditions or being lined up as cannon fodder for future imperialist wars. In fact, the oppression of youth takes on many other forms outside the sexual. Increases in HECS fees, casualisation of jobs and harassment from brutal racist cops are what working-class and immigrant youth of this country have to face regularly. A telling example of the campaign against youth can be seen from Murdoch's *Daily Telegraph*'s bullying of P-plate drivers. An editorial in the paper on 25 November was condescendingly titled "Protect youths from themselves"! For young women, Australian capitalist society is doubly brutal with its White Australia

racism, male chauvinism and celebration of the "ocker." The scapegoating of single mothers in the recent federal elections followed by calls to restrict abortion only further emphasise the deep oppression suffered by women in this country. If one needs any further evidence of the treatment youth receive from the capitalist state in Australia, one need only look at the treatment meted out by Carr's notoriously vicious cops to the anti-war youth who protested against the Iraq war in student strikes in March of last year.

"Age of consent" laws also assume a particularly nasty anti-gay bias. If proof be needed, one need not look past the legislation of several states and territories where the age of consent for homosexual men is higher than it is for heterosexuals (e.g. NSW and NT—two years higher, WA three years higher at 21 years!). We demand: *State out of the bedroom! Free Gavin Hopper! Clear the name of Karen Ellis! Full equality for homosexuals! Free abortion on demand!*

Effective Consent: The Only Criterion for Sexual Relations!

Nicely articulating what is the plainly obvious mindset of many teenagers, Ellis' student earlier this year commented, "I found her attractive...so when you find someone attractive, you go after them." Around the country teenagers adorn their rooms with posters of supermodels who may very well be several years their senior. But according to the law, given the (remote) chance of acting on their sexual fantasies, they would have to suppress their urges. Try telling that to a teenager and see how well you are received!

As Marxists we believe that the only criterion for sexual relations should be effective consent; that is, mutual agreement and understanding without coercion, irrespective of age. But determining what is *effective* consent in a society based on inequality can be tricky, and particularly where youth or the mentally impaired are involved there are grey areas. But the merits of a liaison if called into question must be judged on a case by case basis—the act of sex in itself is not *a priori* evidence of abuse or coercion.



Network 10

17 June 2004: Karen Ellis—persecuted for having a consensual sexual relation with an eager student—leaves Melbourne Magistrates Court with her husband.

Ellis was given a suspended sentence of 22 months in early November for having a wholly consensual sexual relationship with one of her students, prompting the sentencing judge to damn Ellis as having committed a "fundamental evil." That is, for having had a cross-generational relationship in violation of the capitalist state's arbitrary and reactionary "age of consent" laws, what was, and should have remained, a private (and enjoyable) matter between two consenting people has been dragged out for public and media scrutiny, ridicule and slander. Prosecuted at the behest of the Bracks Labor government of Victoria, Ellis will now carry the title of "serious sexual offender" and has been placed on the sexual offenders register banning her from working with children.

In a wrongly named "victim's impact statement," the sixteen-year-old involved asserted, "At no stage has this affected my life. If anything, I have gained" (*Australian*, 11 November) and in an interview with the Seven Network commented "I'd say if it doesn't affect me now, I don't see how it's going to affect me in years to come." Further underscoring the absurdity of the charge against Ellis, even the judge had to concede, "the victim in the legal sense [i.e. the student] is saying 'I'm not a victim at all; if anyone's a victim, it's her'" (*Age*, 5 November). In acknowledgment of the humiliation suffered by Ellis, the judge deemed this "freak show" punishment enough: jail was not necessary.

"knight in shining armour... [with] a darker motive" and (god forbid!) possessing the sex drive of Errol Flynn!

Unlike Ellis, Hopper has shown no remorse for his "crime" after the former student involved later decided that she felt hurt by the relationship. A retrospectively uncomfortable or disappointing consensual relationship should not equate to retroactive sexual assault. Given the tangle of race, sex and class in this bigoted society, even consensual relationships can often be emotionally exploitative and unequal—but to call them "crimes" is to bring in the state, which is the very enforcer of that bigotry and exploitation.

The prosecution of Ellis and Hopper comes amid an anti-sex witchhunt being played out in tandem by both the revamped and re-elected federal conservative Coalition government and the state Labor governments. Aimed at curbing anything but the most rigidly (mature) heterosexual and monogamous relations, together with the active support of organised religion and right-wing bigots and busybodies, this "family values" crusade is assuming a myriad of forms from the "discussion" on abortion being pushed by thuggish federal health minister, Tony Abbott, to the ban on homosexual marriage (see "Marriage and the Capitalist State," *ASp* No. 188, Spring 2004). The contempt that the capitalist state displays in its draconian measures against teenagers especially, and youth more generally is but one part of this offensive.

Sydney, 28 March 2003: Police arrest young student protesting Iraq war. At behest of NSW Carr Labor government, students were violently attacked by police.



Child abuse, sexual, physical and mental, is very real and brutal under capitalism. As Bolshevik leader, Leon Trotsky noted in the beginning of his autobiography, *My Life*,

"Childhood is looked upon as the happiest time of life. Is that always true? No, only a few have a happy childhood. The idealization of childhood originated in the old literature of the privileged.... But the majority of the people... sees, on the contrary, a childhood of darkness, hunger and dependence. Life strikes the weak—and who is weaker than a child?"

That the capitalist rulers lump consensual relationships in the same category as horrendous, violent sexual and other crimes, such as rape and wife-beating and child abuse, to which we are unconditionally hostile, demonstrates more about their perverted, sick world than those caught in their anti-sex web. For instance, the lumping together of cross-generational sex, that is completely consensual, with actual rape trivialises the crime of rape and belittles the real humiliation, terror and agony that rape victims undergo.

We seek to overthrow the capitalist state through workers revolution, not strengthen its repressive apparatus. It is for this reason that we don't place trust in the state to create a fairer society. That is, we don't believe that it is their place to dictate what is and isn't mature or in the interests of protecting children or to stipulate what is a sexual "norm." This is the same racist state which locks up children in hellhole detention centres for indefinite periods, acts as imperial overlord in East Timor where one in five babies die, and is participating in the colonial occupation of Iraq where scores of women and children are bombed, killed, maimed and faced with starvation.

This is also the state whose organs—including prison guards, police and "Aboriginal Protection Boards"—have killed and raped Aboriginal women and children over the last 200 years. The state that is responsible for the stolen generations of Aboriginal children, taken from their homes to work as virtual slaves in domestic and agricultural work. Nor is this a distant legacy. Following the courageous stand of Redfern militants against racist cop aggression in February this year, itself sparked by the killing of a Kamilaroi youth by the cops, reportedly up to 400 children have been snatched from the Redfern area by the Department of Community Services. Have no illusions: the capitalist state does not give a damn about working-class and immigrant children, and in spite of all its dribble about "protection" of minors, there is no body more violent to children than the capitalist state.

In the recent nationwide "anti-child porn" bust of Operation Auxin, which implicated as many as 700 men, with more than 400 homes raided and up to 200 people charged, at least four men under investigation were driven to suicide. That those men saw no way out is hardly surprising considering the viciousness of the government's agenda and the unlikelihood that, even if acquitted, the hurt and stigma could be undone. In the same way that we do not charge the state



Dennis Silverstein

Nina Hartley, socialist, X-rated movie star and high profile crusader against censorship of pornography and sexual expression.

with defining what constitutes appropriate sexual relations; neither do we charge them with defining what constitutes "appropriate" and "inappropriate" pornography. Pornography is in the eye of the beholder and is merely words and images intended for entertainment. As we noted in "Feminists and Feds in Anti-Porn Frenzy" (*Women and Revolution* No. 20, Spring 1980):

"Of course, a lot of pornography, a lot of movies, a lot of literature reflect ugly and frightening aspects of human behaviour. How could it be otherwise in this violent and class-divided world? But those reflections are not the enemy!"

