



N.Y. SPARTACIST LEAGUE
P.O. BOX 3381
CHURCH ST. STATION
NEW YORK, NY 10008
212-267-1025

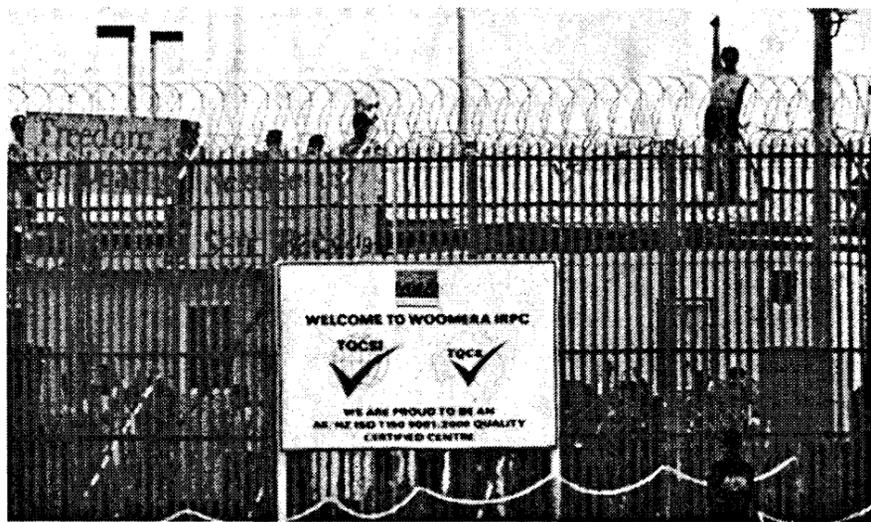
Refugees Protest Racist State Brutality

For Union/Minority Action to Defend Refugees and Immigrants!

Down With Liberal/ALP War on Immigrants!

The 10 February Spartacist League leaflet printed below was widely distributed at protests in defence of refugees in Canberra, Melbourne and Sydney. The response of the Liberal/National government of John Howard to protests by desperate refugees in the concentration camps and by their defenders on the streets of cities around the country, was to deport scores of asylum seekers. Now it has come out that during last year's election campaign the government repeatedly lied that refugees had thrown their children into the sea to "blackmail" the government into letting them into Australia.

The facts are that on 7 October a boat carrying 220 Iraqi refugees was intercepted by the HMAS *Adelaide* near Christmas Island and driven out of Australian waters in a hail of gunfire as the *Adelaide* pounded 23 rounds from heavy guns into the water in front of the



Reuters

Desperate asylum seeker gestures defiantly before jumping on razor wire at Woomera. Close the concentration camps! No deportations!

boat. As armed troops boarded the boat, and with the vessel dangerously floundering, terrified refugees began jumping into the sea.

Smearing the asylum seekers as heartless, less than human and certainly

"un-Australian," Howard, then-defence minister Peter Reith and immigration minister Philip Ruddock milked their baldly racist lie for all it was worth. They continued to do so even though, days before the election, their story was

exposed by the Navy's vice-admiral David Shackleton as a fiction. Now sections of the racist Australian military—no doubt thinking their services would be better employed in killing Afghans or lording it over the East Timorese—have revealed a trail of fabrication and cover-up leading right to Howard's office. All attempts to expose the lies were buried; pictures presented as "evidence" were in fact taken the next day, doctored to mask identifying features, and stripped of dates, times and captions; a video tape was similarly falsely claimed as "proof."

It will be no surprise to militant workers that the likes of Peter Reith, architect of the war on the Maritime Union, is a lying provocateur. As for the pro-capitalist Labor Party, however, then-ALP leader Kim Beazley only complained "that the much-vaunted deterrents of John Howard are not working" (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 8 October 2001). For the ALP brass to now whine that Howard "stole the elections" is self-serving rubbish: they *shared* the same racist anti-immigrant program. They vied
continued on page 2

Oakland, California Labour-Centred Mobilisation:

Defend Immigrants! Defend the Unions!



