



ALP Govt: Bush's Dogs of War

Once again, Australian imperialism has proven to be the most slavish junior partner of the U.S., with the Hawke government being among the first of Bush's allies to enlist in imperialism's grab for oil in the Persian Gulf. Two frigates, the *Adelaide* and *Darwin*, and a supply ship, *Success*, have now arrived in the region to join the imperialist armada enforcing the blockade of Iraq. The government wanted to send two more frigates, but discovered it lacked the capacity.

Hawke typically pontificated that "big countries cannot invade small neighbours and get away with it"—when all Australia's wars have been fought in someone else's country—raved jingoistically against "appeasers," and worked himself into a lather over the "hostages." In the course of the flap over what role the ships would play, Foreign Minister Gareth Evans ventured: "just steaming round in circles, bristling and operating as a general deterrent in the abstract." What it's about is anything but abstract—blood, oil and the U.S. alliance. Lackey Australian imperialism has rushed to offer its services to its military protector and "great and powerful friend," just as it did in two world wars, Korea and Vietnam. The *Australian's* Greg Sheridan advised Hawke to be "completely candid" about this. "This is the first crisis of the post-Cold War world" in which "regional heavyweights might feel freer to indulge historic

expansionist tendencies." Because of the "unique aloneness of Australia's position," argues Sheridan, "it is overwhelmingly in our interests to promote genuine multilateralism and to maintain the one truly significant alliance we have, that with the United States" (25-26 September).

Hawke was widely ridiculed as "the president's poodle" for apparently making the decision after just one phone call from Bush. He was in such a hurry he didn't bother with the formality of a Cabinet decision. But the haste came from Canberra, not Washington, it later emerged. According to the *Sydney Morning Herald* (1 September), "the Government lobbied long and hard in Washington from the very early days of the crisis for Australian involvement" and "before the U.S. had made any request, formal or otherwise." The Australian ambassador even had to request Bush's phone call. This is just like Vietnam, in 1965, when Menzies pressed the U.S. to arrange a "request" from its Saigon puppets for Australian troops. And just as Menzies couldn't even wait for the "request" to arrive before announcing he was sending troops, so Hawke's announcement preceded the arrival of a letter requesting aid from the deposed Emir of Kuwait by a full three days.

The Cold War Hawke government has supported every U.S. war move from Grenada to Libya to

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Garden Island, Sydney, 13 August.

Break Blockade of Iraq!

The following article is reprinted from *Workers Vanguard*, fortnightly paper of the *Spartacist League* (U.S. No. 509, 7 September 1990).

SEPTEMBER 4—What's going on in the Middle East right now is a bald attempt by the United States to seize control of the world's oil supplies. Having lost its economic predominance, Washington is now trying to reassert its role as imperialist global policeman through brute military force. That's what George Bush means when he talks about a "new world order," echoing Adolf Hitler in the 1930s. But in fact, the

American invasion is setting the stage for a new world war.

The consequences of Bush's war moves are incalculable. Perhaps a *quarter million* U.S. troops are in or heading for the Persian Gulf region right now. Ships are being taken out of mothballs, and tens of thousands of reservists are being called up from civilian life. It's a *war mobilization* on a scale not seen since the height of the Vietnam War. Now they're talking of launching an air war in a matter of weeks, and Bush is to meet Soviet leader Gorbachev in a hastily called summit in Helsinki next weekend.

The bipartisan U.S. crusade against former U.S. ally Saddam Hussein is hardly about resisting aggression or "making the world safe for democracy." Certainly not coming from the people who recently slaughtered thousands of civilians to install a puppet regime in Panama. Bush says it's about defending "our way of life." What he means is a war to make the world safe for the feudalism of the oil sheiks and the profiteering of Big Oil.

After proclaiming victory in the Cold War, U.S. imperialism is now seeking to dictate terms to its imperialist rivals.

Meanwhile as Gorbachev prates about "collective security," Bush has used the fig leaf of UN sanctions as a green light for a massive U.S. military operation less than 700 miles from the Soviet border. A deadly noose is tightening around the USSR. We call on the Soviet Union to rescind its arms embargo against Iraq.

The trip wires for World War III are pulling taut in the volatile Near East. French president Mitterrand declares, "We have entered into the logic of war." The deranged Zionist rulers in Jerusalem are itching for a pre-emptive strike

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Reuters



Dennis Brack

Vacationing Bush orders war mobilisation from his golf cart. Is this the face of World War III?

Imperialist Oil Pirates Out of the Persian Gulf!

Dogs of War...

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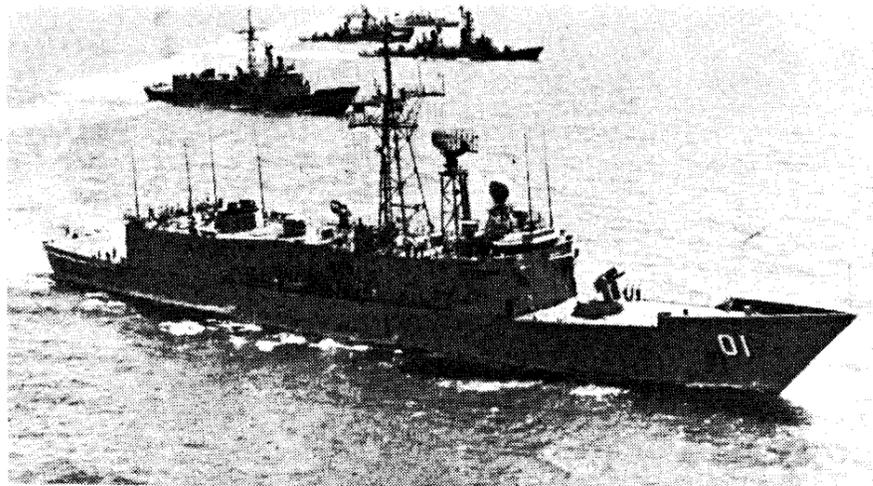
Panama, as well embarking on an ambitious military build-up to be the imperialist bully-boy of the South Pacific. And while they're raising a hue and cry over Iraqi chemical weapons, the Hawke government has gone out on a limb to defend the U.S. chemical weapons depot on Johnston atoll. They've threatened to invade Vanuatu, ran a dirty little "counter-insurgency" on Bougainville, sent troops for UN "peacekeeping" in Namibia, and are committed to send troops to Cambodia for the proposed UN occupation force. Evans has been the front man for this U.S.-inspired plan for counterrevolution which opens the way for the despised mass murderer Pol Pot to return to power. Nor is this the first time Australian troops have been used as imperialist dogs of war in the Near East. After World War I, Australian troops took part in the brutal suppression of the 1919 nationalist uprising in Egypt by British colonial authorities. And when Hawke came to power, he continued the commitment of Australian troops to the U.S.-led force in the Sinai, which secured Israel's southern border when it invaded Lebanon. We say: Australian and all

imperialist forces out of the Gulf! Down with Australian lackey imperialism!

Hawke Hits the Vietnam Syndrome

Hawke was hoping to reap a "Falklands factor" from his Gulf commitment, but instead he ran into the "Vietnam syndrome." The memory of Australia's part in the dirty losing war in Vietnam is still deeply embedded in the minds of working people. Hawke's farewell to the "boys" at the Garden Island naval base in Sydney on 13 August went down like a lead balloon. Many of the sailors' wives and families, interviewed that night on TV, weren't cheering, and a few were outright opposed. Morale was reportedly low, and "peace" Senator Jo Vallentine claimed in parliament that 40 sailors had deserted the *Adelaide*. No wonder, with commanders like the senior naval officer who declared that asbestos was harmless and even edible! A militant Spartacist contingent (see photo, page one) at a protest outside Garden Island the day the ships left was widely covered by the press, including the *West Australian*, the *Sydney Daily Telegraph*, the *Townsville Bulletin*, the *London Evening Standard*, the French Communist Party daily *l'Humanite*, the *New Zealand Herald* and the German *Sddeutsche Zeitung*.

The opinion polls in the capitalist



Australian Foreign Affairs Record

HMAS Adelaide foreground, part of Hawke government's contribution to imperialist Persian Gulf oil grab.

media rapidly disappeared, after showing massive (in some cases, a majority) opposition to Hawke's Gulf commitment. Criticism ranged across the bourgeois parliamentary spectrum, from the Australian Democrats, ex-Prime Minister Gough Whitlam, ALP "lefts" like George Crawford and Tom Uren, Arabic newspapers and community groups representing most of the Arab community, and even the National Farmers Federation, which was worried about Australia's Near East trade. Most of this opposition was limited to criticising Hawke for not waiting for UN approval, and the ALP "lefts" caved in when the vote was taken in parliament, pleading only for more "consultation."

Outside parliament, however, talk shows and letters to newspapers ran heavily against Hawke's commitment, and the uproar intersected Hawke's domestic unpopularity, with the Accord at breaking point and widening chasms within the ALP over privatisation. The servile media went to work to mould "public opinion," whipping up war hysteria over the "hostages" and fomenting anti-Arab racism. After a few weeks they duly produced new opinion polls some of which claimed a large majority supporting Hawke. Even if these are accurate,

however, such a mood is very brittle—and is likely to disintegrate once war breaks out.

Peace Protests: "Little Australia" Nationalism

The fight against imperialist war abroad is inseparable from working-class struggle against the hated Hawke government's war on the unions and the poor at home. However the social-democratic left and the nationalist "peace" movement see it as an opportunity to revive the "broad" popular-front anti-war movement of the Vietnam Moratorium days. They have set up single-issue coalitions like the Sydney "Bring the Frigates Home Coalition" and the Melbourne "Gulf Action Coalition" to organise marches, with social-patriotic, "little Australia" nationalist politics in command. This nationalist "peace" movement, far from fighting Australian imperialism's war plans, appeals to the bourgeoisie in the name of Australia's "sovereignty," its "national interest" and supposed "democratic traditions." They loyally beseech the ruling class not to be dragged by Uncle Sam into war in the Gulf, but instead to keep the navy at home to look after its "own backyard."

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TROTSKY

To the Memory of Leon Trotsky

Fifty years ago, on 20 August 1940, Leon Trotsky was struck down by the blows of an assassin acting on Stalin's orders. Co-leader with V.I. Lenin of the Russian Revolution, intransigent fighter against the Stalinist bureaucracy's betrayal of that revolution, Trotsky founded the Fourth International in 1938. His legacy lives on in the internationalist political program he fought for, while the heirs of Stalin collapse under the weight of their own bankruptcy. Today we

fight to reforge the Fourth International, destroyed by liquidationist forces in 1951-53, as the indispensable prerequisite for the victory of world socialism. Below we reprint remarks by American Trotskyist leader James P. Cannon at the memorial meeting in New York on 28 August 1940.

Comrade Trotsky's entire conscious life, from the time he entered the workers' movement in the provincial Russian town of Nikolaiev at the age of 18, up till the moment of his death in Mexico City 42 years later, was completely dedicated to work and struggle for one central idea. He stood for the emancipation of the workers and all the oppressed people of the world, and the transformation of society from capitalism to socialism by means of a social revolution. In his conception this liberating social revolution requires for success the leadership of a revolutionary political party of the workers' vanguard....

He once wrote: "It is not the party that makes the program (the idea); it is the program that makes the party".... Trotsky, a disciple of Marx, believed with Marx, that "an idea, when it permeates the mass, becomes a material force." Believing that, Comrade Trotsky never doubted that his work would live after him. Believing that, he could proclaim on his death bed his confidence in the future victory of the Fourth International which embodies his ideas....

The betrayers of the revolution knew that the revolution lived in him, the tradition, the hope. All the resources of a powerful state, set in motion by the hatred and revenge of Stalin, were directed to the assassination of a single man, without resources and with only a handful of close followers....

Comrade Trotsky not only struggled for a new social order based on human solidarity as a future goal; he lived every day of his life according to its higher and nobler standards. They wouldn't let him be a citizen of any country. But, in truth, he was much more than that. He was already, in his mind and in his conduct, a citizen of the Communist future of humanity.

—James P. Cannon, "To the Memory of the Old Man" (August 1940)



LENIN

Spartacist League/Australia

Regular readers will have noticed that the Spartacist League/Australia and New Zealand has become the Spartacist League/Australia, a decision of our nineteenth national conference in mid-April. Having recently changed the name of our international tendency from international Spartacist tendency (iSt) to International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist), an act of political house-keeping with the Australian section's name seemed timely. The comrade who motivated the proposal wrote: "Australia and New Zealand are not one country nor one state, although there is a somewhat close relation between the two.... We should not have this anomaly in our name and should stick to the regular Leninist line on one state, one party."

This prompted a discussion on our history which was particularly interesting for the newer members attending their first conference. The Spartacist League/Australia and New Zealand originated in New Zealand in 1967, forged out of a faction fight in the New Zealand Socialist Labour Movement, a loose Trotskyoid grouping. The founding document was the Spartacist League/U.S. "Declaration of Principles" (reprinted in *Marxist Bulletin* No. 9). A Spartacist group active in the anti-war, student and women's movements had been established in New Zealand by the early seventies.

The Spartacist League of New Zealand moved to Australia in early 1973 considering that the opportunities for build-

ing a revolutionary party were greater here at the time. We maintained close links with supporters in New Zealand and broad circulation of *Australasian Spartacist*, and we had an early perspective of rebuilding a section there. The name adopted for the section, SL/ANZ, reflected this. However, over the years these links diminished, and while the name SL/ANZ was kept mainly to reflect historical origins, it became increasingly anomalous.

In 1974, the SL/ANZ joined with the SL/U.S. in founding the iSt as a democratic-centralist international tendency with the adoption of the "Declaration for the Organising of an International Trotskyist Tendency" (see "International Communist League Launched," *Australasian Spartacist* No. 132, June/July 1989). Over the past 17 years the SL/ANZ has recruited class-conscious workers and students and has established itself as the Trotskyist organisation in this country and as a proud fighter against rotten Australian imperialism at home and in the region. The Spartacist League/Australia will build on this work in our struggle for a workers Australia, part of a socialist Asia. And we are certainly not abandoning our commitment to build a section of the ICL in New Zealand as part of a regional revolutionary perspective. As we wrote in *Australasian Spartacist* (No. 6, March 1974): "Forward to Bolshevik Parties in Australia and New Zealand! Forward to the Rebirth of the Fourth International!" ■

Australasian

SPARTACIST 

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

Marxist two-monthly of the Spartacist League of Australia, section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist).