The bourgeoisie deliberately conflates the mere *possession, viewing or downloading* of images with the *act* of child abuse so as to remove any distinction between the two. Details of those arrested under Operation Auxin have been sketchy and limited, but it appears that the state is deliberately mixing together people who merely downloaded or viewed images (which seems to be the vast majority of people charged) with possibly a few who are alleged to have committed rape, which is a crime. And in this witchhunt atmosphere, not only are the innocent often destroyed, but in the general hysteria real crimes against women and children continue.

For the most part, pornography is a private affair, but that doesn't exclude the prying eye of the state. Last year, Victorian teacher Daryl Quick was charged with possessing and publishing child pornography after the discovery of a diary in which he jotted private fantasies. Regardless of the fact that the diary was kept under lock and key and was never intended for public distribution, the magistrate still ruled it child porn.

This country has a long history of draconian censorship laws that are still in effect today. The banning of Larry Clark's *Ken Park* two years ago because some actors were *portrayed* as minors in sexual encounters, despite all being above the age of 18 speaks to the ridiculous nature of censorship. When eminent film critic Margaret Pomeranz defied the ban and hosted a screening of the movie at Balmain Town Hall, Carr's NSW Labor government cops, acting on a complaint from right-wing Christian fundamentalist MP Fred Nile, raided and flushed the cinema, threatening those present with arrest. This again shows the capitalist state at work, with its armed cops raiding homes and cinemas, attacking youth; its courts that prosecute "offenders" like Hopper and Ellis, and its prisons to house those persecuted. Sexual oppression, however, is only one of the roles of the state, which seeks to maintain capitalist rule through the use of its aforementioned institutions. It is the same police who

attack workers pickets and demonstrations and the same courts that recently imprisoned trade union leader Craig Johnston.

The Anti-Sex Witchhunt and Teachers Unions

In November last year, the Australian Education Union (AEU) acknowledged that a "witch-hunt mentality" was manifest in schools with teachers being rightly terrified, because, as Australian Council of Civil Liberties president Terry O'Gorman stated at the time "...with mandatory reporting, and more and more child-sex cases hitting the news a [student] knows full well the ease with which an allegation can be made, and the absolute havoc it wreaks on a teacher's career and personal life." Such false indictment was seen in February when damages were awarded to a man after his spiteful eleven-year-old stepson used information learned during child-protection classes at school to wrongfully accuse his stepfather of sexual abuse. Handing down his findings, the judge commented "fairness gave way to zealotry...the truth gave way to a badgering designed to obtain information to support the preconceived belief that such allegations are true" (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 4 February).

Unionists should expect the unconditional support of their unions when being unjustly persecuted by the vicious capitalist state. But in a classic example of the misrepresentation of workers by the Laborite trade-union bureaucracy, the AEU, despite acknowledging the aforementioned stress their membership is suffering in this neo-McCarthyite climate, has been fully complicit in the state's crusade in the prosecution of Ellis, Hopper and the 70 other Victorian teachers who are under investigation for "inappropriate" relationships with students. As if speaking on behalf of the bosses, the president of the Victorian branch of the AEU could only remark, "This sort of conduct is not tolerated within the profession." This treachery reflects the role that the trade-union misleadership plays. The trade-union tops are integral to the Labor Party, which is a bourgeois workers party. That is, a party with a working-class base of support but a thoroughly bourgeois program and outlook. In power, such as is the case in Victoria—where unionist Craig Johnston is imprisoned, where the leftist S11 2000 protesters were bashed by police, and where Ellis and Hopper were prosecuted—the ALP runs the capitalist state for the benefit of the bourgeoisie. That the tops of the AEU are aiding the witch-hunt against the interests of their members is unsurprising, since it's their role to both chain the workers to capitalism and all its misery, and to act as a transmission belt for reactionary bourgeois ideology within the workers movement. Furthermore the witchhunt climate results in suspicion, distrust and fear which

is used to divide workers and pit sectors against each other.

We look forward to the day when economic and artificial constraints over sexual relations, imposed on humanity by this brutal society, will be non-existent, and, in the words of Frederick Engels, "there is no other motive left except mutual inclination." But this day will not come while capitalism remains. What is needed is a party standing in the tradition of Lenin and Trotsky's Bolsheviks, who in October 1917, took Marxism out of the realm of abstraction and gave it life and blood, overthrowing capitalism in the first successful workers revolution and instituting a planned collectivised economy in the area of the former Tsarist empire. To the extent possible in a country of belated capitalist development, dependent mainly on peasant-based agriculture, the revolution removed the influence of institutions that upheld social backwardness and reactionary prejudices (principally the Russian Orthodox Church) which have manifested themselves anew with capitalist counterrevolution. The Bolsheviks eliminated all the legal impediments to women's equality, legalised abortion and abolished all the laws against homosexuality, declaring it a private matter. Writing in 1923, Grigorii Batkis, director of the Moscow Institute of Social Hygiene, explained:

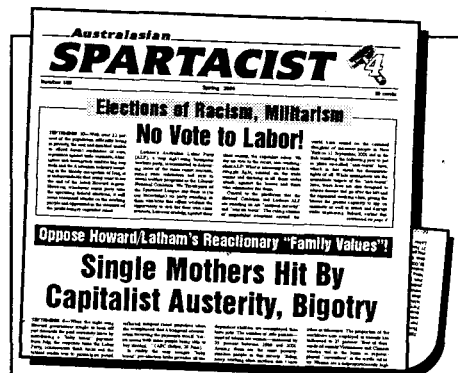
"Soviet legislation bases itself on the following principle: *it declares the absolute non-interference of the state and society into sexual matters so long as nobody is injured and no one's interests are encroached upon....* Concerning homosexuality, sodomy, and various other forms of sexual gratification, which are set down in European legislation as offences against public morality—Soviet legislation treats these exactly the same as so-called 'natural' intercourse. All forms of sexual intercourse are private matters."

—"The Sexual Revolution in Russia," 1923, quoted in J. Lauresten and D. Thorstad, *The Early Homosexual Rights Movement 1864-1935* (emphasis in original)

The building of a Bolshevik-type party must necessarily come about through combating all the manifestations of capitalist oppression wherever its ugly head appears. As V.I. Lenin, leader of the Russian Revolution wrote in his 1902 work *What is to be Done?*, the communist's ideal should be:

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

Down with reactionary "age of consent" laws! Oppose youth oppression! State out of the bedroom! ■



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China and Japan...

(continued from page 5)

castes and fight to extend proletarian rule to the advanced capitalist countries, with Japan as key.

Imperial Japan's Brutal Occupation of China and "War Responsibility"

From 1931 to 1945, Japan brutally occupied large sections of China, which resulted in an estimated 30 million Chinese deaths. More than 200,000 women from Korea, China, Indonesia, the Philippines and Okinawa were forced, under the threat of death, into sexual slavery as Japanese imperialism vied with their American counterparts for mastery of Asia and the Pacific. Chongqing, where the Japanese team played four of its soccer games, was where one of the first aerial civilian bombings in history took place. On 3 and 4 May 1939, the Japanese air force pummelled that non-military site with incendiary bombs that burned to death several thousand Chinese. For almost ten years, Iris Chang [recently deceased] has repeatedly been denied the right to translate and publish her bestselling book *The Rape of Nanjing*, which details the massacre, rape and torture of 340,000 Chinese civilians by one million Japanese soldiers from December 1937 to the end of January 1938. Between the air raids and the ground war, one third of the city was completely destroyed. We say: Let Iris Chang's book be read in Japanese!

Japanese imperialism's killing machine also included the infamous Unit 731 which developed biological warfare agents for use in China and carried out heinous medical experiments on defenceless prisoners, some of whose skeletons continue to be unearthed during construction work in Shinjuku. In August 2003 in Qiqihar in northeast China several residents were killed when they stumbled across chemical weapons which the Japanese military left abandoned. Dozens of slave labour camps were built in China in a program reminiscent of Nazi Germany, and Japanese corporations bought prisoners of war from the government to use as forced labourers throughout Asia and in Japan.