Workers Vanguard

February 9: Unionists, immigrants, blacks and youth mobilise in defence of immigrants; against anti-terrorist laws.

We reprint below an article from *Workers Vanguard* (No. 775, 22 February), newspaper of the Spartacist League/U.S.

WORKERS VANGUARD

OAKLAND—For the first time anywhere, on February 9 organized labor was mobilized here to flex its muscle in defense of its immigrant brothers and sisters targeted under the U.S. rulers' "war on terrorism." Some 300 unionists, immigrants, blacks and youth rallied in downtown Oakland in opposition to the USA-Patriot Act, the Maritime Security Act and the anti-immigrant witchhunt. At the core of this demonstration were over 30 dock workers from International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) Local 10, including members of the drill team. They joined transit workers from Bay Area Rapid Transit, water utility workers from the East Bay Municipal Utility District, printers, federal park workers from San Francisco's Presidio, day laborers, Asian and Near Eastern immigrants, college and high school students, and the revolutionary Marxists of the Spartacist League to declare that the U.S. working class will fight to defend all the oppressed against their common capitalist class enemy.

In initiating and building this united-front protest, the Bay Area Labor Black League for Social Defense and the Partisan Defense Committee sought above all to win workers to the need to tear through
continued on page 10

International Workers Solidarity: The Black Armada

We call for union/minority action to defend refugees and immigrants, today in the crosshairs of the racist Australian capitalist state. Many youth who oppose racism think that such a call on the working class is either a pipe-dream or just confusing. But the workers movement in Australia has at times engaged in powerful acts of political struggle on behalf of the oppressed.

During World War II, as the Dutch imperialists retreated from Indonesia, they transported their colonial functionaries to Australia, along with hun-

dreds of members of the Indonesian Communist Party and other political prisoners. While being moved to prison camps in Australia, the imprisoned militants appealed for help by throwing notes from convict ships and railway cars. Australian unionists and civil libertarians responded with a successful campaign to free the leftist political prisoners.

At the end of the war Australian dock workers, many of them influenced by the Stalinist Communist Party of Australia (CPA), black-banned (refused to load or service) Dutch ships in what was known

as the "Black Armada." This was in aid of Indonesian Seamen's Union's actions against the Dutch imperialists' attempt to reconquer their former colony and crush the new Indonesian Republic. The British, Australian and Dutch governments responded by conniving to transport Indian seamen to break the strike by the Indonesian workers. Australian unions responded by helping to organise the Indian workers into the Indian Seamen's Union, which upheld the strike and supported the black bans. The Indian seamen were motivated in part by their own struggle for independence from Britain. The Chinese Seamen's Union, also organised in Australia during the war, was key in providing material support to striking Indian and Indonesian seamen.

In a series of actions, including protests, fundraising by Australian unions, and even a courageous mutiny by Indian seamen, these workers gave crucial time to the nationalist Indonesian independence movement to organise resistance to the Dutch colonialists. It was that multi-racial class unity which helped win a victory against the Dutch colonialists and their Australian and British allies.

The "Black Armada" is an example of what is possible when the working class is mobilised in defence of the oppressed. But undercutting the internationalism of

these actions was the social patriotism of the CPA. In their newspaper *The Tribune* they declared, "A fettered Indonesia in the Near North carries a constant threat of political and economic instability to Australian trade and foreign policy." This nationalist poison dovetailed with that of the governing Labor Party, which had run World War II for racist Australian imperialism, and to which the CPA was ultimately subservient.

After the failure of Dutch offensives in 1947 and 1948, the jackal Australian bourgeoisie saw the writing on the wall and the ALP government tried to cosy up to the Indonesian nationalists to better pursue the interests of Australian imperialism. To build upon, deepen and extend workers' impulses to international proletarian solidarity requires forging a class-struggle leadership in the unions through a political fight against nationalist Laborism.