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"Mumia Abu-Jamal must not die!" "Rettet das Leben von Mumia Abu-Jamal!" "Mumia Abu-Jamal ne doit pas mourir!" Through June and July around the world—in union halls, universities and urban ghettos—this demand was being shouted. The cause of the 36-year-old black journalist on death row in Pennsylvania, USA, is the rallying cry for opponents of the barbaric death penalty around the world. A former Black Panther Party spokesman and a respected journalist known as the "voice of the voiceless," Jamal was framed on charges of killing a Philadelphia policeman in 1981. Last year Pennsylvania State Representative David Richardson summed up his case:

"Mumia's trial was a farce.... It was clear, to anyone whose eyes are open to racism, that Mumia had been framed for his political beliefs.... An innocent man has been sentenced to die."

The campaign was sponsored by the Partisan Defense Committee in the U.S. and its various fraternal defence organisations initiated by sections of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist). Protest meetings and demonstrations were held in Toronto, London, Paris, Berlin, Hamburg, Sydney and in American cities including New York, Oakland, Chicago and Philadelphia itself. Over 26,000 people internationally, including 1,800 in Australia, have signed statements demanding Jamal must not die. Unions representing millions more have stood up against this "legal" lynching. Newspapers across America and in Canada, Germany and London covered the campaign; in Europe, the French and Italian Communist Party newspapers carried articles for Jamal.

In an ominous demonstration of why Philadelphia's kill-crazy cops are so hated and feared, the Philadelphia Fraternal Order of Police held a counter-demonstration at the same time as the Philadelphia PDC rally and demanded Jamal's immediate execution. FOP president Richard Costello labelled death penalty abolitionists fighting to save Jamal as a "misfit terrorist group" and threatened: "If you don't like it you can join him. We'll take out the electric chair, we'll make it an electric couch."

The Partisan Defence Committee in Australia campaigned actively to save Jamal through June and July leading up to a protest rally in Sydney on 12 July. Community radio including Melbourne's 3CR and Sydney's 2RSR-FM publicised the campaign via Aboriginal Radio Redfern, and Greek-language Radio Rixi,



Partisan Defense Committee rally in New York City, June 28. Mumia Abu-Jamal must not die!

Worldwide Campaign to Save Mumia Abu-Jamal

whose producers also worked with the PDC to publish a leaflet in Greek. Aboriginal students at Sydney University organised a video-showing, finding Jamal's fight for freedom, justice and life intersected their own struggle against racism and reaction. The Sydney University paper *Honi Soit* carried a two-page spread on Jamal, and the SRC passed a motion to send a protest letter to Philadelphia's Governor Casey. In Melbourne the Swinburne Institute of Technology journal also carried an article.

As a class-struggle defence organisation the PDC looks not to the capitalist courts but to the power of the working class to save Jamal and smash the death penalty from South Africa to the U.S.A. The Fireman and Deckhands Union of NSW sent a protest letter abhorring "the use of the death penalty in any circumstances and particularly in this case where a politically active Black

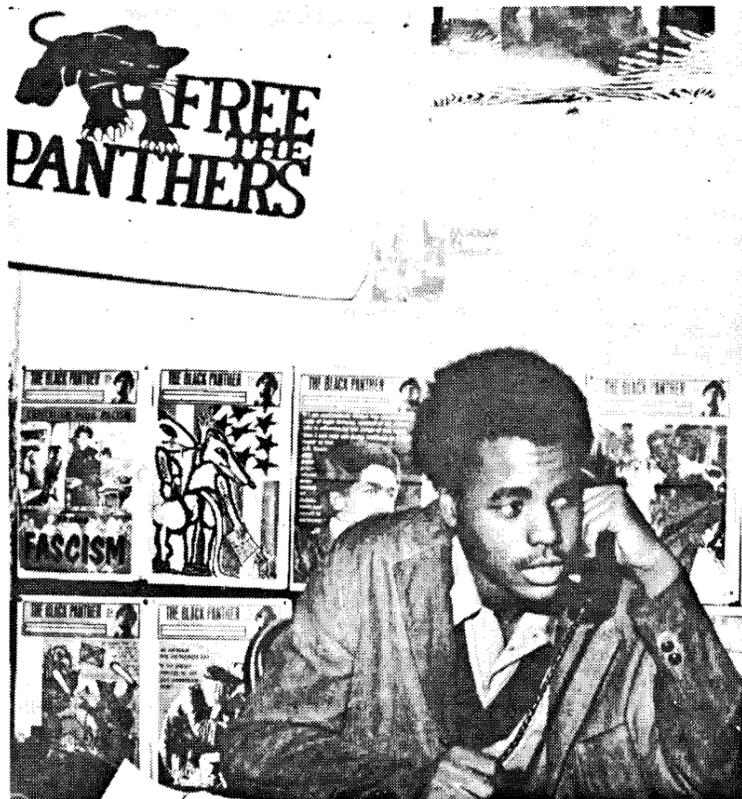
American appears to have been denied natural justice." Teachers at the Sydney TAFE Teachers Association Educational Services Branch and the Correspondence Branch of the NSW Teachers Federation passed motions adding their voices to the protest. The Victorian Branch of the Australian Telecommunications Employees Association passed a motion demanding that Jamal's life be saved. The *Journalist*, national journal of the Australian Journalists Association, carried a letter on the case. These unionists join American unions including the International Longshoremen's Association [waterside workers], the Metro Toronto Labour Council and the CGT, France's largest trade-union federation representing millions of workers.

The spirited 12 July rally included speakers from the PDC, a militant from the Teachers Federation and the Spartacist League. Representatives from the

Coalition Against Apartheid and the Campaign Exposing the Frame-Up of Tim Anderson enthusiastically joined the PDC campaign and addressed the rally. Messages of support and further protests to Governor Casey from Victorian Labor MLC George Crawford, the Pan-Africanist Congress of Azania (South Africa), Australasian Office, and the Freedom Socialist Party and Radical Women were read to the rally. A message to the international protests from Jamal was also read. His moving note said, in part: "Your international voice of protest becomes a sweet song of hope for the thousands of us in the United States sitting on the brink of death. I am honored to join you, and this noble fight."

Among industrialised capitalist countries only the U.S. and South Africa retain the death penalty, a legacy of cen-

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Mumia Abu-Jamal in 1969, age 14, Minister of Information for Philadelphia Black Panther Party.

Former Black Panther Framed Up A Fighter Against Racist Oppression

Mumia Abu-Jamal's life is a chronicle of black protest—from demonstrating against a George ("Segregation Forever") Wallace rally in the white bastion of South Philadelphia at the age of 13, to his impassioned journalistic defense of the MOVE organization. In 1967, Jamal was in the forefront of citywide student demonstrations demanding black studies programs in the high schools, and was expelled for leading protests to change the name of Benjamin Franklin High School to Malcolm X High School and distributing pamphlets calling for "revolutionary black student power." The protests culminated with a demonstration outside School Board headquarters which was attacked by the cops.

As a victim of and witness to racist cop ter-

ror, Jamal was determined to fight for black emancipation. At the age of 14, he was co-founder and Minister of Information of the Philadelphia chapter of the Black Panthers. "I was beaten into the Black Panther Party," he says. In the summer of 1969, while still in his teens, Jamal was arrested during one of many cop raids on the Panthers' Philly headquarters, part of the FBI COINTELPRO conspiracy. The following summer he was working in the offices of the *Black Panther* newspaper when Philly top cop Rizzo led his notorious assault on the Panthers, dragging the young black militants out onto the street, where they were lined up against the wall and stripped.

In January 1970, the 16-year-old Jamal was

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Iraq...

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against Baghdad with "non-conventional weapons." And the concentration of American firepower could blow the whole region sky high. The workers of the world have a big stake in defending Iraq against this imperialist onslaught. Break the Yankee blockade!

War, as Lenin said, is the mother of revolution. The imperialist invasion will set the Middle East aflame as the Arab masses surge into the streets in angry protests that could topple the kings, sheiks and colonels throughout the region. And in this country, we have a big opportunity to stick it to this vicious, dangerous ruling class which first and foremost exploits the American working people and minorities.

Bush has jumped into a quagmire with both feet. The Arabian sands could well be quicksand for U.S. rulers. Remember what happened to Carter's Delta Force in Iran and the Marines in Beirut. In the name of the American young men and women who will come back in coffins, in the name of millions of Arabs facing the imperialist war machine, we call for sharp class struggle to bring down the bloody-minded American capitalists.

A War for Big Oil

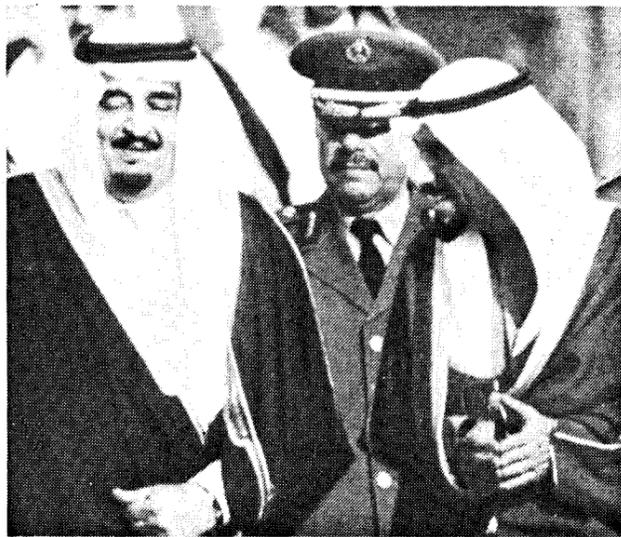
It all started when Iraq's Hussein sent his army into the emirate of Kuwait on August 2 in a grab for the oil fields and to fulfill Iraq's historic claim to a port on the Gulf. Previously the U.S. had supported Iraq in the squalid eight-year Iran-Iraq war, supplying satellite intelligence and tanker escorts, even overlooking the Iraqis' Exocet missile attack on the USS *Stark*. But now suddenly the Iraqi strongman was sitting on 20 percent of the world's oil reserves. Overnight Saddam Hussein was transformed into a new "Hitler" by the servile U.S. media. War propaganda against "insane Hussein" escalated violent anti-Arab racism at home.

Bush vowed the seizure of Kuwait "will not stand," and after strong-arming the feudalistic Saudi monarchy, U.S. troops started pouring into that desert country. Kuwait's considerable assets abroad were frozen, a trade embargo was placed on Iraq, and four U.S. aircraft carrier battle groups were mobilized to enforce a blockade (labeled "interdiction" to disguise the fact that this is a blatant act of war). The stated goal was to defend the house of Saud and restore Sheik Jabbar al Ahmad al Sabah to the Kuwaiti throne.

Bush & Co. just cut the ground out from under naive liberals and pacifists who thought they would collect a "peace dividend" in the "post-Cold War" world. Instead of cuts in the "defense" budget, supplemental appropriations are being rushed through and virtually every military boondoggle that was under the budget ax has been resuscitated. The entire massive mobilization is being accomplished without even a pro forma Congressional debate, much less lip service to the War Powers Act as the Democrats snap to attention whenever Bush waves the flag.

To justify the American invasion, State Department ignoramus Margaret Tutweiler harps on "Iraqi aggression." Yeah, like when Saddam Hussein went into Grenada? Iraq's takeover of Kuwait is no historical aberration: all states are built on acts of aggression. What about William the Conqueror? And Iraq's Hussein had more justification than most when he pointed out in an August 10 speech that "the colonialists, to ensure their petroleum interests...set up those disfigured petroleum states."

The statelet of Kuwait was an imperialist legacy created by drawing artificial "Lines in the Sand," as Glenn Frankel wrote in the *Washington Post* (31 August). The former Ottoman Empire was carved up between the English and



Nelson/AFP



Der Spiegel

U.S. power behind the thrones of Saudi Arabia's King Fahd (left) and Emir of Kuwait. Iraq strongman Saddam Hussein (right) is target of Bush's imperialist "new order."

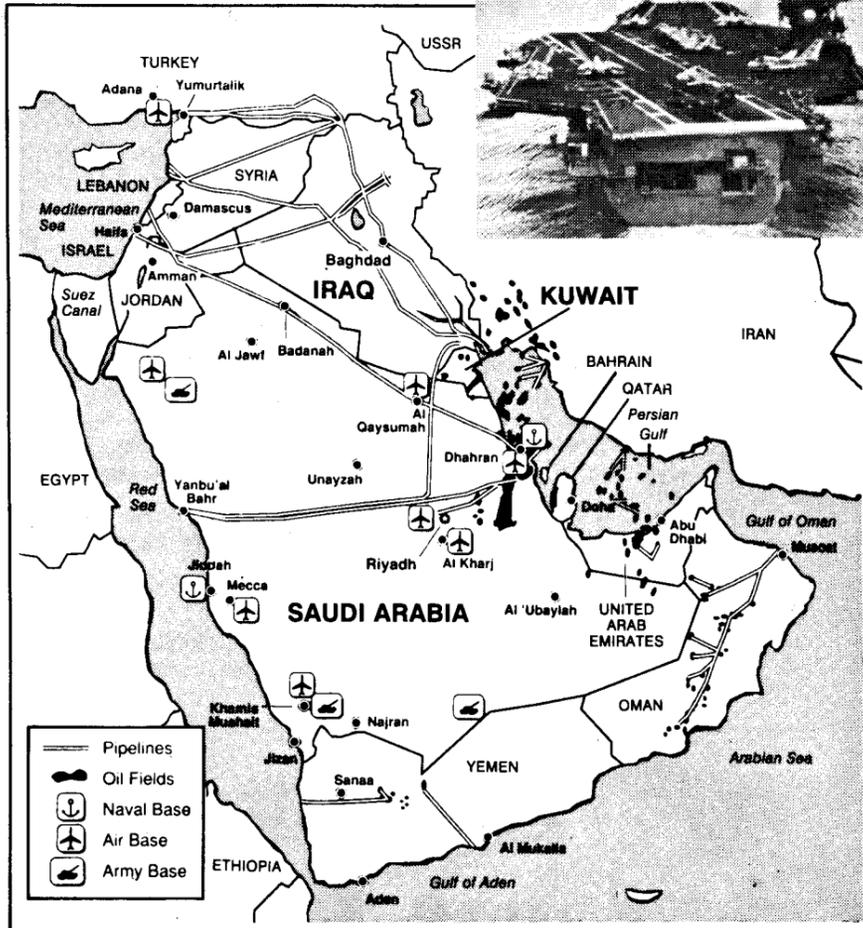
French in the secret Sykes-Picot agreement of 1916. Part of Basra province until London recognized it as a protectorate in 1899, Kuwait was separated off after World War I in order to deny Iraq access to the sea, which was War Office policy to "limit its influence in the gulf and keep it dependent on Britain."