But we do not hold the entire "Japanese people" responsible for these crimes. As Marxists we reject the bourgeois ideology of "war responsibility" as applied to the entire Japanese people because it covers up the class nature of society. It is the Japanese *bourgeoisie* which is collectively responsible. In the prewar period, sections of the working class attempted to fight against increased militarism and the capitalists' austerity program. But severe state repression combined with the



Chinese war heroes hailed by North Koreans celebrating 1953 cease-fire ending Korean War. Chinese forces were critical in defeating U.S./British/Australian attempt to overrun North Korean deformed workers state.

betrayal of socialist and labour leaders of the time left the working class leaderless. The notion of "war responsibility" was started by the Japanese aristocracy and capitalists, aided by U.S. occupation forces. The purpose was to alleviate Hirohito (Showa emperor) from any responsibility for the Pacific War, and thereby help maintain the emperor system.

Many in Japan who adhere to the "war responsibility" ideology point to how a "deep distrust between Japan and China prevents a Franco-German-type entente in Asia." They note German chancellor Schroeder's participation at this year's D-Day celebration in France, and his more recent visit to Poland to commemorate the Warsaw Uprising. The presence of the heir of the Third Reich in France had little to do with apologising for the crimes of German imperialism during World War II, and everything to do with putting forward a "European united front," no matter how temporary, in the face of U.S. imperialism's hegemony. The purpose behind Schroeder's trip to Warsaw had nothing to do with the massacre of millions of Jewish people in the Nazi Holocaust, but was to prepare the people of eastern Europe for greater capitalist exploitation. Poland is now part of a German-dominated European Union and the German bourgeoisie needed to show the "softer" face of German imperialism.

Defend the Chinese Deformed Workers State!

The Chinese Revolution which triumphed in 1949 originated in part as a national liberation struggle against the Japanese occupation of China. Though deformed from its inception by the rule of a parasitic, nationalist bureaucratic caste, the Chinese Revolution overthrew capitalist property relations and imperialist subjugation. This resulted in the

construction of a planned, collectivised economy which meant enormous social progress for the worker and peasant masses.

Today, the Japanese ruling class is committed to regaining the right of untrammelled exploitation of China's working masses. Japanese imperialist investment is no longer confined to areas formerly colonised by Japan such as Manchuria, Harbin and Darin, but has expanded to the southern tip of China. In 1999, Matsushita was the biggest foreign employer in China. Many of the Chinese people interviewed during the Asia Cup games described with outrage the attitude of their Japanese bosses, who act as if they were lords of a new semi-colony and how they view China as one big brothel. The three-day orgy in Zhuhai in September 2003 organised by a Japanese cement company that hired 500 Chinese prostitutes coincided with the anniversary of Japan's occupation of China and in the minds of many Chinese was reminiscent of the kidnapping and enslavement of the *ianfu* ["comfort women"].

We oppose capitalist penetration into China because it further undermines the collectivised economy. The Stalinist bureaucrats in Beijing have increasingly opened the country to imperialism, paving the way for capitalist restoration. At the same time, it is simultaneously preparing the ground for a new revolutionary explosion—not a social revolution which would overturn the economic foundations of society as in 1949, but a political revolution that is premised on the defence of the planned collectivised economy and which would oust the ruling bureaucracy and place political power in the hands of worker, soldier and peasant soviets. We call to expropriate without compensation the factories and other enterprises owned by Japanese and Western imperialists, and by the offshore Chinese bourgeoisie in Taiwan, Hong Kong and elsewhere, and by the new layer of indigenous Chinese capitalists.

For Proletarian Internationalism

Today, the Stalinist bureaucracy in Beijing is sitting atop a volcano of social unrest; the country is profoundly unstable at its base. Chinese nationalism acts to subordinate the Chinese working class to the overseas Chinese bourgeoisie and encourages all sorts of social reaction inside China. It also channels growing social unrest away from the massive increase in unemployment, economic insecurity, social inequality and income differentials.

It is the rejection of internationalism that links the leadership of Mao Zedong and his protégés to that of Deng Xiaoping and his followers. Mao's regime preached the anti-Marxist notion that socialism—a classless, egalitarian society based on material abundance—could be built in a single country. In practice, "socialism in one country" meant opposition to the per-

spective of workers revolution internationally and accommodation of world imperialism. Mao was not a proletarian internationalist, but rather a Chinese nationalist who was just as willing to collaborate with world imperialism as the Soviet leaders whom he denounced at the time as "revisionists." And this was dramatically demonstrated when in the early 1970s China formed an alliance with the U.S. against the Soviet Union. This alliance was consummated in 1972 when the American president Richard Nixon visited Beijing and was embraced by Mao at the very moment U.S. war planes were bombing North Vietnam. Deng's China supported the Afghan mujahedin cutthroats who were bankrolled by the CIA to kill Soviet soldiers in the civil war there in the 1980s. The current leadership has joined the crusade against North Korea's nuclear weapons program. This is a betrayal that undermines the Chinese deformed workers state itself: capitalist counterrevolution in North Korea would only embolden the forces of capitalist restoration targeting China.

In recent years, there have been massive labour struggles and peasant protests throughout China against the introduction of "market reforms" and the accompanying growing poverty. Sooner or later, the explosive social tensions will shatter the political structure of the ruling bureaucratic caste. And when that happens, the fate of the most populous country on earth will be starkly posed: proletarian political revolution to open the road to socialism or capitalist enslavement and imperialist subjugation.

In the 16 August issue of *Kaiho*, Kakumaru [third campist] claims to stand for "real international solidarity with the Chinese people." Don't be fooled. In the name of "anti-Stalinism," Kakumaru has embraced the forces of pro-imperialist counterrevolution from Poland to the Soviet Union. When the People's Liberation Army and the North Korean army pushed the imperialists to the southern tip of the Korean peninsula in 1950 during the Korean War, Tsushima, the mentor of the founder of Kakumaru, called for the "revolutionary rearmament of Japan." During the Vietnam War, their slogan was "Oppose the Vietnam War! Oppose Chinese nuclear testing!"

Instead of organising joint class struggle against the *zaibatsu* [giant industrial-financial corporations] in both Japan and China, Rengo [trade union federation, previously affiliated with the Social Democratic Party] instructs the Chinese trade union federation how to handle "issues relating to labour-management relations in a market economy." A couple of years ago Fuwa, head of the Japanese Communist Party, to which the Zenroren [trade union] federation is affiliated, travelled to China where he gave advice on the "benefits" of a market economy: "The market economy should not be narrowed because it causes harm, the question is to have rules which rein in the harm" (*Akahata*, 25 September 1999). Real solidarity with the Chinese workers and peasants entails a political fight to break the Japanese working class away from the reformist leadership of all three trade union federations. The Chinese working class must be broken from the nationalism preached by the Chinese Communist Party, to become a rallying point for international proletarian revolution in the advanced countries. What is needed is a Leninist-Trotskyist party which would coordinate and lead the spontaneous and localised workers struggles in China toward the seizure of political power. A Trotskyist party would link the fight for workers revolution in Japan with the Chinese workers struggle against the corrupt Stalinist bureaucracy and with the class struggles of the militant Philippine and South Korean workers against their capitalist rulers. Only through a socialist revolution in imperialist Japan will the basis be laid for the development of a socialist Asia. ■

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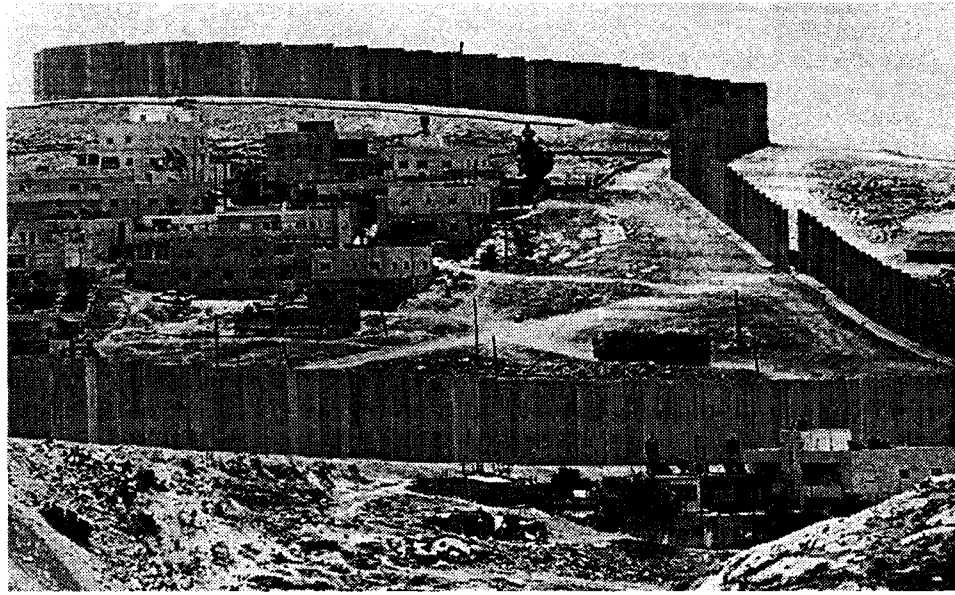
Gaza...