Our task is to win radical student youth to the side of the working class, joining with young workers in the fight to overthrow capitalism. The Spartacus Youth Clubs seek to build a revolutionary, internationalist, multiracial workers party able to mobilise the working class in defence of all those oppressed and exploited under capitalism on the road to taking state power.



Indonesia Calling

October 1945: Indian seamen arrive in Sydney after their mutiny forced return of Dutch munitions ship *Patras*.

Refugees...

(continued from page 1)

with the Liberals in a *bipartisan* orgy of racism against asylum seekers and imperialist war-mongering against devastated Afghanistan.

With refugees drowning on the high seas or thrown into concentration camps while striking workers are baited as "terrorists," immigrants and also white Australian-born workers are looking to fight in defence of the oppressed and the workers movement as a whole. Our aim is to unshackle the anger and discontent at the base of this society. Workers and minorities need a revolutionary workers party, not the Labor Party which supports racist capitalist rule.

The Liberal government's brutal war on refugees—fully backed by the Labor Party tops—has thrown a spotlight on the racist barbarism of capitalist Australia and provoked desperate protests in hellish detention camps. Millions around the world were horrified by reports of a man hurling himself on to razor wire and Afghan women stitching their lips with fence wire and torn blankets. Hundreds, mostly Afghans, Iraqis and Iranians, have gone on hunger strikes or threatened mass suicide. Subjected to racist abuse and beatings by sadistic guards, many are driven to attempt suicide or self-mutilation. As one refugee said: "I

prefer the Taliban, who only kill people. Here, they torture you." This is no aberration. Refugees experience in extreme form the racism minorities suffer daily, and it mirrors what the White Australian rulers have done to Aborigines for over 200 years.

The racist ruling class won't be swayed by the servile appeals to their "morals" pushed by the Laborite left and liberals. The capitalists' only "moral" calculus is their bottom line. To carry out huge job massacres and shredding of health care, education and welfare unopposed the capitalists whip up racism to divide the working class, going after the most vulnerable first, so as to paralyse workers' ability to struggle. But the working class, with its strategic immigrant component, makes the wheels of profit turn. A political strike combining defence of immigrants with opposition to union-busting attacks would be a major step in the fight to push back the bosses' union-busting and divisive racist schemes. Asylum now and full citizenship rights for refugees and all immigrants! Close the concentration camps! No deportations!

Anti-Imperialism Abroad Means Class Struggle At Home

The Australian capitalists' racist hysteria against refugees is the domestic face of the "war on terror" which internationally has jacked up racist scapegoating. Ever hungry to expand their areas of exploitation, Australian imperi-

alism has grabbed the chance to extend their military reach in South Asia, sending the navy to openly kidnap refugees on the high seas, dumping them on remote island neocolonies. The newly signed "anti-terrorism" agreement between Australia and Indonesia, along with the five patrol boats to pursue refugees, is of a piece with this. From Indonesia to East Timor and the Philippines, where the U.S. just sent 650 troops, the imperialists are intensifying the military repression and superexploitation of the Asian masses. Australia/UN get out of East Timor now! U.S. out of the Philippines! U.S./Australian/UN/NATO troops out of Afghanistan, Central Asia and Near East!

With Afghanistan bombed to a heap of rubble, the U.S. imperialists are targeting Iraq, Iran and North Korea, a bureaucratically deformed workers state. The sabre rattling against North Korea is also a direct threat to China, strategic target of the U.S. imperialists, their junior Australian partners and Japanese rivals. Murderous proof of this was the recent sinking of a North Korean ship *in Chinese waters* by Japan's navy. One way or another the imperialists are determined to open China to untrammelled capitalist exploitation. The unconditional military defence of China, North Korea,

Vietnam and Cuba—bureaucratically deformed workers states—against capitalist counterrevolution and imperialist attack is a precondition for successful revolutionary struggle.