"We, the British, cobbled Iraq together," admitted British diplomat Sir Anthony Parsons. The boundary with Kuwait

Hussein pointed out, in World War II, in an act of racism utterly without military justification, the U.S. threw hundreds of thousands of Japanese Americans, many of them U.S. citizens, into concentration camps.

And then there is the matter of Iraq's poison gas, "the poor man's atom bomb." Having for years turned a blind eye to Hussein's vicious use of nerve gas and mustard gas against Iranian troops

American military (aircraft, ships, troops) have moved in to stay, in bases throughout Arabian peninsula, to grab Mideast oil supplies.



New York Times Map

contested by Saddam Hussein was dictated in 1922 by British high commissioner Sir Percy Cox. And indeed, the British drew the frontiers and designated rulers throughout the region, installing loyal tribal leaders as monarchs as T.E. Lawrence did with Ibn Saud. And the French carved up their Syrian mandate territory to create the artificial state of Lebanon as a pro-Western Christian-dominated enclave in the Levant. The last 40 years of bloodletting in the Middle East go back to this cynical imperialist carve-up.

Another Washington battle cry is Saddam Hussein's refusal to let Westerners leave Iraq, turning them into hostages. Why, he even sent some to Iraqi military bases and dams which would be obvious targets of U.S. air strikes. What savagery! War is indeed a savage business in which enemy aliens are often subjected to repression. And the citizens of any country participating in the blockade of Iraq certainly qualify as enemy aliens. As

and thousands of Kurds inside Iraq, now Washington objects. Forget that the U.S. has a vast chemical warfare arsenal, and that Bush has fought Congress to continue production of "binary" nerve gas. American warships in the region surely carry atomic weapons, and we are morally certain the Pentagon is already updating operational plans to *nuke Baghdad*.

"New World Order"

When Hitler took power in 1933 proclaiming a "New Order," he proclaimed it would last a thousand years. In taking up the same rhetoric, Bush is desperately trying to revive the "American Century" which, as we have put it, was buried in the jungles of Vietnam. Hitler's "New Order" lasted 12 years; Bush's could blow up in his face in a matter of weeks.

This is no longer 1945, when America was undisputed master of the capitalist world. German imperialism is forming a

Fourth Reich by taking over East Germany and establishing the domination of the D-mark in East Europe on the road to economic hegemony throughout Europe. Japan is forming a new "co-prosperity sphere" in East Asia having already become the U.S.' main creditor. The "dollar zone" is being challenged by the yen and D-mark.

Today the American imperialists talk of protecting the oil "life line." In the 1800s, British interest in Mesopotamia (present-day Iraq) was based on defending the "life line" to India. This was also the rationale for grabbing Suez, and once they had Egypt and the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, that paved the way for the Cecil Rhodes "Cape to Cairo" types. While Britannia ruled the waves and grabbed the lion's share of Africa, the Germans dreamed of a Berlin-to-Baghdad railroad. When these two imperial ambitions clashed, the result was World War I.

U.S. rulers want to regain the position of imperialist top cop by seizing the oil, which they can then dole out to their economically more dynamic rivals. Significantly, Washington's Japanese and German "allies" have hung back from military commitments in the Persian Gulf adventure, no doubt hoping to maintain friendly connections in the Arab world. As the world's chief bursars, they would like to have the U.S. act as mercenaries to guard "their" oil supplies.

But if the junk-bond-bloated Yankee rulers are short on productive capacity these days, they're trying to make up for it with brute military force. In the first place, the U.S. mobilization is far more than necessary to "defend" Saudi Arabia: the Pentagon has moved in "ground and helicopter forces expressly geared to offensive operations," just the mix that computer wargame analysis indicates for an air/land attack on Iraq, notes the authoritative *Aviation Week* (27 August).

But a war with Iraq's battle-hardened army of nearly a million men with over 5,000 tanks will not be a walkover like Panama or Grenada. No war has ever been won through a blockade, as was tried against the Southern Confederacy and Germany. And as Hussein himself pointed out, no war has ever been won through air power. So they're gearing up for "the big one." Right now they're in a phase of "phony war," letting UN secretary general Pérez de Cuéllar show that shuttle diplomacy is worthless. It will take another few weeks for the U.S. to get the full complement of forces in place. And then inexorable pressure will mount to "use it or lose it."

The current "crisis" was not entirely unplanned: the Army Corps of Engineers has spent \$17 billion over the years for military infrastructure in Saudi Arabia, including "hardened airfields where fueling, maintenance and ordnance loading are done well underground" and runways were specifically designed for large U.S. transport planes (*Navy Times*, 27 August). And "Operation Desert Shield" could be implemented so quickly because the Joint Chiefs of Staff simply

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They further bemoan Hawke's "hypocrisy" in not standing up militarily to the Indonesians over East Timor, or to the Rabuka military coup in Fiji. The closer they are to home, the more hawkish they become. One chant at the Garden Island demo was "Fight for Australia, not for America!"

But Hawke is "fighting for Australia," the only way the ruling class knows how. Denouncing the "knee-jerk anti-Americanism" of the left, *Australian* columnist P.P. McGuinness baldly stated, "it was not merely a case of Australia responding to America's bidding... given the kind of desperate economic situation in which we find ourselves, it is not a bad thing to tighten the ties that bind us to the United States" (18-19 August). The nationalist "left" may dream of an "independent" foreign policy, and some take it to the reactionary conclusion of advocating "armed neutrality," but the ruling class know that they can only exist as a white imperialist outpost on the rim of Asia as a lackey of a more powerful white imperialism. Australia's involvement in the Persian Gulf goes well beyond a couple of frigates. Bases like North-West Cape, put on alert during the 1973 Arab-Israel war, have been crucial to U.S. global war plans, and you can bet that the spy bases at Pine Gap and Nurrungar are busy right now. *U.S. Bases out of Australia! Smash the U.S.-Australia alliance!*

The Brezhnevite Stalinists of the Socialist Party of Australia (SPA) supported UN sanctions against Iraq as a supposed alternative to war. They got what they asked for pretty quickly, when the "peace loving" UN voted to sanction the use of force by the imperialists to enforce the blockade. This recalls the Korean War, in which millions died and Korea was devastated by imperialist armies under the UN flag. The SPA grumbled about the "policy of appeasement of imperialism which seems to be the line presently being followed by the Soviet leadership." But as demonstrated by their faith in the neutrality of the UN, the SPA have no political alternative to the Stalinist pipedream of "peaceful coexistence" with aggressive imperialism that has brought the Soviet Union to its present pass.

ISO: Phoney Anti-Imperialists

The International Socialist Organisation (ISO) is posing as the "radical" wing of the social-patriotic popular front. The ISO thinks the USSR is "state capitalist," a rationale for refusing to defend the historic gains of the 1917 Revolution, a position which has landed it in the camp of imperialism from Afghanistan to Poland to Cambodia. A meeting of the Sydney "Bring the Frigates Home Coalition" on 23 August turned into an acrimonious squabble between the likes of Denis Freney of the CPA/New Left Party, who wanted to pander to the government by denouncing Iraq and appealing to the UN, and the ISO, which had been waving placards saying "Just like Vietnam. Victory to Iraq." This led to the farcical spectacle of the contending proponents of the "broadest unity" settling down to tear each other to shreds.

The Vietnamese workers and peasants were able to achieve a stunning victory over U.S. and Australian imperialism because they waged a social revolution. An important role was played by Soviet arms. But the ISO is utterly hostile to the Vietnamese deformed workers state. One of their supporters in the Melbourne tramways union recently signed a reactionary petition calling for capitalist counterrevolution in Vietnam (see page nine). In stark contrast are their big illusions in the Arab bourgeois nationalist Hussein. They call upon Hussein to launch another reactionary Arab-Israel

On Baghdad, and Bagmen

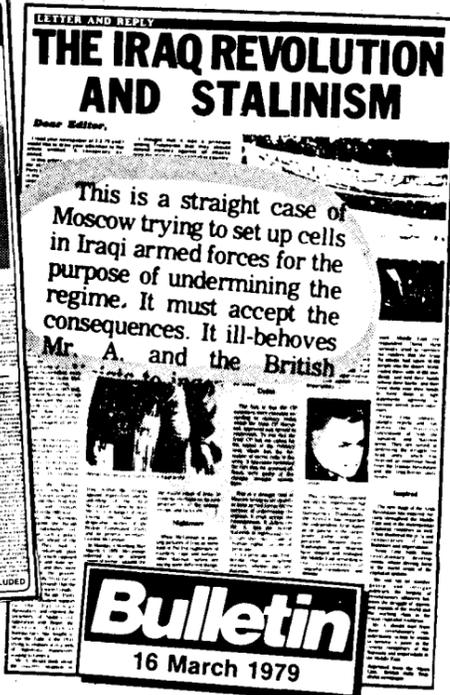
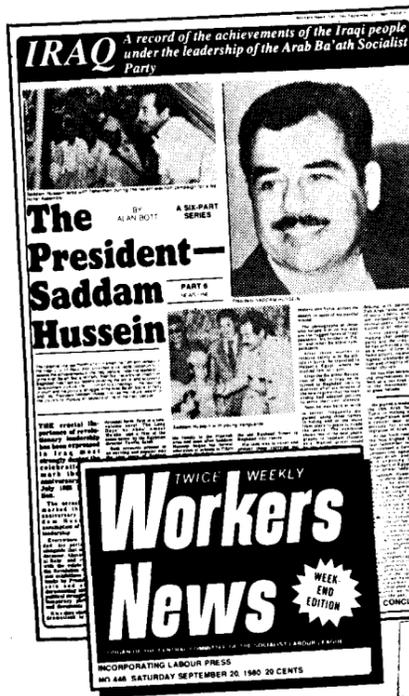
The Socialist Labour League (SLL) masquerade as Trotskyists, and over the Gulf crisis they make some orthodox-sounding calls: "Hands off Iraq! Defeat Australian Imperialism!" Their paper, *Workers News* (24 August), attacks Saddam Hussein's Ba'ath regime for its "brutal attacks on the Kurdish people and their legitimate right to national self-determination while savagely repressing the Communist Party of Iraq and the trade unions." A statement more breathtakingly cynical and deceitful would be hard to find. For years, in the late 1970s and early '80s, the SLL were the paid press agents of various Arab despots, including Hussein, and in 1979 they supported the Iraqi regime's execution of 21 Communists in the army, saying "the Arab Ba'ath Socialist Party of Iraq has played a hundred fold more progressive role in the Middle East than Stalinism" (*Workers News*, 16 March 1979).

The 24 August *Workers News* attempts to brazen it out, in an article titled "Alex Mitchell—mouthpiece of Australian imperialism." Mitchell was a leader of the SLL's fake international, the International Committee (IC), when it was ruled by British Workers Revolutionary Party (WRP) leader Gerry Healy. He was editor of Healy's paper, *News Line*. Today Mitchell works for Fairfax's Sydney *Sun-Herald*, and is running articles about Saddam Hussein such as "My meeting with the Arab dictator" based on

war, and thus possibly World War III: "we actively want Iraq to break the blockade, attack Israel and arouse the Arab masses against imperialism and their own rulers" (*Socialist*, August 1990). This phoney anti-imperialism aside, the ISO just wants to be part of the popular front. The *Socialist* ran a big and bold headline: "Bush is the real butcher. U.S. OUT OF THE GULF!" in glaring contrast to the tiny note: "Bring back Aust ships," which fits comfortably with the cheap chauvinist "yank-baiting" of the Laborites that amnesties Australian imperialism. And an article by an ISO member in the Sydney university student paper *Honi Soit* (21 August) makes no mention of "Victory to Iraq" but instead complains "Why were no Australian forces sent to help the 'small neighbours' Grenada and Panama" and that Hawke "undermined effective sanctions and action against Rabuka's military takeover" in Fiji.

We shouldn't forget the eternal Laborites of the *Militant*. When it comes to Iraq, they'll settle for nothing less than red revolution: "The best way for the Iraqi workers to defeat a U.S. attack is to overthrow Hussein and launch a revolutionary war making a class appeal to all Arab, Palestinian and Jewish workers as well as Western troops. A 'holy war' for socialism" (September 1990) and so on. Wisely avoiding the danger of over-exerting themselves, in Australia they're taking round a petition to the ALP National Executive. But don't think these stalwart "Marxists" have forgotten the final goal: "a socialist Labor government... which would not be opposed" to helping out the Arab proletarian revolution. The Iraqi working class can hardly wait.

In contrast, militant Spartacist contingents have called for mobilising the working class against its own main enemy, Australian imperialism, in the protest marches in Sydney on 1 September, in Melbourne on 18 and 27 August, and at a Spartacist-initiated rally at Sydney University against Evans, who was speaking on foreign policy. One Spartacist chant took up one of the left's fondest myths, that the ALP is traditionally anti-war: "Bust the Accord!