(continued from page 4)

Democratic president Clinton between Israel and Yasir Arafat's Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). In the years since, the number of settlers, many of them heavily armed ultra-Zionist fanatics, has doubled. The Palestinians have been partitioned into ghettos to which exit and entry is entirely controlled by Israeli troops: farmers are unable to reach their land, families are split apart and the population is cut off from jobs, hospitals, schools and even water.

Today, the entire West Bank is dotted with military outposts and fortified settlements, crisscrossed by the "bypass roads" that are off-limits to Palestinians. The construction of a 600-mile-long wall completes the segregation of the Palestinian West Bank population, while placing large chunks of Palestinian land under Israeli control. Last month, the mayor of Jerusalem presented plans, praised by the Israeli interior ministry, to declare Wadi Joz, an Arab neighborhood in occupied East Jerusalem, as "zoned for Jewish population" (*Ha'aretz*, 24 September).

Palestinian unemployment is now two-thirds in some areas, and more than half the children are malnourished. Incomes have fallen by more than half to \$900 a year—compared with an average of nearly \$17,000 for Israelis. One of Sharon's cabinet ministers last year expressed the longstanding Zionist dream that through brutal suppression, the Palestinians will just get out: "Make their life



Israeli wall imprisons Palestinians, dividing families, separating farmers from their land and cutting off population from jobs, hospitals, schools, fresh water.

including youth and even women, are turning to the reactionary Islamic fundamentalist Hamas and Islamic Jihad movements. On the other hand, some Palestinian spokesmen are abandoning even talk of Palestinian self-determination. In an op-ed piece printed in the *New York Times* (4 October), PLO legal adviser Michael Tarazi wrote:

"After years of negotiations, coupled with incessant building of settlements and now the construction of the wall, Palestinians finally understand that Israel is offering 'independence' on a reservation stripped of water and arable soil, economically dependent on Israel and even lacking the right to self-defense. As a result, many Palestinians are contemplating whether the quest for

victory for the oppressed black masses of South Africa, as it provided formal equality and the right to vote. But it is hardly liberation; what exists in South Africa today is neo-apartheid, where a black government lords it over the black population—whose standard of living has not changed in the last decade—for a tiny white capitalist class. But even that can never happen in Israel—no way will a predominantly Arab Palestinian government rule for a Zionist capitalist class. Similarities between South Africa and Israel/Palestine are purely superficial; the differences between them are far greater.

Tarazi writes that Israel "wants Palestinian land but not the Palestinians who live on that land." Despite the hideous injustices, oppression and subjugation suffered by the black masses in South Africa, the white rulers could not even conceive of driving them off the land because it would mean driving off their labor force: the enormously higher standard of living experienced by most of the white population was based on the super-exploitation of black labor. The opposite is the case in Israel/Palestine. From the beginning of their colonial enterprise, the Zionist rulers have made it a point not to rely on Arab labor, and to instead build up a Hebrew proletariat.

For decades after the 1967 war, Israel used Palestinian laborers from the Occupied Territories for the most unskilled and lowest-paid work. But as noted in a compelling article in *New Left Review* (September-October 2004) by Tel Aviv University professor Yoav Peled: "With the outbreak of the first *intifada* in 1987, however, the economic benefits of the Occupation—a cheap and reliable labour force and captive market—began to be outweighed by its costs." The hundreds of thousands of Palestinian laborers who used to find work in Israel have for the most part been replaced by over 250,000 foreign workers imported into the country from Asia and East Europe. Whereas South African apartheid was premised on the exploitation of black labor by the white minority, the Zionist state was founded on the *expulsion* of the Palestinians, *not* the exploitation of their labor.

The Palestinian nationalists have tried nearly everything to beat back the Israeli garrison state: from fighting to negotiating to appealing to the UN and Western imperialists, to now pathetically begging to simply be allowed to exist—and it has

all been and will all be futile. So long as the national axis is emphasized, the situation will always be bleak and hopeless. But if the *class* axis is emphasized, there is at least a *realistic* chance at an equitable resolution.

Like all capitalist societies, Israel is divided along class lines and rent by political fissures: the same ruling class that sends tanks into Gaza also sends out its police to attack Israeli strikers and political demonstrators; court-martials the growing numbers of young people in the draft army who are refusing to serve in the Occupied Territories; and shoots Israeli youth who protest the building of the wall.

The Peled article makes vividly clear that the Israeli bourgeoisie's war against the Palestinians is being carried out simultaneously with a war against the Hebrew working class. A powerful nationwide general strike on September 21—the third general strike since April 2003—paralyzed the country for 30 hours as the Histadrut, Israel's labor federation, demanded payment for municipal workers, many of them Arab, who had not been paid for months. On October 1 Arabs called a strike to commemorate the police massacre of 13 people in an Arab village in Israel during the protests that erupted in October 2000 in solidarity with the uprising in the Occupied Territories. And now another general strike is posed, as many workers are still not paid their wages.

It is the task of socialists in the Near East to use every fissure, every strike, every opportunity to widen the gap between Israel's workers and rulers, to convince the Israeli proletariat that it is in its interests to defend the Palestinians and to oppose the Zionist ruling class. We have no illusions that this will be an easy task; it will likely take some historic event, like the victory of social revolution in another country in the Near East extending a hand of proletarian internationalism to the Israeli working class, to jolt the Hebrew proletariat from its ties with the Zionist rulers. Indeed, the Israeli proletariat is largely made up of Sephardic (Near Eastern and North African) Jews who are on the one hand treated as second-class citizens while on the other expressing the most chauvinist attitudes toward Palestinian Arabs. But to write off the Israeli working class as potential allies of the struggle for Palestinian national rights is to write off the struggle for Palestinian national rights.

National self-determination for the Palestinian people—who also constitute the majority of Jordan's population—cannot be resolved within the borders of Israel/Palestine. Nor can there be justice for the Palestinians within the framework of capitalist rule. On the contrary, the system of private property and private ownership of the means of production necessarily contains within it the components of nationalism and religion, which make impossible the settlement of the conflicting national claims of the Palestinian Arab and Hebrew populations. Only through a socialist federation of the Near East can the right of national self-determination for these peoples and the many other peoples of the region—including the Kurds, the largest nation without a state—be equitably realized. This necessarily calls for the leadership of internationalist Marxist workers parties, sections of a reformed Fourth International. There is no other way. ■



Jerusalem: Israeli workers demonstrate against Finance Minister Benjamin Netanyahu during nationwide general strike in September.

so bitter that they will transfer themselves willingly."

Today, the illusion of a negotiated settlement for a Palestinian state, or even the vague "autonomy" promised by Oslo, is dead and buried. Even Sharon's promise to withdraw Israeli troops and settlers from the tiny Gaza Strip is simply a cynical cover for all but formal annexation of much of the West Bank. One of Sharon's top advisers, Dov Weisglass, said recently: "What I effectively agreed to with the Americans was that part of the settlements would not be dealt with at all, and the rest will not be dealt with until the Palestinians turn into Finns.... Effectively, this whole package that is called the Palestinian state, with all that it entails, has been removed from our agenda indefinitely. And all this with authority and permission. All with a [U.S.] presidential blessing and the ratification of both houses of Congress" (*Ha'aretz*, 8 October).