The capitalists are using the "war on terror" as a pretext for a frontal assault on unions and immigrants, and a full scale roll back of democratic rights. When 500 Perth construction workers blockaded a scab job site, the boss raved that this was akin to "terrorism." The rulers are beefing up their apparatus of state repression. In 2000, a new law made it easier to send troops against strikers, allowing the army to use "lethal force" against anyone viewed as a "threat." Proposed new ASIO powers target whatever the government deems "terrorist activity," which is so deliberately sweeping as to include a militant strike or political demonstration. But whether the ruling class succeeds in criminalising dissent depends on the outcome of class and social struggles.

The multiracial working class has a powerful material interest in mobilising in defence of refugees and immigrants, for it is a defence of themselves. On 9 February, in Oakland, California, our comrades of the Partisan Defense Committee and the Labor Black League for

continued on page 9

Spartacist Forums

Down With Liberal/ALP Racist War on Immigrants!

For Union/Minority Action to Defend Refugees and Immigrants!

PLUS: Special report on 9 February labour-centred united-front mobilisation in Oakland, California which demanded "No to the USA-Patriot Act and the Maritime Security Act! Down With the Anti-Immigrant Witchhunt!"

MELBOURNE

6.30 p.m., Tuesday 12 March

RMIT (Swanston Street Campus)
Meeting Room D, Building 8, Level 3
(behind the Union Shop)

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

SYDNEY

7 p.m., Saturday 16 March

Newtown Neighbourhood Centre (upstairs)
1 Bedford Street, Newtown
(opposite Newtown Railway Station)

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

Australasian

SPARTACIST



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

Marxist newspaper, published quarterly by the Central Committee of the Spartacist League of Australia, section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist).

EDITOR: Chris Cunningham

CIRCULATION MANAGER: Mike Wallace

PRODUCTION MANAGER: Phillipa Newman

Printed by trade-union labour.

Spartacist ANZ Publishing Co., GPO Box 3473, Sydney NSW 2001. E-mail: spartacist@bigpond.com.

Subscriptions: \$5 for 4 issues; overseas \$7.

Opinions expressed in signed articles or letters do not necessarily express the editorial viewpoint.

Printed by Spotpress Pty Ltd, 105 Victoria Rd, Marrickville.

ISSN 0311-3264

No. 178, Autumn 2002

Date of issue: March 2002

Join the Spartacus Youth Clubs!

Since September, the U.S. imperialists, fully backed by their junior imperialist allies in Australia, have been carrying out a murderous war against the people of Afghanistan. Under the cover of a supposed "war on terror" the imperialists have all but annihilated anything they could find in one of the most impoverished places on earth. The imperialist-installed warlord regime based on the Northern Alliance, and the Taliban regime before it, are creatures of the imperialists' dirty war against the Soviet Red Army's progressive intervention in Afghanistan in the 1980s.

Armed and trained by the U.S. imperialists and cheered on by the Australian rulers and ALP, the *mujahedin* stood for the enslavement of Afghan women, to be bought and sold in marriage, kept veiled and secluded. They killed school teachers for the "crime" of teaching girls to read. Against these reactionary cutthroats, in 1979 we Spartacists said: Hail Red Army in Afghanistan! Extend the gains of the October Revolution to the Afghan peoples! The Soviet intervention laid the basis for real social progress. They built schools and hospitals, and most of all, women were freed from feudal tyranny. By 1989 some 15,000 Afghan women had joined militias to defend these gains.