Beams' *Workers News* and North's *Bulletin*—mouthpieces for Arab despots.

the time when he was Healy's bagman in Iraq. A 16 December 1985 report by an IC Control Commission documented how over £1 million was received by the WRP from, as well as Libya and Iraq, the government of Kuwait! In return the WRP provided services such as spying on prominent British Jews for Libya and

fingering Iraqi Communists in Britain to the Iraqi embassy.

The *Workers News* article blames Healy's WRP exclusively for these blood crimes and totally hides their own role and that of the current IC *lider maximo*, U.S. Workers League leader David

continued on page 11

Break with Labor—Party of Racism, Depression and War!" As the party of White Australia racism, the ALP has been the bourgeoisie's preferred government in times of war. From World War I "to the last man and the last shilling," to World War II under Hawke's hero, John Curtin. During the Vietnam war, ALP leader Calwell briefly campaigned for withdrawal of troops in the 1966 election, then his successor Whitlam dropped any pretence of opposition to the war and only took it up again in 1969 after the U.S. ruling class had decided to get out because the war was lost. Whitlam's 1967 turnaround revealed the true nature of the ALP to thousands of radical youth, impelling them to the left. Through the likes of Jim Cairns, the ALP ensured that the 1970-71 Moratorium marches were dominated by bourgeois-defeatist politics. A number of Hawke's ministers, including war minister Robert Ray, were anti-war protesters back then, but the path from yesterday's pacifist to today's warmonger is a traditional one well-trodden by Laborites.

What is necessary are political strikes and demonstrations by the working class to spike Hawke's war moves. During the

Vietnam war seamen and waterside workers in particular banned supply ships and took other action against the war. While these actions were subordinated to the official anti-war movement, they contained a component of solidarity with the Vietnamese Revolution. Today such actions would run up against the Accord straitjacket of the bureaucracy. But just as defeat of the ruling class in Vietnam opened up the class struggle, and in the O'Shea mass strike in 1969 in particular the working class was able to loosen the Arbitration shackles, so today Hawke's leap, at Bush's side, into the Near East quagmire could afford the opportunity to bust the Accord and unleash some hard class struggle to roll back the attacks of the Hawke years. The political cement of the Accord has always been Laborism and nationalism. A revolutionary workers party must be built in struggle against the treacherous and reactionary ALP tops through splitting the working class away from them. Such a party would fight for socialist revolution to end Australian jackal imperialism once and for all. *For a workers republic of Australia, part of a socialist Asia!* ■

Spartacist Forums

Break the Blockade of Iraq!

U.S., Australia, All Imperialist Military Out of the Persian Gulf!

Tuesday, October 9
7:30 p.m.
AMWU Council Room
136-140 Chalmers St
Surry Hills

SYDNEY

For more information:
(02) 281-2181

Saturday, October 13
2:00 p.m.
YWCA
489 Elizabeth St
City

MELBOURNE

For more information:
(03) 654-4315

Thursday, October 18
1:00 p.m.
Brennan Room
Holme Building
Sydney University

SYDNEY

For more information:
(02) 281-2181

India, Pakistan Talk War

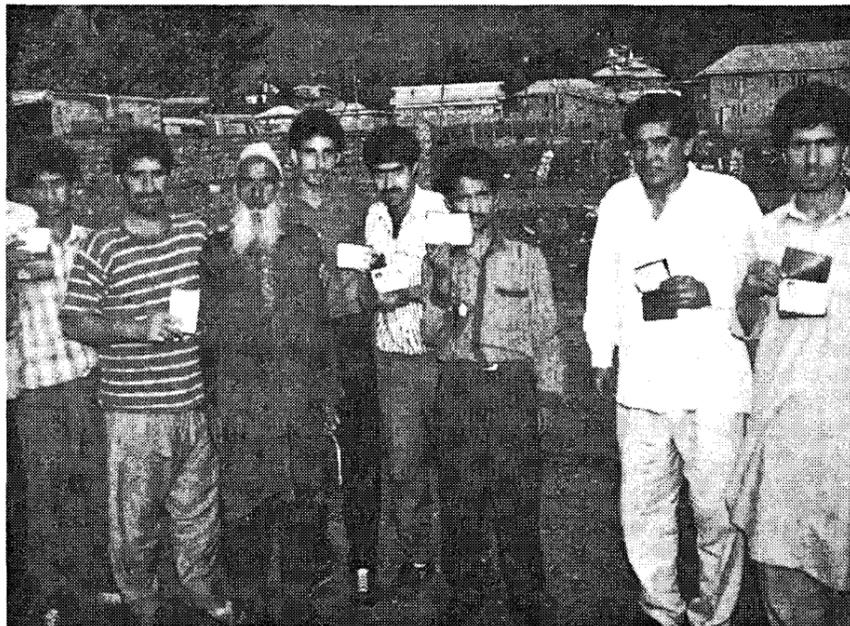
Brutal Crackdown in Kashmir

The following article is adapted from Workers Hammer No. 115 (July 1990), published by the Spartacist League/Britain. Shortly after it was written, on 6 August, Pakistan's president, Ghulam Ishaq Khan, sacked Benazir Bhutto's government along with all the provincial governments, replacing them with "caretaker" governments consisting overwhelmingly of supporters of former military strongman General Zia ul-Haq. Now the Pakistan Army is back in the driver's seat, and the India-Pakistan clashes over the Kashmir border have continued, including artillery duels.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

"Kashmir is at war with India" reports *India Today* (30 April). And the massive resistance of the overwhelmingly Muslim population of the Kashmir valley threatens to trigger a new war between Pakistan and India. Disputes over Kashmir—which is strategically placed on India's borders with Pakistan, China and Afghanistan, with the USSR nearby—have already twice been the direct cause of wars between the two states of the subcontinent (in 1948 and 1965). In late May the troop buildups, border skirmishes, threats and hysteria between two weak and unstable governments nearly exploded into full-scale fighting. The *Economist* termed it "the makings of a bloody, old fashioned war" but both countries hover on the threshold of a nuclear warfare capacity. Kashmir epitomises the seething complex of national and communal conflicts throughout the region, from the Kurdish areas of Turkey through Soviet Central Asia to the Muslim minority areas of China, as well as in the Indian subcontinent.

The new Indian government of V. P. Singh had barely been installed on 2 December 1989 when Dr. Rubiya Sayeed, daughter of Home Minister Mufti Mohamed Sayeed, was kidnapped. The government traded her for five imprisoned Kashmiri separatists, but not before search operations had triggered unprecedented protests. And when security forces opened fire on demonstrators in the main Kashmiri town of Srinagar on January 20, the unrest exploded in a popular uprising. The central government declared presidential rule and sent in the paramilitary police and a tough governor, Jagmohan. With the local police demoralised and disaffected, the paramilitary and army forces now number more than 150,000. One



Pramod Pushkarna

Pakistan, India war tensions heightened. Indian army patrolling Kashmir (right). Residents of Indian-occupied Kashmiri border region display identity cards (above).



no credit

Indian magazine describes the situation:

"The whole valley has been handed over to the para-military forces. Jammu and Kashmir police are looked upon with distrust. In fact every Kashmiri Muslim is prima facie considered a pro-Pakistani traitor. The alienation of the people is total and the masses have lost all faith in political leaders."

—*Economic and Political Weekly*
(5-12 May)

Life in Kashmir has become one curfew after another. The economy is in tatters, and the summer tourist season, upon which about two-thirds of the population depends, is doomed. One government minister, George Fernandes, admits the "total collapse of civil authority" (*Far Eastern Economic Review*, 17 May). On May 21 the security forces fired on the funeral procession of a "moderate" religious leader, killing hundreds. The tens of thousands at the funeral blamed governor Jagmohan for the assassination and chanted: "What did the Maulana call for? Holy war, holy war."

With mounting stories of rapes and death squad killings, and facing international and domestic criticism, the V. P. Singh government replaced Jagmohan with G.C. "Gerry" Saksena, the former head of India's spy agency, RAW (Research and Analysis Wing). Marxists demand the immediate withdrawal of the Indian army and security forces from the

Kashmir valley, and of the Pakistani army from the areas of Kashmir they occupy. Defence of the oppressed and of the right of national self-determination is not conditional upon the character of the leadership; we defend the exercise of the right of self-determination, as long as the Kashmiri struggle is not decisively subordinated to the intervention of the Pakistani ruling class (as was the Bangladeshi struggle to the Indian ruling class in 1971 with the Indian army's invasion). But short of a perspective of proletarian revolution throughout the whole subcontinent the prospects for Kashmiri liberation are far from rosy. This is especially so given its location and historical role in relations between India and Pakistan.

"Divide and Rule"

Kashmir is a chapter in the sordid history of British imperialism in India. The province is 80 per cent Muslim; it was first linked to the area across the southern range of Pir Panjal when the Jammu Dogra king "bought" Kashmir from the British in 1846. The kingdom refused to join the Sikh-Afghan alliance against the British, and during the 1857 "Mutiny" it sent troops to help the British at the siege of Delhi. Its founding ruler, Gulab Singh, aptly called himself "zar kharid" ("slave bought with gold").

The kingdom, with its all-powerful British Resident, remained a horribly impoverished area. During the Indian independence struggle the secular bourgeois nationalists of the National Conference led a struggle against the Dogra autocracy and, in alliance with the bourgeois Indian Congress, for accession to India. Jinnah's Muslim League tried to woo the Kashmiri Muslims; when this failed he sent irregulars in to seize Kashmir for Pakistan. Unfortunately for Jinnah, these backward, tribalist mercenaries were so busy looting and raping that they failed to push on to Srinagar's airport, allowing the Indian army to counterattack successfully. The emergent armies of India and Pakistan, still under British generals, fought it out until a cease-fire on 1 January 1949. This left Kashmir divided between India and Pakistan.

The Kashmiris were promised a plebiscite to decide whether they would join India or Pakistan or become independent. But the Indian bourgeoisie, acutely

aware that the Kashmiris might well reject union with India, quickly reneged. Sheikh Abdullah and other leaders of the National Conference were jailed by their old ally Pandit Nehru, himself from a Kashmiri Hindu family. Virtually every election has been rigged. The central government has relied on engineering changes in governments and spreading patronage among various politicians. At the same time the National Conference degenerated into a corrupt and nepotistic outfit. The April 1987 elections were stolen by a combination of the National Conference and Gandhi's Congress (I) headed by Farooq Abdullah. This government was especially corrupt and ineffective. While the government looted the treasury and built golf courses for the rich, the urban poor still have no sewage systems. A new wave of protests began in April 1988 with demonstrations over electricity price increases.

During the partition of India, while neighbouring Punjab and North West Province were gripped with murderous pogroms (which produced mass forced population transfers of literally millions of people), Kashmir remained remarkably calm. During the Pakistani attempts to wrest Kashmir from India in 1948 and 1965 there was little mass support. Now the Kashmiri Muslims are totally alienated from India. And the movement has developed an Islamic fundamentalist character. Muslim women are compelled to adopt the practices of purdah (seclusion) while Hindu women have been instructed to wear the bindi mark on the forehead to identify themselves; cinemas, video libraries and beauty salons were shut down, and liquor sales banned. The mosques preach *jihad* (holy war) and demand the men wear beards and traditional Kashmiri garb.

Among the plethora of groups one of the largest is the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) which demands independence and seeks to distance itself from some of the more communal aspects of the struggle. Rivalling it is the Jamaat-e-Islami, which calls for an Islamic order and theocratic structure. It is linked closely to the organisation of the same name in Pakistan and calls for accession to Pakistan. Another group, the "Allah Tigers," claims allegiance to Gulbuddin Hekmatyar's Hizbe-Islami, the fascistic drug-running extreme of Afghan reaction long favored by the CIA.



Robert Nickelsberg

Nationalists in New Delhi torch the Pakistani flag, a wave of war fervour whipped up by contending capitalist regimes of Pakistan and India.

Even if they were to somehow succeed in removing the Indian overlordship of the region, an internecine war would be posed between those favoring joining Pakistan and the increasingly strong pro-independence forces.

Since last year perhaps as much as half of the non-Muslim population (Hindus and Sikhs) have fled the Kashmir valley. Fearful of threats by some Kashmiri Muslim groups to drive out all Indians and barraged with anti-Muslim propaganda by Hindu communalist groups, the Kashmir high-caste Hindu Pandit community is fleeing. Typical of the whole of India, where caste and minority divisions aid capitalist rule, the Pandits have occupied a disproportionate share of government and professional posts. Now the precipitate flight of this layer is crippling social services, as hospitals for example find their staffs dramatically depleted.

Trip Wire for Indo-Pakistani War

The bourgeois rulers of both Pakistan and India see the Kashmir issue as integral to their existence. As recently as 1987 full-scale war almost broke out, and fighting has continued atop the Siachen Glacier. Pages and pages in the press of both countries are devoted to possible military scenarios. Even more ominous are the veiled threats of both sides with regard to nuclear warfare. V. P. Singh told the Indian parliament that Indian scientists could and would counter any moves by Pakistan to introduce nuclear weapons (*Far Eastern Economic Review*, 26 April).

Singh says that "Fundamentalism is not necessarily directed only at certain parts of India; it is a threat to the fabric of India itself" (*Far Eastern Economic Review*, 17 May). Kashmir is the only Muslim-majority state of India. Its location is strategic and next to it is the Punjab, a hotbed of Sikh unrest for an independent Khalistan. After promising elections, and repealing the draconian 59th amendment to the constitution, New Delhi again imposed a state of emergency, in the face of the central government's inability to contain the armed activity of the pro-Khalistan groups. Moreover India has the second-largest Muslim population in the world (after Indonesia), larger than Pakistan and larger than that of the entire Arab world.

The brutal suppression in Kashmir is intended to signal that separation is not an option. Indian bourgeois nationalists are always touting India's secular character. But Indian nationalism has always contained a strong element of Hindu and Hindi chauvinism, reflecting the predominance of Hindus and the strong percentage of Hindi-speaking people in the population. The late, uneven and arrested development of the Indian bourgeoisie in the context of myriad national, language and religious divisions poses the disintegration of this prison house of peoples. And today the bourgeois politicians hardly bother to mask their corruption, nepotism and venality.