For Arab/Hebrew Workers Revolution!

We defend the Palestinians in their just struggle against the Zionist occupation. However, as long as the conflict remains one of nation against nation, the Palestinians can only lose out to the far wealthier, heavily armed (including with nukes) and more technologically advanced Zionist state. This realization has led to growing despair among the Palestinian population. Particularly since Oslo, as Palestinians have increasingly come to see the PLO as politically bankrupt, increasing numbers,

equal statehood should now be superseded by a struggle for equal citizenship. In other words, a one-state solution in which citizens of all faiths and ethnicities live together as equals."

Such is the logical outcome of the political bankruptcy of Palestinian nationalism. In 1964, the Palestinian National Covenant declared that only "Jews who were living permanently in Palestine until the beginning of the Zionist invasion will be considered Palestinians." Following the 1967 Arab-Israeli War and Israel's conquest of the West Bank and Gaza, the PLO adopted the "democratic secular state" line—a Palestinian state in which Jews would presumably have equal rights. This was not only utopian; it also denied the *national* rights of the Hebrew population, treating them instead as a religious minority. Then in the mid 1970s, the PLO adopted the call for a "mini-state" in the Occupied Territories. In the early 1990s came Oslo, where Arafat's PLO and the Palestinian Authority would get to police isolated Palestinian cantons for Israel's rulers. Now Tarazi is renouncing the national rights of the Palestinians outright.

Tarazi is calling for what amounts to a "Greater Israel" in which the 3.5 million Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza would join the "Israeli Arabs" who are currently third-class citizens of Israel. Tarazi paints this as a struggle for equality akin to the black struggle in South Africa and asserts, "The struggle against South African apartheid proves the battle can be won."

The fall of apartheid was an important

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

Class Struggle...

(continued from page 1)

marriage, and increasingly targeted single mothers with their anti-woman bigotry. This climate has seen the religious right emboldened, with the Christian fundamentalist-backed party, Family First, making electoral gains in the Senate, and has provoked a wave of attacks against women and gays. Under the guise of "debate," anti-woman zealots such as the health minister, Tony Abbott, and deputy prime minister, John Anderson, have women's right to abortion in their sights. An article by Geoffrey Barker in the *Australian Financial Review*, 8 November, captured the vicious essence of such latter-day witch-burners: "These men are not detached thinkers seeking to clarify contentious issues of ethics, science and law... Behind their masks of compassion are the faces of inquisitors prepared to torture those they regard as heretics." With Labor support, the Howard regime has spearheaded a climate in which racist bigots and anti-woman chauvinists across the country feel the wind in their sails.

Meanwhile, the barrage of "anti-terror" laws from federal and state Labor governments is cynically designed to, and does, whip up suspicion, fear and racism on the streets and in workplaces. In November, a Turkish school in Melbourne was burnt to the ground by racists. Hundreds of Muslim and Arab people have reported being the target of some form of racist attack since 11 September 2001.

While targeting in the first instance Arab and Asian minorities, "anti-terror" laws constrict the democratic rights of all and are ultimately aimed against the organised working class. Always in the forefront of repressing basic rights the NSW Carr Labor government has tabled laws which would allow the police to secretly invade and bug people's homes with impunity. Meanwhile, during 2003-04, ASIO carried out more than 16,000 "security assessments" on government workers (*Sydney Morning Herald*, November 6-7). The "war on terror" dovetails with other measures targeting those seeking to organise against capitalist reaction. On 1 December, federal police raided the homes of Refugee Action Coalition (RAC) activists in Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne, charging at least two people for supposedly obtaining fake passports for refugees desperately seeking to escape this racist hellhole. **Hands off the RAC activists! Drop the charges now!**

While the bourgeoisie plans to step up its union-busting and all-sided reactionary offensive, what they can actually get away with is another matter, which will be determined by the outcome of social and class struggle. It is true that the working class has been weakened by years of union busting and reaction under first the Hawke and Keating ALP governments and now Howard's conservative Coalition. Key class battles like the 1998 MUA struggle, which galvanised thousands of other unionists to join the pickets in solidarity with the wharfies, were betrayed by the Laborite union bureaucracy. But the unions have plenty of clout left and wide sections of the class are fed up and willing to fight. Recently at the Ardmona factory in Victoria, AMWU members of the heavily immigrant workforce took action against the vile racist, anti-woman bigotry of the bosses. Earlier this year, after a series of popular strikes and demonstrations across the state, NSW government school cleaners won a victory against the Carr government's attack on their jobs.

On 25 November in Melbourne, some 5,000 mainly construction and manufacturing unionists struck in defence of imprisoned union leader Craig Johnston. Just as strikes won the release of jailed tramways union leader, Clarrie O'Shea, in 1969, strikes and rallies must be built

against the bosses and their Victorian ALP state government to free Johnston now!

But at every turn workers struggles are undermined by the pro-capitalist Laborite misleaders. The bureaucrats of the NSW rail unions called off a threatened strike in November against the rail bosses and their decrepit, dangerous public transport system. A strike opposing attempts to get drivers to work longer and faster and additionally demanding more jobs and increased train services would be hugely popular with commuters sick of enduring delayed trains and cancelled services. **Some hard-fought strikes with solid picket lines and solidarity strikes in defiance of the bourgeoisie's anti-union laws are what the working class needs to combat the bosses' union-busting offensive and to turn back the casualisation of the workforce.**

In the course of taking on the capitalist rulers, the working class must raise demands that will draw in behind it the fighting energy of other sectors of the oppressed—militant Aborigines (who have engaged in heroic recent struggles in Redfern and Palm Island), women and

aggravating antagonisms that have been developing for a number of years and have already led to several unions disaffiliating from the ALP. Yet, to date, the union tops have mainly taken a dive in the face of the government's union-busting agenda, scrambling for cover under state industrial systems while quickly trying to negotiate new enterprise agreements with the bosses before the Coalition gains control of the Senate in June next year. Almost immediately after the election results, ACTU president Sharan Burrow obsequiously declared unions had no plans to protest against the Coalition by taking industrial action!

Reflecting the varying consciousness and composition of their base, there are to be sure important differences within the union leaderships. So while the Doug Cameron national leadership of the AMWU has criminally supported the bosses' campaign against Craig Johnston, the Victorian branches of the CFMEU and the TCFUA textile union, led by Martin Kingham and Michelle O'Neill respectively, oppose the jailing of Johnston. But even the more militant Laborite



Asp photo

Sydney, January 2003: SL joins demonstration protesting departure of Australian warship, Kanimbla, to the Persian Gulf in lead up to imperialist invasion of Iraq. There needs to be class-struggle opposition to the colonial occupation.

immigrants (who make up key components of the working class): **Down with Howard's racist "mutual obligation"! Free abortion on demand! Down with the ban on gay marriage! Close the hell-hole concentration camps! Full citizenship rights for all immigrants! Down with the racist "anti-terror" laws!** A class-struggle leadership of the unions must be built to bring the understanding to the working class that they must champion the cause of all oppressed in a struggle against capitalism. Such a leadership, linked to a multiracial revolutionary workers party and forged in political opposition to Laborism, would be committed to bringing the class struggle to a victorious conclusion through socialist revolution. Such a revolution would place the productive wealth of society in the hands of the working people, thereby ensuring full employment, with decent and safe working conditions, free quality health care for all and free 24-hour childcare. And it would allow the massive health, housing and education programs to begin to address the over 200 years of brutal oppression of the Aboriginal people.

Laborism: Roadblock to Working-Class Struggle

Attacking the unions at every turn, the bosses' media has been quick to advise the leader of the defeated Labor Party, Mark Latham, that he must follow British Prime Minister Blair's path and begin to sever links with the unions. For his part, Latham and other Labor leaders have thrown themselves at the feet of big business and have already acceded to aspects of government workplace relations legislation. The ALP is a very right-wing bourgeois workers party. It is thoroughly loyal to the capitalist system while having organic ties to the working class through the unions. Its first point of support in the workers movement is a conservatism, privileged layer of workers—a labour aristocracy—bribed by crumbs from the rich imperialist profits reaped from Australian superexploitation abroad.