During the murderous bombing of Afghanistan, the SYCs built speakouts and intervened at protests proclaiming "Defend Afghanistan against imperialist attack! For class struggle against the racist rulers at home!" Today we demand:

All U.S./UN/NATO/Australian troops get out of Afghanistan and Central Asia now! In contrast, the fake left (Democratic Socialist Party, International Socialist Organisation, Socialist Alternative, et al.) set up NO WAR (Network Opposing War And Racism) and ANSWER (Act Now to Stop War and End Racism) coalitions whose nationalist pacifism is captured by such calls as "no to Bush's war" and "no Australian involvement." This is an *appeal* to the Australian imperialists to keep their hands "clean" even as they brutalise peoples throughout the region from East Timor to Bougainville. The pseudo-socialists push the deadly illusion that the imperialist rulers can be pressured into acting in the interests of workers and the oppressed. This program was seen in action in 1999 when the fake left marched

for Australian imperialist occupation of East Timor.

While the anarchoid Love and Rage wrote that they are for "class war" and war against "the bosses," they buried themselves in NO WAR and refused to defend Afghanistan against imperialism. They too supported the Australian imperialist occupation of East Timor. First and foremost for us the main enemy is the capitalist class at home. We seek to end war by fighting to mobilise the working class against our "own" capitalist rulers.

The first victims of the "war on terror" were domestic: immigrants and minorities. In Australia the racist ruling class seized on the criminal attack on the World Trade Center in New York to paint desperate refugees as potential terrorists,

trying to justify the horrendous conditions immigrants face in this country, such as being locked up in hell-hole detention centres. The SYC demands: Full citizenship rights for all immigrants!

In the November 2001 federal elections, both the ruling Liberals and the Labor "opposition" screamed as one for war, while trying to outdo each other in whipping up anti-immigrant hysteria. Labor, the historic party of "White Australia," criticised Howard for not doing enough to stop refugees and called for a specialised coast guard to intercept ships potentially carrying refugees.

The fake left, via the Socialist Alliance, called for a vote or preferences to Labor. As such they seek to dupe workers and youth into believing that the ALP in power is other than a capitalist government. Being pro-capitalist and pro-imperialist the leadership of the ALP necessarily rules in the interest of the bourgeoisie *against* the working class and oppressed. We said: No vote to Labor and their Socialist Alliance lackeys! We struggle to win the working-class base of the ALP away from the shackles of Laborism.

Against the ALP hacks and their fake-left toadies, we seek to rally youth to a *revolutionary* perspective. Our goal is to help build an internationalist multiracial revolutionary workers party that fights all manifestations of oppression on the road to overthrowing this system of racist capitalism. The SYCs are organisations of revolutionary action and education. Join us!

Sydney, 9 December 2001: SYC and Spartacist League march against imperialists' war on Afghanistan.



1 Mobilise students behind the social power of the working class! Picket lines mean don't cross! One out—all out! For industrial unions, not the treacherous division of unions by craft. For union hiring halls! For the closed shop, where *every* worker is in the union! For union-run job recruitment and training programs to recruit those historically discriminated against—Aborigines, immigrants, women. Organise the unorganised! Down with slave-labour "work for the dole"! Down with "junior rates" of pay and multi-tier wages which pit younger and older workers against each other! Government, courts out of the unions—labour must clean its *own* house! Cops, prison guards, security guards out of the unions! Down with Arbitration and the Industrial Relations Courts! Down with racist protectionism—whether in anti-"globalisation" or "fair trade" guise or otherwise—which pits workers in Australia against workers in other countries! Workers of the world unite!

2 Australia is a jackal imperialist power which attempts to lord it over Southeast Asia both as "deputy sheriff" for U.S. imperialism and to pursue the interests of the Australian capitalist class in the superexploitation of the oppressed masses in Asia. We stand opposed, first and foremost, to our "own" imperialist rulers—the main enemy is at home! Smash the ANZUS alliance! The UN is a den of imperialist thieves, their lackeys and victims! Beware the fraud of "humanitarian" imperialism. Not a person, not a cent to the imperialist military! All Australian imperialist troops get out of East Timor, the Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea, Bougainville, Fiji! Hands off Indonesia! Defeat Australian imperialism through workers revolution!