Their pretensions to "secularism" are transparent. The Congress (I) of Rajiv Gandhi has long played the communalist game. In the Punjab it encouraged pro-Khalistan fanatics like Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale in an attempt to undermine the more moderate Akali Dal. And the government of the new "Mr. Clean" V. P. Singh relies on the support of the sinister Hindu communalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). The BJP calls for pre-emptive strikes against Pakistani-held "Azad Kashmir" and for opening the valley to all Indians. This party is now a major force in the Hindi belt across north central India, having gone from 2 to 84 seats at the last general elections.

For Pakistan, the issue of Kashmir represents its pretensions to constitute "one nation" of all Muslims. The Pakistani ruling class cannot accept the option of an independent Kashmir—which



would pose the question of independence for the Baluchis, Pathans and Sindhis who all bridle at Punjabi domination. The issue of Kashmir has always been used by the fragile bourgeoisie of Pakistan to divert attention from problems within their artificial state. The government of Benazir Bhutto, under pressure from right-wing and religious forces like the Jamaat-e-Islami and the Inter Services Intelligence, has been stymied in Afghanistan, particularly at the heroic defence of Jalalabad. Now they have rushed headlong to embrace this new opportunity.

Benazir Bhutto Plays the Kashmir Card

Bhutto herself has not dragged her heels in whipping up chauvinism and war hysteria over Kashmir, outflanking her most strident opponents and earning kudos from the army for her stance on Kashmir. She is after all the daughter of her father, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, a wealthy landlord from the Sind (around Karachi) and a demagogic populist who as much as anyone was responsible for the bloody Pakistani attempt to suppress the uprising in Bangladesh. Bhutto quotes her father in vowing a thousand-year war over Kashmir. This imperialist-touted "democrat" presides over Pakistan's pivotal role in imperialism's reactionary terrorist war in Afghanistan.

But Kashmir has not proved sufficient for Bhutto to divert the discontents of her "own" people. Sind, the main base of Bhutto's Pakistan People's Party (PPP), is awash with intercommunal gang warfare. The near-anarchic conditions are a direct result of the counterrevolutionary involvement in Afghanistan, with a flood of guns and drugs into the main cities of Sind intersecting bitter intercommunal strife. One inhabitant of Karachi, Pakistan's major port and commercial centre, said, "You could call it Beirut. Or maybe Colombia" (*India Today*, 15 June). One force is the Mohajir Qaumi Mahaz (National Mohajir Movement, MQM), based on the Mohajir community—Muslims who fled India at the time of partition. The MQM was originally encouraged by General Zia as a counterweight to the PPP. Other private armies exist among the Pathans who control road transport and drugs, and among the landlords in the countryside. The provincial PPP government draws support from the Sindhi community. There is even an "All Sindh Bandits Association." Hundreds have been killed in these clashes, while the Bhutto government and the army quarrel about exactly who to crack down on.

Kashmir, the Sind and the Punjab are not isolated examples. In India itself national and communal unrest continues among the Gurkhas and Assamese, to mention only two examples. In Burma and Nepal the recent period has seen mass protest against despotic regimes. In Sri Lanka the withdrawal of the brutal Indian army occupation restores the island to the situation which triggered the Indian intervention in the first place: bloody fighting in the North between the "Tamil Tigers" and the Sinhalese-chauvinist Sri Lankan army and police, with hundreds killed, and the looming

prospect of genocidal pogroms against the Tamil minority in the South.

More broadly, from the Kurds in Turkey, through Soviet Central Asia, to the Muslims of Chinese Sinkiang, there is a wave of ethnic unrest. U.S. imperialism has exerted strong pressure on its Pakistani client state to avoid giving an excuse "for an Indian pre-emptive war" (*Far Eastern Economic Review*, 21 June). Billions of dollars have been channelled through Pakistan to aid the reactionary war in Afghanistan, with the Pakistani army committing troops to the Jalalabad siege, but the imperialists fear a Pakistani war with India could lead to the disintegration of their key ally in the region.

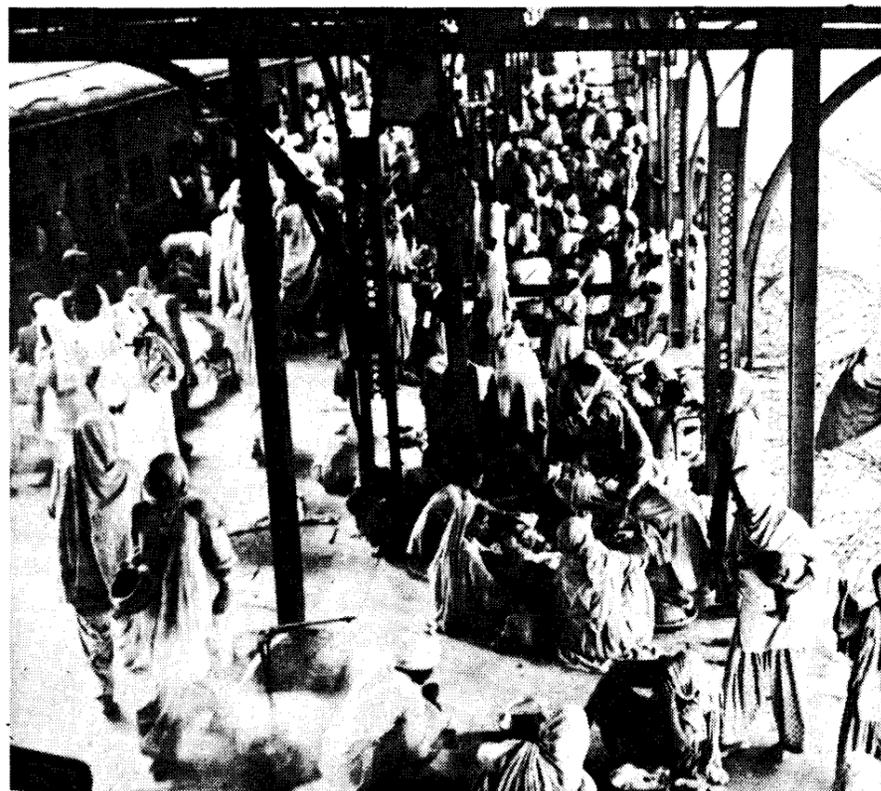
The Stalinist bureaucracies of China and the Soviet Union fear the wave of nationalist and Islamic fundamentalist unrest that has spread among their central Asian minorities and along their borders. The Chinese Stalinists aided the reactionary CIA cutthroats against the Soviet Army supporting the PDPA regime in Kabul. Meanwhile, Gorbachev's policies of perestroika have encouraged reactionary nationalist movements within the USSR and throughout the entire region. The Soviet intervention in Afghanistan had posed the possibility of a social transformation that would lift the people of Afghanistan out of feudal and capitalist immiseration, as well as dealing a blow to the most reac-

seal the border with Pakistan in order to stop the flow of subversives and arms."

Likewise both Communist parties oppose the right of self-determination for the Sikhs in the Punjab.

Communist/national/religious divisions not only obstruct working-class unity in general but in this region of the world are particularly targeted against the working class, since it is often made up of local minorities. The Hindi-speaking workers of Calcutta, the Bihari and Gurkha tea plantation workers of Darjeeling, the immigrant workers of Bombay's industry and especially graphically the Indian Tamils of Lanka's hill country plantations are evidence of this. British imperialism's cynical "divide and rule" schemes and the grafting of capitalist oppression onto pre-existing social structures have left the impoverished subcontinent a mosaic of national and caste antagonisms.

If the "secular," "all-India" pretensions of India's rulers are a fiction behind which the brutal oppression of national and religious minorities and depressed castes is perpetuated to serve the interests of the capitalist ruling class, still the despairing program of the minority nationalists offers no way forward. To rip these areas away from the control of the overbearing "centre" in Delhi, even if it can be accomplished by massive and necessarily bloody popular resistance, would produce only new versions of the



Popperfoto

Lahore railway station: refugees fleeing during 1947-48 partition, engineered by British imperialism. Millions died in communalist riots.

tionary forces in the region. Leftist and national minority militants from Iran and Pakistan sought refuge in Kabul. Now Gorbachev's sellout withdrawal has encouraged imperialism and reaction while strengthening the hold of the most reactionary elements within the national struggles such as that in Kashmir.

From Kurdistan to Eelam: Workers Must Rule

It is only the perspective of proletarian revolution that can bring liberation to the oppressed nationalities of the Indian subcontinent. This will not come from the Stalinist Communist parties of the Indian subcontinent. During the 1965 Indo-Pakistan war the respective parties of India and Pakistan shamelessly supported their respective bourgeoisies. In India both the CPI and CPI(M) support V. P. Singh's current coalition government. *People's Democracy* (10 June) advises:

"The CPI(M) Central Committee urges the National Front Government to urgently address itself to the task of restoring peace in the Valley by taking firm administrative measures.... The CPI(M) calls upon the National Front Government to immediately

tragedy of partition, forging ethnically "pure" areas through mass flight provoked by naked terror by the new local majorities. Only those for whom the members of other communities are not human beings can look forward to a repetition of the enduring image of partition: as the train pulls into the station, those waiting on the platform begin to shriek and faint as they see hanging out the windows the dead bodies of their relatives, hacked and bludgeoned to death for the crime of being from the "wrong" community.

Only a Bolshevik vanguard party can break the genocidal pattern bequeathed by imperialism, by establishing the ascendancy of the class question, uniting all the working class and oppressed in the struggle for workers revolution. Only an internationalist perspective, uniting social struggle in the subcontinent with the fight for workers revolution in the advanced capitalist countries, can open the door to real social liberation for the impoverished Indian and Pakistani masses. For soviet workers republics from Baluchistan and Kashmir to Eelam and Lanka, as part of a socialist federation of South Asia! ■

Vic. Inc....

(continued from page 12)

Socialist Left are vicious enforcers of capitalist rule.

In light of all this special mention should be made of the Socialist Labour League (SLL). The SLL have campaigned forever and a day, on virtually every issue from the tramways struggle earlier this year to Bougainville, with the crowning demand that the "Labor lefts expel the Hawke/Keating right wing and form a workers government." Now the Socialist Left have "seized the reins of government" and socialism has not drawn one day closer. The absurdity of the SLL clamouring that Kirner carry out "socialist policies" only stands out more clearly as the Socialist Left have assumed the premiership with an even more reactionary program than before. Their demands are designed to "expose the lefts," says the SLL, but the only thing exposed is the crass Labor-loyalism of these sinister charlatans.

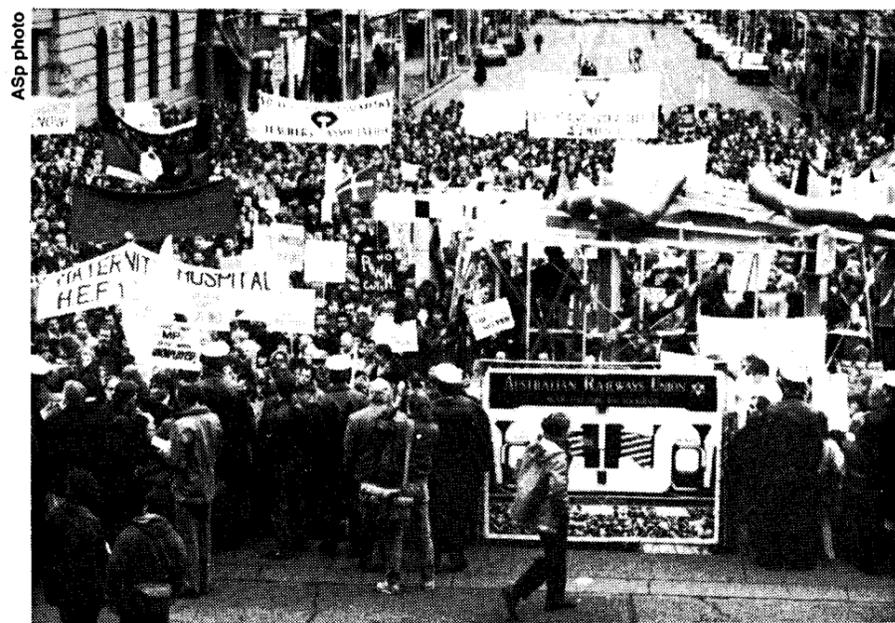
Australian Capitalism Sinks Into Recession

Earlier this year the *Australian Financial Review* (17 May) announced in threatening tones: "Recession now the main course." The "soft economic landing" that more optimistic pundits were predicting is fast giving way to doom and gloom. Indeed for ruling class mouthpieces like the *Financial Review* the Hawke/Keating "policy-induced" recession, aimed at puncturing the private credit explosion and asset price boom of the '80s, is about the right medicine. News that unemployment has now topped 600,000—its highest level in more than two years—is greeted with malicious and ill-disguised glee. In Victoria, which has the biggest concentration of manufacturing industry of all the states, the recession is biting deepest and fastest. The rate of unemployment there shot up by 1.9 percent in the last two months. And these "official" statistics massively understate the real

The financial collapse in Victoria highlights this. In the last year it has been big business crashes making the headlines—Hookers, Bond Corp., Elders IXL, the media high-fliers like Skase. Less well known is the Small Business Association forecast that by the end of 1990 as many as one in eight of all small businesses will go under as the banks tighten the screws on credit. Meanwhile the building sector, always a good economic indicator, is grinding to a halt, contributing to massive job losses. Belatedly a lot of bourgeois spokesmen are now admitting what anyone could see, that the Hawke years of greed have cost the country dearly. By one estimate the recent spate of spectacular corporate collapses has cost shareholders \$8 billion. Gone is all the ballyhoo about Keating's "glorious" financial deregulation also. As one *Sydney Morning Herald* (28 July) review explained:

"It wasn't just the crash of '87. Part of the answer lies with banks that couldn't give money away easily enough, entrepreneurs who couldn't spend it quickly enough and regulators who couldn't keep up with either. Part of it was only illusory, mere paper money to inflate dodgy accounts."