Latham's open pro-business agenda has created acrimony between himself and the Laborite union bureaucracy,

tops subordinate the interests of workers to the capitalist state—the cops, courts, prisons and army—the bourgeoisie's instrument for suppressing the proletariat. It was the "left" union tops who were at the forefront of the September 1999 campaign to speed up the entry of the Australian imperialist military to East Timor. This November, the Victorian branch of the CFMEU initiated action in the federal court against its more right-wing factional opponents in NSW in order to gain access to its books and membership lists, suspicious it was being denied just representation on the national body. This action comes at a time when the CFMEU is in the crosshairs of a government-inspired union-busting drive. It serves to legitimise the very institutions that have waged this offensive, including the court system that carried out the anti-union Cole Royal Commission into the building industry. Calling the capitalist state into union affairs disarms workers in the face of their bitter enemy and opens the union up for further state intrusion and attacks. **We fight for the complete independence of the unions from the bosses' state. State out of the unions! Workers must clean their own house!**

All wings of the Laborite union bureaucracy push the idea that success for the enterprises of Australian capitalism is good for the workers that they exploit, and call variously for tariffs, subsidies and government "industry policy" to protect local industry. Left TCFUA leader, Michelle O'Neill, recently denounced a new round of cuts to clothing and footwear tariffs. And in response to the threat of job cuts at automotive parts manufacturer Ion Ltd, right-wing union leader Bill Shorten has not called all out strikes or plant occupations, instead railing that "The Federal government is typically absent from making any effort to secure good Australian jobs at Ion but is only to[o] happy to further open markets to Chinese manufacturers" (AWU website). Far from saving jobs, protectionism only serves to tie workers to the job-slashing bosses at home and their government. Thus it undermines what is really necessary to fight for jobs: class-struggle action, *against* the capitalists,

demanding jobs for all. And by fueling racist nationalism, protectionism poisons class-struggle solidarity with workers overseas. This is clearly evident in Shorten's statement, which additionally also feeds anti-communist hostility to the Chinese deformed workers state. We say: **Down with protectionist poison! For internationalist class-struggle solidarity and actions!** To forge a fighting alliance with the workers of this region, the proletariat must be won to opposing every intervention by Australian imperialism abroad, including by *defending the gains of the anti-capitalist revolutions in China, North Korea, Vietnam and Cuba.* We say: **Racist Australian imperialist troops, cops and plunderers, get out of PNG, East Timor and the Solomon Islands! Down with the U.S./Australia colonial occupation of Iraq!**

"Fair" Greens and Pale "Reds"

In the lead-up to the federal elections, the Spartacist League in calling for "No Vote to Labor!" stated that there is no party standing that offers the opportunity for workers to vote for their own class interests, however crudely, against their class enemy. As shown clearly by the role of state ALP governments, a victory for the ALP at the elections would also have been a "mandate" for anti-union profit-gouging by the bosses, more racist "anti-terror" measures and attacks on welfare. The victory of the more right-wing Coalition reflected the fact that with proletarian class struggle knifed by the Laborite misleaders, the insecurities of the middle class and semi-proletarian elements—like individual contractors—were translated into support for reaction. Yet as shown in recent rallies and demonstrations, there are many youth and unionists who deeply hate the increasingly bigoted and ugly nature of this country. Angry at the Australian government's open theft of East Timor's oil, Australia's continued role in the brutal occupation of Iraq and the mandatory detention of desperate refugees, some say they are embarrassed to be Australian and would like to make the country less brutal. On the one hand this reflects a healthy hatred of racism and oppression. However, it also reflects a rather false view that this country can be made better simply by propagating more tolerant values.

Such sentiments have been channelled into support for the bourgeois Greens and their "vision" of a "fair, independent and sustainable Australia." A study by NSW unions estimated that a disproportionately high number of trade unionists (12 percent) voted for the Greens. The Greens' stated program, which includes opposing mandatory detention of refugees, supporting women's access to affordable and safe abortion services and full rights for people in same-sex relationships, can on the surface appear attractive in a climate of right-wing reaction. But the key point for Marxists is that the Greens do not support workers standing as a class against the capitalists. Their supposed agency for change will be capitalist rulers responding to public opinion. Those unionists and anti-racist youth attracted to the Greens must understand that the capitalist ruling class, running a system based on its extraction of profits from exploited workers, necessarily promotes racist, sexist and other divisions because they are essential to maintaining its class rule. Any scheme for a fairer society that lies outside the class struggle of the workers against the capitalists is a fraud.

Ultimately, the Greens' acceptance of the current social order means that they sign on to imperialist militarism. In Germany, Greens leader and foreign minister Joschka Fischer has supported the war on Serbia in 1999, backs German troop deployments to Kosovo and today oversees the prominent role of the German military in the murderous imperialist occupation of Afghanistan. Similarly, Bob Brown here often makes noise about "working for peace," however he is committed to maintaining "an adequate defence force" for "regional defence" and last year was screaming against the

AUSTRALASIAN SPARTACIST

Falluja...

(continued from page 12)

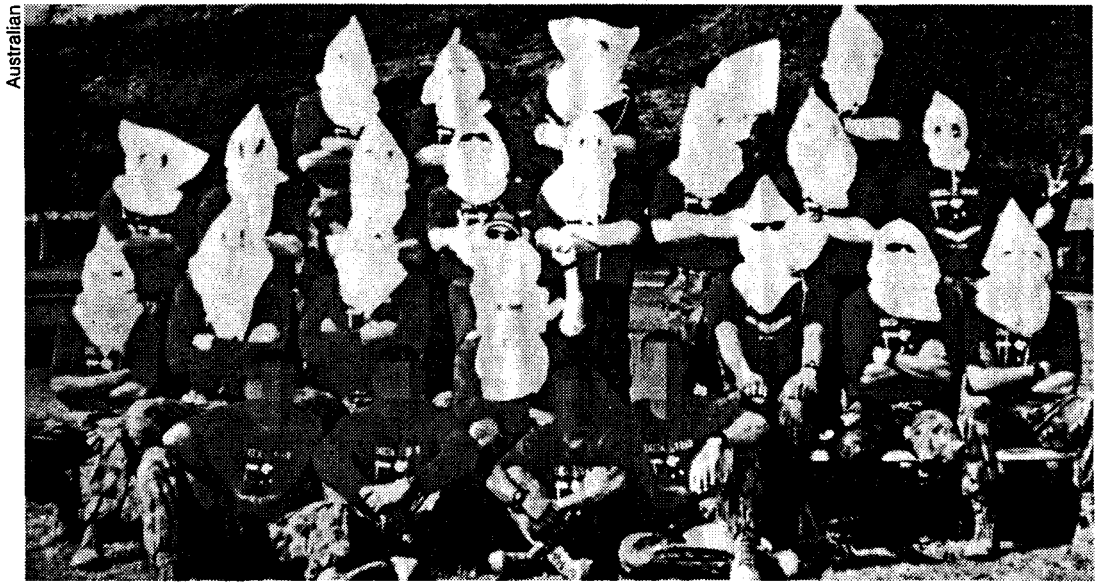
Normalising colonial crimes like the attack on Fallujah requires such racism, linking our imagination to 'the other'."

In this vein, a *Wall Street Journal* editorial (18 November) described the city of Falluja as a "terror den" and justified the shooting of the unarmed, wounded Iraqi man in the mosque. They sneered: "Who from the safety of his Manhattan sofa has standing to judge what that Marine did in that mosque?" The atrocity in the Falluja mosque quickly became a template for the U.S. troops and their Iraqi puppet forces. On November 19, 200-300 Iraqi National Guard troops, backed up by American forces, stormed Baghdad's al-Hanifa mosque, one of the most important Sunni mosques in Iraq, when it was filled with worshippers at the end of Friday prayers, killing two and wounding at least nine.