3 Down with anti-communist China bashing! Defend the gains of the 1949 Chinese Revolution which smashed the

rule of the landlords and capitalists, threw off the yoke of imperialist exploitation and collectivised property! For unconditional military defence of the deformed workers states—China, North Korea, Vietnam and Cuba—against imperialist attack and attempts at internal capitalist counterrevolution! Close the U.S./Australia spy station at Pine Gap—dagger against China, North Korea and Vietnam! For workers political revolution to oust the Stalinist bureaucracies and establish regimes of workers democracy based on the power of workers councils and revolutionary internationalism!

4 For women's liberation through socialist revolution! For free, quality 24-hour childcare! For free abortion on demand! For mass labour-backed mobilisations to defend abortion clinics against attack by religious bigots! Down with parental consent laws! Down with attacks on Medicare, public health services! For free, quality health care for all! Equal pay for equal work! Down with reactionary "age of consent" laws! Full democratic rights for gays! State out of the bedroom! Down with all laws against crimes without victims such as prostitution, consensual sex, drugs!

5 Full citizenship rights for all immigrants! Close the hell-hole "detention centres"! No deportations! Immigrant workers are key to class struggle—organise so-called "illegal" workers! For full union wages and conditions for *all* workers! Down with the racist "war on drugs" targeting in particular immigrant youth! Down with anti-immigrant, anti-Semitic and all racist bigotry! Fascist terror is not a matter of free speech! Stop the Nazis! Stop the KKK! No reliance on the capitalist state! For mass labour/

minority mobilisations to stop the fascists and race-terrorists!

6 The capitalist state—the cops, courts, prisons and standing army—is the executive committee of the ruling class, an instrument of organised violence by the capitalists against the working class and oppressed. The state is not neutral and cannot be reformed—it must be smashed through workers revolution! No illusions in police "reform" or royal commission whitewashes! Defend the victims of racist cop terror and police frame-up! For mass labour protests against cop terror! Free all class-war prisoners! There is no justice in the capitalist courts! No to gun control! For the right of armed self-defence! Abolish the Senate and reactionary relics like the monarchy and governor-general! Down with anti-democratic compulsory voting and mandatory preferences! No support to the racist bourgeois "republicans"! For a workers republic, the dictatorship of the proletariat!

7 Australian capitalism was founded on the dispossession and attempted genocide of the Aboriginal peoples. We support any attempts by Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders to claw back some of the land which has been stolen from them, and to get whatever financial compensation they can from the tight-fisted, racist ruling class. We fight for complete legal equality; for jobs for all; and for massive health and education programs to address the oppression of Aboriginal people on the reserves, in the wretched "fringes" and inner cities. Down with racist state terror! For many Aborigines prison is a death sentence—down with "mandatory sentencing" which is aimed at jailing Aborigines! "Reconciliation" is a racist hoax—for a class-struggle fight

for Aboriginal rights! Only socialist revolution can end the deep-going oppression of the Aboriginal peoples, laying the material basis for a society not based on brutal exploitation and all-sided racism.

8 For free, quality education for all, including overseas students! No fees! Abolish HECS! For open admissions and a full, state-paid living stipend for all! Abolish the campus administration! For worker/staff/student control of the universities! Cops and security guards off campus! Drive army and ASIS/ASIO recruiters off campus!

9 For separation of church and state! Defend science against superstition and mysticism! Down with state funding for private and religious schools! For a single, secular school system! Down with "religious education" in state schools!

10 The ALP is the historic party of "White Australia." Proudly pro-imperialist it has been trusted by the ruling class to run Australia during both inter-imperialist world wars. A bourgeois workers party, it upholds the rule of racist capitalism. Organically tied to the ALP, the trade-union bureaucracy acts as the agent of the capitalist class in the workers movement, spreading the lie of a common "national interest" between workers and their exploiters. Split the working class base from the pro-capitalist leadership of the ALP—break with Laborism! For a class-struggle leadership of the unions! For a multiracial, revolutionary workers party which opposes every manifestation of capitalist injustice and oppression in the fight for socialist revolution! Look to the heroic, Bolshevik-led workers of 1917 tsarist Russia! For new October Revolutions! For an international centrally planned economy, under the rule of the working class! For a workers republic of Australia, part of a socialist Asia! ■



Der Spiegel

Yeltsin's barricades of counterrevolution, Moscow, August 1991. Russians thrown into impoverishment following restoration of capitalism line up at soup kitchen in freezing cold.