The federal and state Labor governments were willing partners. WA Inc. and Victoria Inc. came to typify the other side of Keating's much-vaunted financial "deregulation"—government partnership and financial largesse to every shonky "entrepreneur" who came along, hoping to kick-start corporate investment. The bottom line is the government bails out the banks and speculators and in the end the working people cop the burden. Keating's claims to the contrary, the big-spending "boom" led to precious little productive investment. Instead vast sums of money have been squandered in speculative paper shuffling and takeover bids which have further blown out the foreign debt. This is a product at bottom, not of wrong policies nor evil men (not that these are in short supply), but of the irrationality of the decaying capitalist system itself. It's far more profitable to go up to your ears in debt to take over a company, strip it of its assets and destroy jobs, than it is to invest in new factories and new jobs which create new



Melbourne, 9 August: Victorian public sector workers rally in protest against Labor government's job-slashing plans.

corporate investors. The bosses squandered it but the ordinary taxpayers are being forced to pay for it—after weeks of mass demonstrations by Pyramid's small depositors the Victorian government agreed to provide \$380 million so they would get a miserable 25 percent of their savings. They may count themselves lucky—Keating and the Reserve Bank advised Cain to give them nothing.

Hawke's Accord Coming Apart

In the federal election earlier this year we of the Spartacist League (SL) said "No Vote to Labor," and counterposed a program of hard class struggle to the reactionary Labor government. Topping its post-election agenda has been racist attacks on immigrants, stepped-up union busting and imperialist war. In the space of a few short months, the sharp domestic downturn alongside an uncertain world capitalist economic climate have magnified the government's problems. Moreover Hawke's unpopular involvement in imperialism's Persian Gulf oil grab and the vicious attacks on pensioners in the latest Budget reveal that the Labor government is walking a fine line between the requirements of a desperate ruling class and the threat of massive working class resistance.

From the union-busting plans to privatise sections of Telecom, Qantas and Australian Airlines, to the one-week shutdown of car plants with thousands of jobs threatened, and with manufacturing production down a staggering 4.2 percent over the last year, workers across the country are confronted with the prospect of mass unemployment. The Laborite bureaucracy is having trouble selling even further givebacks and job losses to its ranks. Of late ACTU tops like Kelty have been blustering about going outside Arbitration. But he's not fooling anyone. Even the smug *Sydney Morning Herald* economics editor Ross Gittins (3 September) saw through Kelty's posture, describing it as a means to:

"...deflate the unrealistic expectations of the ACTU constituency and ... convince a few left-wingers that the Accord wasn't quite the rip-off they imagine."

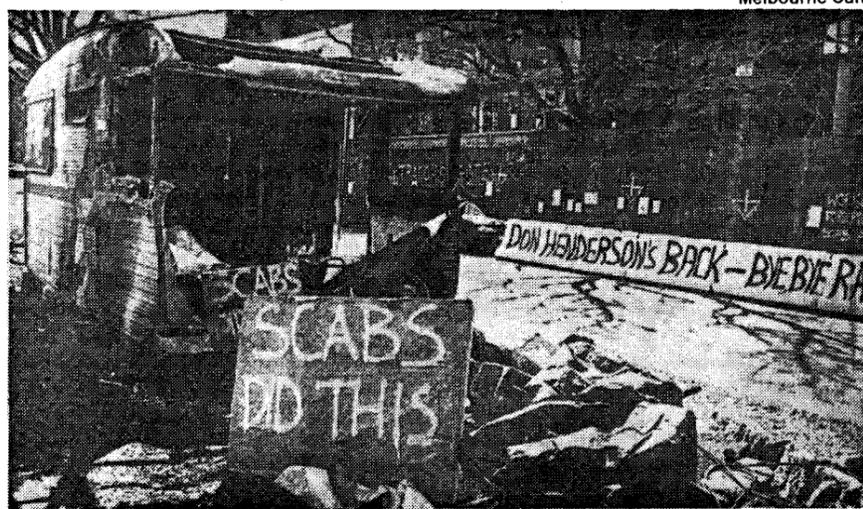
The smashing of the BLF in 1986 was the watershed of the Hawke years, consolidating the ALP-ACTU Accord straitjacket. For a while the building industry flourished, and a flood of speculation in property by fast buck operators burnt by the 1987 stockmarket crash kicked the construction "boom" along. With the pliant pro-Accord McDonald leadership of the Building Workers Industrial Union (BWIU) presiding over drops in safety and job conditions, the Labor tops were counting their blessings. Now the bubble has burst with speculators and developers squeezed by continuing high interest rates and falling asset prices.

In Sydney, workers were locked out of the massive World Square building site when management found their funds had run dry, but not before they had tried to

blame the unions and sacked site delegates. In Melbourne, workers at the Leightons' 417 St Kilda Road site have been picketing daily for months, after the Leightons' bosses attempted to contract out all the workers to subcontractors with subsequent loss of pay and conditions. Eighty carpenters and labourers have been sacked and the government has gone all out to smash the workers resistance. This has involved cops, including the Special Operations' Anti-Terrorist Squad, attacking the workers' picket line, massive damages writs on union officials and members of up to \$50,000 per day, raids on picketers' homes and the jailing of BLF official, John Cummins, for refusing to comply with a Supreme Court Order barring him from going near the picket line. On 9 September the picket caravan was fire-bombed with one worker luckily escaping serious injury.

The militant Leightons' pickets are bearing the brunt of a vindictive anti-working class campaign by the bosses and government backed up by the Victorian THC. Moreover they've had to contend with the criminal backstabbing of the Raffa leadership of the Victorian BWIU, which has kept their struggle isolated. The Leightons' workers must not be left to fight alone. The way to win is some hard class struggle to close Leightons' down tight with mass picket lines and extend strike action throughout the building industry. And it needs to happen now! Drop the charges against John Cummins and all unionists! Victory to the Leightons' picketers!

In NSW the Greiner Liberal government has announced the establishment of a Royal Commission into corruption in the building industry—a blatant anti-union move. This is a bitter pill for the BWIU tops to swallow. They have been the most loyal cops of the Accord and anti-working class givebacks, even to the point of cheering on the government's use of RAAF planes to smash the pilots' strike last year. The BWIU's role in the smashing of the BLF is coming home to haunt them—the prelude to the destruction of the BLF was a similar anti-union Royal Commission into "corruption." Their cooperation in the witchhunt of the BLF has paved the way for these latest attacks. Meanwhile the Gallagher BLF leadership, desperate to regain recognition from Arbitration, signed a deal with a body-hire agency called Troubleshooters which agreed to individual contracts and undermined existing Award and safety conditions. The deal fell through but not before it ex-



Leightons' picket caravan torched by anti-union scum, 9 September. Pickets face daily cop attacks and criminal THC backstabbing.

story, since youth unemployment is concealed by the Hawke government's elimination of the dole for under-eighteens. And working women, especially migrant women who are amongst the first to be laid off, generally don't register as unemployed when they're sacked.

Australian capitalism, with its heavily protected and uncompetitive manufacturing industry and reliance on agricultural and mineral exports, is highly susceptible to the vicissitudes of the world market. Already a massive 23 percent of export income is required merely to service the interest payments on the foreign debt! Forty percent of the value of the Tokyo stock market has been wiped out this year, over a third of that during the Gulf crisis, and now Japanese capital has begun massive liquidations of U.S. Treasury bonds, threatening a recession in the U.S. Australian capitalism is in deep trouble.

wealth. And if it goes bust never mind, only the poor go to jail for not paying their debts.

When the \$3 billion Farrow Group of building societies (which included Pyramid) collapsed in Victoria it ruined some 200,000 of its depositors, amongst them students, pensioners and workers, savaging regional centres like Geelong where Pyramid was used as the local bank. In the '70s building societies like Pyramid carved out a niche for themselves by providing residential housing loans, but come the '80s they sought to cash in on Keating's deregulation and branched out into high-risk commercial loans in chase of the fast buck. Farrow's directors lived high on the exorbitant management fees of up to \$1 million each they paid themselves annually. Needless to say, the first to be paid out (in full) from Pyramid's remaining assets are the rapacious fast-buck men and

Contact the Spartacist League

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Tramways Militants Say: "Defend Vietnam!"

The following letter was submitted to the Melbourne tramways union (ATMOEA) journal in late August and has been circulated amongst union members by tramways militants and supporters of the Spartacist League.

Dear brothers and sisters,

We write to protest the scandalous petition which is being circulated among our ranks and endorsed by the ATMOEA leadership who call on the members to sign it. Under the guise of calls for "democracy," the petition says: "Australia must be firm in its dealings with Communist Vietnam." Such calls for "democracy" and "freedom" are the hypocritical slogans of counter-revolution and restoration of capitalist exploitation. It is interesting that such a call comes at a time when the Australian government is sending warships against Iraq as part of a Western imperialist grab for oil. U.S. imperialism and its allies are again attempting to police the world just like in Korea, Vietnam, Cuba, Nicaragua, Grenada, Libya, Panama. In 1975 U.S. and Australian imperialism were defeated by the

heroic revolutionary workers and peasants of Vietnam. This was an historic victory for workers and the oppressed peoples of the world.

The Vietnamese people got a taste of capitalist "democracy" and "freedom" during the 1960s and 70s as the U.S. and Australian governments waged their dirty war in order to roll back Communism and keep Vietnam in colonial chains. The U.S. dropped more bombs on Vietnam and Cambodia than were dropped throughout World War II. Over two million innocent Vietnamese died in that war. Since 1975 the Australian government and its allies have maintained an economic blockade against Vietnam, trying to starve her into submission. U.S. and Australian imperialism support the Cambodian contra alliance, aiding and abetting Pol Pot's vicious war against the Cambodian people who were liberated from those genocidal killers by Vietnam at tremendous cost to her own people. Now the refugees who have fled the civil war stirred up by Australia and the U.S. in Cambodia are treated with contempt by Hawke's government, locked up in concentration camps awaiting

expulsion from Australia. Meanwhile the torturers and war criminals who took the side of U.S. imperialism against the revolution in Vietnam are called "freedom-fighters" and "democrats."

In circulating this petition the ATMOEA leadership is simply following the lead of the ALP Hawke government with its "Evans Plan" for counterrevolution in Indo-China. And it was through loyalty to the ALP that they sold out the fight for connies' jobs trying to avoid confrontation with the Cain government. The Labor governments—SEQEB, the BLF, the meatworkers, the pilots and the trammies. Now they try to divide the working class along race lines through the "immigration debate." The ATMOEA leadership's support for this reactionary petition is an insult to all those workers who took a class-struggle side in the Vietnam war, like the maritime unions who expressed their solidarity with their Indo-Chinese class brothers and sisters by carrying out strikes and bans against the Australian war effort. The ATMOEA leadership is endorsing the

political line of the Vietnamese counterrevolutionaries who in 1985 used violence against the workers movement here, physically attacking the meetings of unions and working-class political groups who were celebrating the historic 1975 victory over imperialism.

The revolutionary Vietnamese workers and peasants took a great step forward when they expropriated the land and factories from the capitalists and landlords. Socialised property forms are hard-won gains that must be defended in order for the working class to advance to a new and better society that can offer a decent future for all people. The working class here must defend the Vietnamese revolution against imperialism. Workers here must say: U.S. and Australian imperialism, hands off Vietnam and Cambodia. The ATMOEA leadership is siding with the class enemy in pushing this petition. We call on our union brothers and sisters to reject this reactionary line and stand with the beleaguered working people of Vietnam and Cambodia by refusing to sign this petition and passing motions of condemnation.

posed the wretched policies of Gallagher and Co. to building workers across the country. For their part the BWIU tops have announced their willingness to cooperate with Greiner's Royal Commission if it makes "a genuine effort to expose and weed out corrupt practices." To this end they are suggesting the Commission investigate the BLF. But the remnants of the BLF are not the bosses' main target.

Class Struggle Fightback Desperately Needed!

A unified class-wide fightback, smashing the shackles of Arbitration and the Accord, will find the greatest obstacle to be the sell-out Laborite bureaucracy. When up to 30,000 building workers took over the streets of Sydney in July to protest the attacks on their unions there was not a word about struggle from their leadership. Even the prospect of action at the World Square site against the sacking of union delegates was dismissed as "playing into the bosses' hands." Instead building workers were delivered a dose of vicious racist protectionism directed against "Asian bosses" by "left" Federated Engine Drivers and Firemans Association (FEDFA) delegate, Joe Owens. These traitors cast Malaysian, Japanese and other Asian workers as the "enemy" while the profit-gouging Australian bosses are supposed to be the victims. The whole thing is shot through with poison, and aims to cement the Big Lie that there can be a partnership of capital and labour, the sort of partnership the union-busting and job-slashing Accord has been premised on. It is the direct antithesis of defence of even the most minimal gains, let alone the much needed international class solidarity from Japan and Malaysia to Australia.

Only industry-wide action of builders, plumbers, painters and all building

unions, forged through picket lines that no one dares cross, can decisively halt the attacks on workers jobs. Linked to a program to fight for jobs for all and massive wage rises—30 hours work for 40 hours pay—and for full citizenship for foreign workers, such decisive class action would spark the desperately required struggle to turn the tide on the government and bosses' offensive. What's needed is a revolutionary leadership of the unions, which can be built by fighting for such a class struggle program against the do-nothing, sell-out Laborite tops.

ALP Privatisation Moves Mean Union-Busting!

For years now, Hawke and Keating have been pushing to implement the bosses' and Treasury plans to sell off government-owned industries like Telecom, the Commonwealth Bank, Qantas and Australian Airlines, but weren't able to impose them on the ALP. Now they've put privatisation back on the agenda. ALP Federal Secretary Bob Hogg hopes to push some of it through at a special National ALP conference in late September. Keating put the lefts over a barrel with the bankruptcy of the SBV, forcing the Socialist Left to accede to the partial privatisation of the Commonwealth Bank to fund its acquisition of the SBV.