Le Monde reported that outside the mosque, dozens of men were forced to lie face down on the ground under the guns of the U.S. Army. The violation of the mosques is a huge affront to every Muslim in the region and in the world. With these acts, the deranged, Christian fundamentalist Bush administration proclaims that nothing is sacred, nothing will be spared in the U.S. occupation, and political fallout be damned.

Cutting water supplies to cities, starving civilians, deliberately killing the unarmed and wounded—all these are war crimes as stipulated by the Geneva Conventions, to which the U.S. is a signatory. But the only rule of war the U.S. recognizes is what it can get away with. Before capitalist counterrevolution destroyed the Soviet Union in 1991-92, fear of the Soviet nuclear arsenal stayed the hand of

Townsville, September 2000: White soldiers from Australia's 1RAR regiment humiliate Aboriginal and other non-white soldiers forced to sit in front of them. Vile Ku Klux Klan ritual occurred on eve of the elite troops' deployment to East Timor, where Australian military enforced plunder and colonial subjugation of dark-skinned Timorese masses under guise of protecting their "human rights."



U.S. imperialism. Now, with a military arsenal that far outstrips any of its rivals, the U.S. is riding roughshod wherever it pleases. Emboldened by re-election, Bush is escalating the brutality of the American occupation in Iraq and is now brazenly saber rattling against Iran and North Korea. We insist that the North Korean deformed workers state has the right to develop nuclear weapons to defend itself against the American imperialists.

The veil of "neutrality" has to be ripped off the bloody face of the United Nations, whose sanctions against Iraq, imposed at the behest of the U.S. in 1990, killed *one and a half million people*. This starvation blockade as well as the UN weapons inspections literally set the country up for rape and destruction by U.S. imperialism. Notably, the UN and the mainstream capitalist media kept an early appeal for help from Falluja's governing Shura Council a deep, dark secret. *CounterPunch* and the *Asia Times* published excerpts of a letter sent on October

14 to Kofi Annan by the Falluja Shura Council:

"In Fallujah [the Americans] have created a new vague target: al-Zarqawi. Almost a year has elapsed since they created this new pretext and whenever they destroy houses, mosques, restaurants, and kill children and women, they said: 'We have launched a successful operation against al-Zarqawi.' The people of Fallujah assure you that this person, if he exists, is not in Fallujah...and we have no links to any groups supporting such inhuman behaviour. We appeal to you to urge the UN [to prevent] the new massacre which the Americans and the puppet government are planning to start soon in Fallujah, as well as many parts of the country."

No Illusions in Capitalist "Democracy"

"Democracy" was of course the pretext for the slaughter in Falluja. George Bush wants a decal of legitimacy slapped on the bloody American occupation of Iraq and so aimed to clean out "foreign insurgents" (look who's calling who "foreigner"!) before the sham elections projected for January 30. *Time* magazine reports that the CIA is funding its favorite candidates, which is how "the Company" has helped install loyal U.S. neocolonial regimes—that is, when the U.S. even bothers to push ballots after bullets.

Al Jazeera cites the deputy commander of the U.S. Central Command, Lieutenant General Lance Smith, as imperiously stating that elections will likely not take place in Falluja at all. "And so it could be that even without, say a city like Falluja voting, that there will be adequate representation by the Sunnis to feel or look like it was legitimate representation for all the parties involved." Smith stated that additional troops will be deployed to "secure the country" before the vote.

Just before the U.S. launched its previous attack on predominantly Sunni Falluja this April in retaliation for the killing of four mercenaries, the occupiers also moved against Shi'ite cleric Moktada al-Sadr, shutting down his Baghdad newspaper. These events sparked protests around Iraq and temporary expressions of unity between Shi'ites and Sunnis against the occupation. This time around, Washington is taking better advantage of the longstanding ethnic and religious divisions in the country. Thus, the U.S. deployed Kurdish army forces in Falluja and dangles the carrot of serving as Washington's anointed satraps before the Shi'ite leaders. Iraq is not a nation but a patchwork of different peoples and ethnicities, carved up by the British imperialists out of the old Turkish Ottoman Empire at the end of the First World War. The Sunni minority lorded it over the Shi'ite majority under Ba'athist rule, and now it looks like the terms of oppression may be reversed.

Meanwhile, many Iraqi Kurds (part of the Kurdish nation which also geographically spans parts of Iran, Turkey and Syria) wrongly look with hope to the American occupation as a rampart against Arab reconquest. As we wrote in "The Left and the 'Iraqi Resistance'" (*WV* No. 830, 6 August): "Absent the working class emerging as an independent political force in a struggle against neocolonial rule, each of these populations can only

come to power by oppressing the others and in alliance with U.S. imperialism."

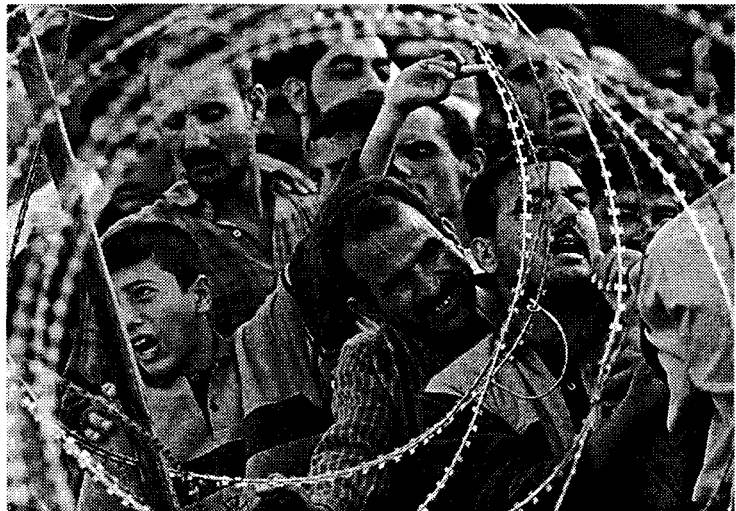
At the same time, thousands of people demonstrated in Baghdad, Basra and Heet in support of the people of Falluja, braving beatings and arrests. The Association of Muslim Scholars rallied 47 political parties, including Sunni, Shi'ite, Christian and even Turkmen, at the Umm al-Qura Mosque to plan a boycott of the elections. As the overextended U.S. military concentrated its forces in Falluja, guerrillas launched large-scale attacks in Ramadi and Mosul.

The U.S. military had hoped that Iraqi troops would take the front lines during the elections, a key component of the *trompe l'oeil* "sovereignty." But Iraqi troops have deserted en masse when militarily confronted by resistance forces. In Mosul on November 10 and 11, nine police stations were overrun while officers deserted. The stations have been recaptured, but only 800 out of 4,000 officers have reported back to serve under the U.S. occupiers (*Financial Times*, 20-21 November). The U.S. military has resorted to extending tours for troops already deployed in Iraq and calling up reservists who haven't handled a weapon or jogged around the block in years.

The terror, destruction and racist subjugation by foreign imperialist occupation is the immediate threat confronted by the peoples of Iraq. The precondition for any liberation is to get the U.S. and allied troops out. This struggle must be combined with combatting the reactionary clerical forces seeking to impose an Islamic regime. These forces seek to reimpose the veil and (Islamic) *sharia* laws, which reduce women to a status little different than chattel slaves.

Unemployment in Iraq is over 70 percent. The American oil companies and sleazy contractors want to plunder Iraq, and that means grinding neocolonial exploitation of Iraq's working people by the imperialists and their Iraqi front men. Equality for all the peoples of Iraq, and the Near East more broadly, will only come about through the overthrow of capitalist rule in the region and the establishment of a socialist federation of the Near East. This poses the urgency of constructing genuine Marxist parties to lead the fight for workers rule in the region.