Up to now resistance has been strong within the ALP, for whom (centrally the "lefts") the state-owned enterprises are a sacred cow, the embodiment of the utopian, reformist dream of "creeping socialism." Far from having anything to do with socialism, public ownership of enterprises like Telecom, some airlines and a few banks arose from the need of a weak bourgeoisie for a big government role in the task of capitalist "nation-building," in particular the provision of an economic infrastructure. Labor has

historically been the party of the "public sector," a key component of its corporatist vision in which the working class shares in the prosperity of capitalist White Australia. So resistance to Beazley's plan to merge Telecom and OTC and introduce telecommunications "competition" by selling off AUSSAT draws heavily on national chauvinism—"defend an Australian industry that buys Australian."

As hundreds of thousands of government workers can attest, the notion that the state is somehow a better employer under capitalism is a cruel lie. Often it's the state-owned enterprises which are first to cut workers jobs or attack working class conditions, as the thin end of a wedge of much wider government attacks. Take Telecom. The Cooper leadership of the Victorian branch of the Australian Telecommunications Employees Association (ATEA) has met the government plan with mealy-mouthed appeals to the Labor platform on nationalisation. Yet for years under Accord deals the ATEA and other Telecom union leaderships have given away one hard-won union gain after another in preparation for the "restructuring" currently threatened. Nor are workers jobs going to be defended by the ATEA's pathetic calls on Telecom management to "come to its senses." Beazley's aim is to drastically run down Telecom services and wipe out union conditions under the guise of "restructuring" as well as raise money to service the foreign debt. To decisively challenge and defeat the government's anti-working class, austerity privatisation moves requires independent class action to defend jobs and real wages and fight for a qualitative increase in services. Critical to that is understanding that the enemy is the government and bosses. And in counter-position to those dyed-in-the-wool Laborites who still kid themselves that Labor's "socialist objective" means something, (and conveniently forget its history of White Australia racism), the working class requires a revolutionary program for the expropriation of the banks, factories and mines by a workers government.

Earlier this year Victorian tram and bus workers waged a bitter month-long struggle to defend their jobs against the Cain government's attacks. That struggle occurred only months before the federal election and posed a threat to the government's union-busting "reforms." It

had the potential to galvanise mass working class resistance that could have spiked the savage attacks now being undertaken by the federal and state governments. But from the very start the Di Gregorio tramways union leadership, alongside Victorian THC secretary John Halfpenny, worked overtime to keep the struggle within the limitations of Arbitration, eventually accepting the government's draconian plans. Only Spartacist League supporters in the industry fought to extend the struggle to all Melbourne public transport and build militant mass picket lines. The lessons of that struggle must ring clear today. The Kirner government is on the rocks, the question is more how it will go than when. While the state Liberals talk of blocking supply, the working class must use its power effectively and decisively to beat back the bosses' attacks whatever party is in office. Crucial to that task is a class-struggle revolutionary party forged through splitting the ALP's working class base from the bourgeois tops (of all stripes) and pledged to ending capitalist rule once and all. ■

Marxist Working-Class
Biweekly of the Spartacist
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SUB DRIVE RESULTS - 1990

Once again our annual subscription drive, held in July and August, was successful. We welcome new readers and greet our regular subscribers, many of whom also took out subs to our international publications. Congratulations to Comrade Bret S. who won the sub drive with 89 points.

Quotas: Achieved:

Sydney	600	608
Melbourne	400	406
At large	0	8
Total Points:	1,000	1,022

Iraq...

(continued from page 4)

presented Bush with a modified version of "Plan 90-1002" for a massive air- and sealift of U.S. forces to the Gulf.

It's clear that U.S. forces are being moved into the Persian Gulf to stay. Heretofore, the Saudis have been reluctant to grant the Pentagon base rights. But in the last weeks, American combat aircraft have been stationed in all the Gulf states of the Arabian peninsula. Defense Secretary Cheney makes no bones about it: the U.S. military commitment is "long term," and "we do not know how long we will have to stay." *With this invasion the U.S. has taken a big step toward a strategic objective: a military stranglehold on the Middle East. But now they may have to pay the price in blood.*

While the Democrats march in lock-step with Bush, however, elements in the Republican right wing (such as Patrick Buchanan) have doubts about the U.S.' military capacity to bring this off. These "Fortress America" types want to concentrate on dismantling the ex-Soviet bloc. Attacking Bush, Buchanan asks: "If we walked out of tiny Lebanon after 250 dead, are Americans ready to bear the burden of pacifying Iraq and Iran, with 70 million people."

To keep their profits flowing, they're prepared to spill the blood of millions of impoverished Arabs and thousands of black and working-class American youth in uniform. The Vietnam War brought down two American presidents. Bush & Co. will soon enough find out that the Vietnam syndrome is still alive.

Mideast Cauldron

If during the Vietnam War, protesters sang "One, two, three, what are we fighting for?" that question will be repeated more loudly today when this war can't be justified as part of the crusade against Communism. Who wants to die so that the Kuwaiti Emir can live a life of luxury in a state where only 70,000 men out of a population of over 2 million have the right to vote for a "parliament" which is dissolved as soon as it meets? Or for the feudal house of Saud which lords it over its one-family state where women are denied the right to drive, much less vote, and even princesses are beheaded for adultery. Saudi Arabia is the largest remaining state where chattel slavery still exists.

Already there have been incidents of "culture shock" as U.S. troops come up against the social straitjacket of Saudi medievalism. In one case, Saudi soldiers went crazy when a woman member of an F-15 ground crew took her shirt off to work in her T-shirt in the 120 degree heat. And take note that the Saudi dynasty was catapulted into power with the aid of the Wahabi sect. In Afghanistan,

where they have been acting as mercenary *mujahedin* (holy warriors), these Islamic fanatics are notorious for raping every "infidel" woman they come across.

Those are the U.S.' glorious "allies" in Bush's war for "freedom" and "our way of life." Iraq's Saddam Hussein, on the other hand, has won popular support throughout the area, justifying his takeover of Kuwait as an effort to take back the oil wealth from the lavish-living sheiks. He is also now seen by the Palestinians as a champion of their cause against the Zionists who have deprived them of a homeland. Hussein is simultaneously trying to take on the mantle of Nasser as the unifier of the Arab nation against feudalism and imperialism, while putting himself forward as the new scion of Muhammad in calling for a *Jihad* to defend the Islamic holy sites from the Western infidels and their lackeys.

Of course, with his roots in the Ba'ath "Socialist" party, Saddam Hussein was supposedly secular. In reality, he is the kind of thug and murderer who would normally qualify as a U.S. ally. He might be compared to bloody Pakistani dictator Muhammad Zia ul-Haq, who helped funnel CIA aid to Afghan counterrevolutionary bands (in return for a big rake-off). Hussein actually was a U.S. ally for years. When the Ba'ath party came to power briefly in 1963, it may have been aided by the CIA, which reportedly supplied lists of Communists to be killed.

Letter to the Kremlin

Rescind Arms Embargo of Iraq

9 August 1990

Embassy of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Washington, D.C. and Paris

USSR Mission to the United Nations

Dear Ambassadors:

The American imperialists have seized upon a local disturbance in the Persian Gulf to vastly extend United States military might. In the face of this escalating imperialist provocation, the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist) demands that the Soviet government rescind immediately its arms embargo against Iraq. The U.S. provocation is a tripwire for world war, posing a grave danger to all humanity.

With unbridled hypocrisy and in the name of "freedom," the U.S. is seeking to assure its stranglehold over world supplies of oil. The establishment of American military bases in Saudi Arabia for the first time and a naval embargo aimed at starving Iraq into

submission pose a danger not only to that volatile region but to the Soviet Union itself. The deployment of American might in the region has tightened the encirclement of the Soviet Union by the utterly hostile forces of imperialism.

In pursuit of narrow diplomatic concerns, the Soviet government previously signed a Treaty of Friendship with Saddam Hussein, the butcher of thousands of worker militants, Communist Party members, and members of the Kurdish minority. Yet now when Iraq is genuinely threatened by imperialism the Soviet government has supported United Nations sanctions against Iraq and seems willing to "cooperate" with the White House warmongers. This is a betrayal of the interests of the Soviet state and the Soviet and world working people.

The ICL(FI) believes the workers of the world are opposed to a squalid war between the reactionary sheiks and colonels over the oil fields. We have, however, great interest in the

profits sweated out of oil workers from the Persian Gulf to the North Sea to the Gulf of Mexico: our interest is that this wealth go to the working people of the world. We say: U.S. Out of the Persian Gulf! We Trotskyists, who stand in defense of the Soviet workers state against world imperialism, demand that the Soviet Union rescind its arms embargo of Iraq and send their former allies in Baghdad the weapons they need to deter Washington's oil grab.

The Soviet government fought to the end, successfully, to keep the oil fields of Baku out of the hands of the imperialists. We should make vigorous efforts in the current situation.

Fraternally,
Helene Brosius
International Secretary

cc: General of the Army B.V. Snetkov
Commander in Chief,
Group of Soviet Forces in Germany
Zossen-Wünsdorf

After the Ba'athists took over again in 1968, they jailed and killed thousands of CPers, particularly among Kurdish oil workers in the region of Kirkuk.

This did not stop the Kremlin Stalinists from aiding Saddam, just as they gave support to both Shah Pahlavi and then Ayatollah Khomeini even as the Iranian rulers jailed Iranian Tudeh members. For years, Moscow has been supplying advisers and military hardware to Baghdad as part of its efforts to cultivate "Third World" nationalists. Now under Gorbachev's "new thinking," which evidently consists of giving in to every imperialist demand, and then throwing in some more, the Soviet Union has denounced Saddam Hussein's takeover of Kuwait, endorsed UN trade sanctions, cut off arms shipments and eventually voted for the resolution okaying the U.S. war blockade of Iraq.

Recently it appears that the thick bureaucratic skulls in the Kremlin are awakening to the danger posed by U.S. imperialism's grab for hegemony in the Gulf, barely 700 miles from Soviet borders. "There are no guarantees that the United States will leave Saudi Arabia after the crisis is over," moaned Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksandr Belonogov, while the chief of staff of the Warsaw Pact, General of the Army Vladimir Lobov, complained that the U.S. presence had dramatically altered the strategic balance (*New York Times*, 31 August). Just as Stalin couldn't believe Hitler had violated his "non-aggression" pact by invading the USSR in 1941, his heirs today can't understand why the imperialists don't play by the rules.

The fate of humanity could be at stake. Vietnam and Korea were limited wars because of the threat of Russian power. This is what kept the U.S. from invading Cuba. Now the Soviet Union is out of it, so the Americans don't recognize any limits. The International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist) has denounced this betrayal and in a letter sent to several Soviet embassies demanded "that the Soviet government rescind immediately its arms embargo against Iraq" (see box this page).

For Class Struggle Against the Warmakers

The media have made much of George Bush's "masterful" orchestration of a broad coalition that pits the world against Saddam Hussein. So far the only Western state leader to break ranks is Austria's Waldheim. The policy planners

in the White House, State Department and Pentagon act like they're going to get it all on the cheap. But it's not an accident that most doomsday novels start with a war crisis in the Mideast. And among the prime players, who have been keeping their heads down so far in the Persian Gulf crisis, are the Israelis.

In fact, the Zionist rulers are about the only ones who have to gain from a shooting war. It has not gone unnoticed in Jerusalem that if the U.S. has permanent bases in the Near East, Washington will not be dependent upon Israel as its regional gendarmes. If the Israelis think the flow of dollars may dry up they could just decide to blow the region away. Israel had been gearing up its population for a war even before the latest crisis. Shamir & Co. are itching for a "pre-emptive" strike against Iraq—a repeat of their 1981 bombing raid on Baghdad's unfinished nuclear plant, but this time on an apocalyptic scale with nuclear/chemical weapons to destroy Iraq at one blow and "solve" the "Palestinian problem."

"Israeli political and military leaders are saying that time is not on the side of the United States in the Persian Gulf crisis, and that it should act now," reports the *New York Times* (21 August). But with an arsenal of some 200 nuclear warheads, as well as chemical weapons and delivery systems, Israel might well try it on its own. But while the Zionist rulers with their Masada complex gird for Armageddon, they could touch off revolutionary upsurges throughout the Arab East. And this might even break the extreme chauvinist stranglehold over the Hebrew-speaking workers.

Meanwhile, the U.S. economy, which was already in a recession, is being tipped into depression by the rise in oil prices and the financial chaos of the war threat. While Bush's Big Oil buddies were laughing all the way to the bank as the price of East Texas crude virtually doubled to \$32 a barrel, other businessmen are not so sanguine. "The guns of August suddenly have darkened the economic skies," noted the *Wall Street Journal* (14 August). As stocks plunge and higher oil prices produce inflation, corporations see their profits evaporating, with the savings and loan industry already in crisis and commercial banks in trouble as well. "This could readily be the worse recession since the Depression of the 1930s," one senior securities firm executive told the *Journal*.

American workers and minorities,

SPARTACIST 4
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"Market Socialism" Breeds More Misery
For Workers Political Revolution in the USSR!
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Bagmen...

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North. The article contends: "The principles of Trotskyism... were bartered for cash among the national bourgeois and petty bourgeois leaderships of the Middle East behind the back of the International Committee." Behind their back? A bald-faced lie, and an utterly transparent one too, unless you are gullible enough to believe that the IC could be turned into press agents of various corrupt Arab despots without its cadres noticing.

David North was Healy's toady, and knew where Healy got his money. SLL leaders Nick Beams and Mike Head ran a small group with a large operation, including a print shop and a twice-weekly paper. And they served their Arab bourgeois paymasters just as loyally as Healy. In the midst of the bitter factional struggle within the IC which followed Healy's overthrow in 1985, Cliff Slaughter, the WRP's new leader, wrote in a letter to WRP members (14 January 1986):

"Is it only the WRP which received financial assistance from one or other Middle Eastern bourgeois national governments? Which other sections did so?"

"Is it not a fact that the Australian section did receive a sum of (tens of thousand [sic] of dollars) in 1983?"