The subjugated masses in Iraq face the same racist and union-busting enemy faced by working people and the oppressed in the United States. It is in the class interests of American workers to fight for the withdrawal of all U.S. troops from Iraq. We do not raise the call for class struggle at home against U.S. imperialism in the light-minded belief that this will be easy to achieve in the repressive post-September 11 climate and in the reactionary context of "national unity" pushed by labor misleaders and Democrats as well as Republicans. We raise this call because it is essential to win the working class to the understanding that it alone has the social power to defeat the American imperialist system and because this Marxist perspective is the *only* way forward. A revolutionary multi-racial workers party must be forged to lead the hard struggles ahead to victory. The Spartacist League is dedicated to this purpose. ■



Baldwin/NT Times

Homeless and hungry refugees from Falluja line up for scarce food.

supposed "threat" by the North Korean deformed workers state.

Yet reformist left groups like the Socialist Alliance and Socialist Alternative (SAlt) called for votes to the Greens at the recent federal elections. SAlt did this even while admitting that "the Greens are not a working class party. They want to work co-operatively with big business to change policies" (*Socialist Alternative*, July). By calling for a vote to such a bourgeois party, SAlt undermines proletarian class consciousness, the *starting point* for which is the understanding that it is the *working class* in struggle against the capitalists that is the force for progressive social change. We will not in principle give any support to any capitalist politician or party because that would mean joining the capitalist rulers in deceiving the working class and thus further tying workers to their class enemy. American Trotskyist leader James P. Cannon outlined the Marxist approach to bourgeois elections in a speech in 1948:

"We proceed from a principled line. The basic aim of our principled line is to assist the development of independent political action by the workers and turn it towards a revolutionary culmination."

For SAlt, supporting the Greens was part of their schema for a Latham ALP government with "fewer excuses for not

implementing progressive legislation." Worried that the failure of their parliamentary schemes to materialise will make them lose relevance among their supporters in the wake of Howard's victory, SAlt now cynically declare that "the left is no worse off than it was before the elections" (*Socialist Alternative*, November). But if the left is no worse off now than before the elections then why did SAlt call for a vote to Labor and the Greens in the first place?

Unlike SAlt who perennially support the ALP in elections and have no qualms supporting bourgeois formations such as the Greens, we seek to educate the proletariat to firmly understand that only by fighting independently of and against the entire capitalist class, can it begin to realise its historic goal. As we said in another context:

"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."

—*Australasian Spartacist*
No.182, Autumn 2003 ■



Defend the Iraqi Peoples Against U.S./Australian Occupiers!

Imperialists Devastate Falluja

The following article on the brutal U.S.-led assault on Falluja is reprinted from *Workers Vanguard* (No. 837, 26 November), newspaper of the Spartacist League/U.S. Hundreds of Australian troops continue to be part of the imperialist occupation forces in Iraq and Australian troops assigned to the U.S. and British militaries have directly participated in the Falluja war crime.

While the invasion of Falluja was in full swing, on 11 November the front pages of the tabloids showed a September 2000 photograph of Australia's elite 1RAR regiment where Aboriginal and other dark-skinned soldiers were forced to sit down while white soldiers dressed as Ku Klux Klan members stood menacingly behind them. The latest revelations of the vicious racism of the Australian military centre on the Lavarack barracks, in the Deep North town of Townsville. Black soldiers had their equipment defaced with racist graffiti and were frequently called "black c---s." In August 1999, a month before the Australian-led colonial occupation of East Timor, a 19-year-old black soldier, Damien Palmer, was found hanged after enduring months of racist abuse, including being ridiculed by an instructor about the supposed "level" of government handouts to Aborigines. In another account, a dark-skinned Australian soldier had the life-saving armour taken out of his flak jacket by other platoon members while on patrols in East Timor.

That the military is rife with the crudest manifestations of the intense racism and sexism of capitalist Australia, flows from the fact that its purpose is to enforce the interests of not the "Australian people" but the tiny band of greedy exploiters who actually rule this country. Not one person, not one cent for the racist Australian imperialist military! Australian military get out of Iraq, East Timor and the Solomon Islands.

The fact that the Australian military have led, or participated in, the colonial subjugation of East Timor, Iraq and Solomon Islands, while taking few losses, strengthens the arrogant ruling class here in its drive against the trade unions and in its reactionary crusades against Aborigines, immigrants, women and gays. It is in the direct interests of the working class to build class-struggle protests and action against the colonial occupation of Iraq. Defend the Iraqi peoples against the U.S./Australian occupiers!

Falluja. Like "My Lai," the word "Falluja" must be seared into collective memory and consciousness as a monstrous U.S. war crime. Falluja: a city of 300,000, largely depopulated as American "liberators" rode into town in tanks bearing the inscription in schoolbook Arabic, "Keep away or you will be killed." Flattening



AFP

U.S./Australia Out of Iraq Now!

Falluja was the first act of the second coming of George W. Bush. Mosques were bombed and then stormed by U.S. troops. NBC correspondent Kevin Sites videotaped Marines murdering a wounded, prostrate man in a mosque. This bit of grisly truth was sanitized by NBC (which blacked out the actual shooting) as too much reality about the Iraq occupation to beam into American living rooms.

In assaulting Falluja, the American troops' first act was to seize the city's main hospital to prevent "insurgent propaganda," i.e., word of massive civilian deaths and casualties, from reaching the world. The American military then barred relief workers with the Red Crescent from delivering food, water and medicine to the trapped civilians. Typhoid is up, as families left in the city are forced to drink water polluted with sewage. Water and power lines to the city were cut in advance of the U.S. blitzkrieg and have not been restored. Children are dying. Charred bodies lie strewn among the twisted steel, shattered glass and rubble remnants of the city, and the smell of death is everywhere. Some physicians report evidence of the use of chemical weapons and cluster bombs. Medical authorities guess that at least 800 civilians have perished, but nobody knows.

Hundreds of men fleeing Falluja were separated from their wives and children and ordered to march back to town. "There is nothing that distinguishes an insurgent from a civilian" was the explanation offered by a Cavalry officer. When forced back to Falluja, many males between the ages of 15 and 45 who didn't die in the siege were then arrested. As an Iraqi journalist stated in a firsthand account in the London *Independent* (20 November), "Civilians were told to get out of Falluja, so any man who stayed behind must be in the mujahedin."

Many of those who did manage to get out of Falluja were then killed as they fled to refugee camps or to the homes of relatives outside the city. U.S. forces sank boats ferrying refugees. AP photographer Bilal Hussein dodged gunfire to escape his hometown and attempted to swim across the Euphrates. He watched in horror as, before his eyes, a family of five was shot dead while trying to swim across. Then, he "helped bury a man by the river bank, with my own hands."

The magnitude of the crime demands huge international protest. The international working class, not least the American proletariat, should mount class-struggle actions, demonstrations, strikes and hot-cargoing shipments of

war matériel. This requires a political fight against the AFL-CIO labor tops who squandered union coffers and mobilized forces to support the Democratic Party *pro-war* candidate John Kerry who exclaimed, "I'm not talking about leaving [Iraq], I'm talking about winning!" We demand the immediate, unconditional withdrawal of all U.S. and allied troops from Iraq! We call for the defense of the Iraqi peoples against the U.S. occupiers and their puppet Iraqi troops and police. Insofar as the forces on the ground aim their blows against the imperialist occupiers and the mercenaries, we call for their defense. Every blow struck against the U.S. military and allied powers in Iraq is a blow in the interests of the international proletariat.

Racism and Imperialist Occupation

We have warned that as the American military occupation of Iraq encountered resistance, it would become increasingly

brutal. Haifa Zangana, an Iraqi-born novelist imprisoned under Saddam Hussein, writes: "Since the nominal handover of sovereignty on June 30, we have witnessed an escalation of Israeli-style collective punishment of Iraqi cities. Civilian carnage, coupled with enormous damage to homes and infrastructure, has become our daily reality" (London *Guardian*, 17 November). Australian journalist John Pilger reports:

"According to a senior British officer, the Americans view Iraqis as *Untermenschen*, a term that Hitler used in *Mein Kampf* to describe Jews, Romanians and Slavs as sub-humans. This is how the Nazi army laid siege to Russian cities, slaughtering combatants and non-combatants alike.

continued on page 11



NBC News

War crime: U.S. Marine kills severely injured, unarmed man inside Falluja mosque, 13 November.