"Is it not true that Cde Beams failed to report the matter to the IC or to the WRP delegates, but that he *did* report it to at least some of the delegates who supported the WRP suspension and certainly to Comrade North? That is what happened.

"Finally: is it not true that Comrade North and Beams agreed the matter should not be raised at the IC because they considered it did not constitute a 'class betrayal'?"

Yes, it's all true. The SLL Central Committee censured Beams in February 1986 for failing to report receipt of money from Arab regimes to the IC. Further information came from former SLL leader, Phil Sandford, who led a minority split from the SLL to found the Communist League. In the December 1986 issue of the CL's *Socialist Press* Sandford relates how SLL leader Greg Adler was sent to Baghdad in 1979 to ask for \$100,000 to buy a printing press. Sandford claims Adler didn't ask for the money, but nonetheless Healy gave him a real dressing down for poaching on his turf. Sandford goes on to report:

"The SLL's relations with the Libyan regime require a separate article. Suffice to say they were more productive financially thanks to an even more slavish public relations job in the pages of *Workers News* and such things as the memorable, Libyan-financed brochure entitled *Libya—the true story*."

This brochure was authored by none other than *Workers News* editor Mike Head.

Not one of Healy's lieutenants, from North down, uttered a peep of protest about these corrupt financial dealings until the money dried up. It was this which ultimately led to the spectacular implosion of international Healyism in 1985 and Healy's replacement by North.

Workers News notes that "Mitchell's degeneration into a lackey of Australian imperialism is not the trajectory of an

individual only," referring to the various splinters and spin-offs of the WRP and the IC generally. But what of those deeply involved in the blood crimes of the IC who have never made a public accounting and furthermore try to conceal their role? What of those, in this case the SLL, who printed a Vietnamese fascist paper, the *Saigon Bell*, and justify it as a "commercial operation"? And what can you make of an organisation which habitually drags workers parties, such as the pro-Castro U.S. Socialist Workers Party, through the bourgeois courts, up to and including campaigning internationally last year on behalf of the prosecution case in the U.S. government's frame-up of Iowa trade unionist and SWP supporter, Mark Curtis, on phoney rape charges?

David North's IC and his Australian SLL are proven political guns for hire. Moreover, they are consistently to be found on the wrong side of the class line, from crossing a BLF picket line in 1986 (see *Australasian Spartacist* No. 117, October/November 1988) to siding with imperialism against the Soviet Union on every key question from Afghanistan to Poland to the counterrevolutionary Baltic secessionists. Over the Gulf the SLL sounds no warning to the Soviet and world's working class that the massive imperialist military presence threatens the USSR, because they see nothing in it to defend. And they share the Laborite reformist dream of the ALP lefts rising to power in Her Majesty's parliament, calling on them to form a workers government! In principle the SLL is no different to the various anti-Soviet Laborites they brand as social patriots over the Gulf, except for their sinister, proven capacity to serve any and various reactionary masters, if the price is right. ■

Abu-Jamal...

(continued from page 3)

turies of racial subjugation. But, as the PDC speaker at the rally said:

"Racist state persecution is not limited to the United States. There is no death penalty in Australia at this point in time. However, Australian Aborigines, particularly young black men, meet their death in state custody as a commonplace."

Denouncing the Hawke government's frame-up of anti-Apartheid activist Kerry Browning (see *Australasian Spartacist* No. 137, June/July 1990), the Coalition Against Apartheid spokesman noted:

"It's an attack on the anti-apartheid struggle and on anti-racist forces in this country, and on militant left organisations... We feel great solidarity with Abu-Jamal's struggle."

The Partisan Defence Committee sees itself in the tradition of the International Red Aid, formed in the early 1920s to bring assistance to workers and Communists facing counterrevolutionary terror in East Europe. Its Australian affiliate, the International Labour Defence, emerged in the late 1920s around the American ILD-initiated campaign to save the anarchist workers Sacco and

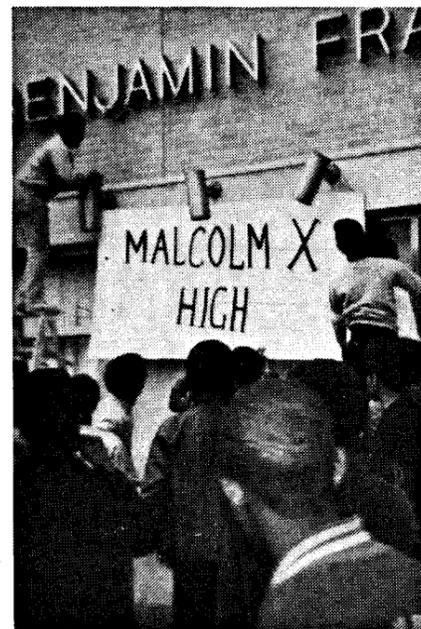
stand on the side of Iraq against the warmongers and union-busters in Washington. And that means waging the *class struggle* at home. Even before the shooting has begun, millions of American working people know that our enemies are not in the Near East but right here: the greedy and vicious ruling class which is willing to spill the blood of thousands to protect its profits and its "right" to lord it over us and over the impoverished masses throughout the world. The workers of this country have the power to stop the system in its tracks and put an end once and for all to the imperialist war machine. Down with Washington's new war—a defeat for "our" rulers is a victory for us. American workers' militancy against Bush and the "Republicrat" party of property will go a long way to making the world a kinder and gentler place. ■

Former Black Panther...

(continued from page 3)

featured as the Panther spokesman in a front-page article in the *Philadelphia Inquirer*. Over the next decade, Jamal was active as a crusading broadcast journalist who became known as the "voice of the voiceless" for championing the cause of the oppressed. He won wide acclaim and was broadcast on national radio networks. In 1980 he was elected president of the Philadelphia chapter of the Association of Black Journalists. Jamal became a supporter of the Philadelphia MOVE organization in the aftermath of the massive 1978 cop siege on their Powelton Village home.

On 9 December 1981 the police tried to kill Jamal in the streets, but failed. He was hospitalized with a bleeding stomach wound and arrested on charges of killing a cop. The prosecutor won the death sentence by convincing the nearly all-white jury that Jamal's use of the Panther slogan "Political Power Grows Out of the Barrel of a Gun" (in the *Philadelphia Inquirer* article 12 years earlier) meant he deserved to die! As Mumia told the court, "I believe America has proven that quote to be true."



Student protest in 1967 to name high school for Malcolm X.

One need only look at the shotgun-wielding cop standing over the stripped Panther victims of Rizzo's 1970 raid, or hear the Philly police today ranting for his immediate execution, to know what Jamal meant.

Reprinted from *Workers Vanguard* No. 508, 10 August 1990



Rizzo's killer cops strip search Philadelphia Black Panthers in 1970 raid.

Vanzetti. Unions and Trades Halls around Australia sent protests to U.S. governments, and at news of the impending execution of Sacco and Vanzetti thousands gathered in Sydney's Domain to hear speakers from the NSW Labor Council, the ALP, the International Workers of the World and the CPA. Soon after, on 23 August 1927, coal miners along with several thousand workers in Sydney struck in defence of Sacco and Vanzetti. This kind of internationalist, united action needs to be rekindled amongst the Australian working class today, to fight in their own interests as well as those of their international class brothers and sisters. As the U.S. PDC staff counsel Rachel Wolkenstein emphasised at the Philadelphia demo to save Jamal, what's needed is a "re-invigorated working-class movement, including a black and red leadership which can fight to win, all the way

to a workers government. All you union brothers and sisters here and all those people who stand with them, it means you have the power to say to this government that this man must not die—this man won't die."

Join the Partisan Defence Committee's campaign to save Mumia Abu-Jamal! Take Jamal's case to your unions, civil rights, campus and community organisations and mobilise them to join the fight. Contact the PDC for speakers, tapes of Mumia speaking and literature. The campaign costs a lot; publicity and printing costs are massive. We are up against the legal and financial resources of the capitalist state. Our chances of success rest on the justice of our cause and the determined support of all who believe Mumia Abu-Jamal must not die. **Send donations to: Partisan Defence Committee, PO Box Q217 QVB, Sydney NSW 2000.**

Iraq...

already ravaged by a decade of economic "growth" in which the rich got a lot richer and everybody else got poorer, now face outright depression and seeing their sons and daughters sent off to die for the greater profits of Exxon and Texaco and George Bush's way of life. While the bourgeoisie gloats about the "death of Communism," and the final triumph of capitalism, this latest imperialist adventure reveals how truly unstable the American capitalist colossus is. Washington is still haunted by its defeat almost two decades ago at the hands of a relatively small nation fighting for a social revolution. But a wounded imperialist beast is more dangerous than ever.

Working people in this country must

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New Socialist Left Premier Kirner with Federal Treasurer Paul Keating.



State Bank of Victoria workers protest against sell off, 24 August.

Victoria Inc. Bankrupt

Socialist Left Makes Workers Pay

"The party's over" is nowadays the refrain of all the bourgeoisie's media scribes. They're calling for increased capitalist austerity as the working people are lumbered with the devastating outcome of the '80s financial binge by high-flying corporate cowboys, who were backed by an eager and willing government. But while the ruling class raked in profits, it was certainly no party for the working class and oppressed. The '80s Hawke era is synonymous with massive foreign debt (now approaching \$160 billion gross), crunching interest rates and wholesale cuts to social welfare spending. Labor rule, federally and state, has been underpinned by the Accord-Arbitration straitjacket which has driven down real wages and slashed jobs and union conditions, resulting in a massive redistribution of wealth further into the hands of the privileged few. Today real wages have fallen to their lowest level as a share of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 40 years, some 5.2 percent lower at the end of the '80s than in 1982. Meanwhile the bosses' profit share of GDP is now higher than during the Menzies "golden age" (*Age*, 14 March).

The Labor government's electoral viability during the '80s was premised on its ability to deliver to the bosses savage attacks on the working class. The union bureaucracy sold this to the working class with the cynical promise that things looked better around the corner. Yet now, widely despised by broad sections of the population, the Labor government's boat has sprung some major leaks, and has been buffeted by a series of financial scandals around the country, culminating in the Victorian financial mess. In one of Australia's biggest financial crashes ever, the state Labor government, after running up a total state debt of \$27 billion, this year also had to cover a budget

shortfall of up to a billion dollars linked to the collapse of the Victorian Economic Development Corporation, a \$2.7 billion loss to the state-owned State Bank of Victoria (SBV) and its merchant bank, Tricontinental, and the collapse of Victoria's largest (and Australia's second largest) building society, Pyramid, shaking confidence in the banking system.

Socialist Left Appointed Receivers

Already the mess has Laborites running for cover, amidst bitter recriminations. But if Hawke is worried about the effects it will have on his government's stability, no one doubts that the Victorian state government's days are numbered. After months of desperate reassurances to the contrary, Labor Premier Cain finally decided to concede that yes, it was a mess—whereupon he quit. This was bemoaned by few, except Socialist Left heavyweight and Trades Hall Council (THC) Secretary John Halfpenny, who complained about disunity and disloyalty. Cain's demise was certainly not regretted by the thousands of unionists like the building workers, nurses and tramway workers, to name a few, whose unions have borne the brunt of years of government attacks.

Into the breach stepped the Socialist Left; and out of it emerged the new premier, Joan Kirner. Having buttressed the Cain government for nine years now, the Socialist Left have decided to dispense with the thin veil of opposition to

Cain's "excesses" they have hidden behind and offer their services to clean up the mess. The Kirner government is intending to cut some 20,000 public sector jobs along with reductions to health, education and public transport services. Working people are going to be hit with increased taxes and charges across the board to reduce the state's debt and underwrite the SBV's losses. Soon to follow may well be the sale of the State Insurance Office and the Gas and Fuel Corporation. Even before it was delivered John Halfpenny announced the THC's acceptance of Kirner's "tough but fair" austerity budget. The Socialist Left have announced that they intend to liquidate the assets of bankrupt Victoria Inc., an irony not lost on the bosses' press, cackling about the sight of yesterday's "left alternative" running today's recession. But you'd have to be a pretty hopeless Laborite hack to be surprised. After all the Socialist Left, with their base in the trade union bureaucracy, helped Hawke and Cain smash the BLF in 1986.

Administering the capitalist state exacts a price for a Labor "left." Bob Hawke prides himself on having taught federal Labor the lesson of Whitlam's overthrow in 1975—to govern in capitalist Australia—you toe the U.S. line. The Victorian Socialist Left too has absorbed this lesson. In June Victorian ALP factional organisers met at a private lunch hosted by the U.S. Consul-General, Richard Block (*Australian*, 15 June), to discuss Cain's successor. Hawke was the

CIA's favourite for ALP leader. What "opinion" did the Consul-General offer regarding Kirner?

The pervasive moralist paternalism that is part and parcel of social democracy has had its most extreme expression under Labor in Victoria. The "wowsers state" has been at the forefront of enforcing the most draconian drink-driving laws, heavy taxes on cigarettes together with government sponsored anti-smoking days, and so on. Victorians (along with many other states) have been subject to a mass of "dob in" days: dob in a drug dealer, a child molester. The roads are littered with signs telling you what to do and when to do it, lately many of them sponsored by corporate outfits like Coke. (A recent road safety report made the obvious point that this multitude of do's and don'ts is dangerous!) But while these righteous Laborites have been preaching moral sermons to the masses, they and their cronies have been looting the public purse with shameless abandon.

Underlying the hypocritical bourgeois moralism is naked repression. Victorian Labor's cops are armed and dangerous, having shot more people in recent years than any other police force in the country, while the citizens are subject to the most repressive gun laws. In early September round-ups of "illegal" Chinese immigrants began in Victoria. About 30 students met the reality of official White Australia racism when they were picked up and jailed in Melbourne's Maribyrnong Migrant Detention Centre for skipping their English classes. This is part of the racist campaign, braintrusted by Victorian Socialist Lifter, Andrew Theophanous for left Immigration Minister Gerry Hand, to round up and expel some 90,000 "illegals" nationally. The

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Break from Labor! Build a Revolutionary Workers Party!