Economist

Ten Years After Counterrevolution in the USSR

For New October Revolutions!

We reprint below from *Workers Vanguard* (No. 774, 8 February), newspaper of the *Spartacist League/U.S.*, an edited version of a presentation by Central Committee member Ed Clarkson at an 8 September SL forum in Chicago.

Since the Yeltsin-led counterrevolution that destroyed the Soviet Union in 1991-92, the world has changed in many ways. I was recently watching a movie called *May Fools* by Louis Malle about a provincial bourgeois French family that's undergoing the process of decay. The old matriarch has just died, and they are figuring out which paintings to sell so that they can get by on the proceeds of previous generations. It is called *May Fools* because it is set in 1968 in the month of May, that is, during the period of the great upsurge of the French proletariat. There's this big family in the countryside, and they're listening to the radio. The batteries are defective, so the radio sputters on and off. They hear that President de Gaulle has fled Paris and the workers have seized the city, and they speculate that the Soviet Army is only two days from the border.

That sense no longer exists. The Soviet Union—as the pre-eminent society where capitalism was overthrown, where working-class property forms were initiated, a power second only in the world to U.S. imperialism—is a place that no longer exists. Just on the purely military level, a great advantage has accrued to the world bourgeoisie. The other thing is that people no longer perceive workers, and indeed to a large extent workers no longer perceive themselves, as inclined toward socialism, as was the French proletariat in 1968. That is a direct result of the final unraveling of the Russian October Revolution of 1917—the first and to date only successful proletarian revolution in history—in 1991-92. Since that time, the imperialists have revealed in “death of communism” triumphalism.

Flashing back to the movie *May Fools*, they all ran out to the woods and hid out for a couple of days until the radio told them it was safe to return. The fears of our bourgeois friends were rather unjustified, even in 1968. The USSR had no intention whatsoever of invading France. Indeed, in the period immediately following the Second World War, Stalin had ordered the disarming of both the Italian and French Communist-led Resis-

tance forces, at a time when there was a power vacuum because the bourgeoisies in both countries were discredited by their embrace of fascism during the war. In 1968, the French Communist Party, the dominant organization of the proletariat, had no aspirations whatsoever to claiming state power. Yet the strength and depth of the workers uprising was certainly strong enough so that one could have considered that.

Nevertheless, there was some basis for that bourgeois family's fear. The Red Army had, after all, overturned capitalism in East Europe in the aftermath of World War II. And the Soviet Union, by giving considerable material support to Mao's Communist forces in China, had played a significant role in the 1949 Chinese Revolution, which took about a fourth of the population of the planet out

of the hands of the imperialists. The contradictory behavior of the Soviet Stalinist regime in these various instances serves to illustrate that what ultimately developed from the October Revolution was a very complex and contradictory historical phenomenon, described by Leon Trotsky as a degenerated workers state.

The imperialists are not so silly as to believe their own public relations campaign about the “death of communism.” They are quite aware that the vicious contradictions of their system will continue to engender working-class opposition and popular uprisings. The remaining workers states, which we describe as bureaucratically deformed—China, North Korea, Cuba, Vietnam—do not have anything near the military capacity of the former Soviet Union. Nonetheless, since the fall

of the USSR, the U.S. has been relocating most of its military forces to the Pacific theater as a bludgeon particularly against China, which has some nuclear weapons. That is simply because the U.S. imperialists intend, if necessary, to utilize military might to overthrow the last remnants of proletarian state power on the planet. To that end, the U.S. continues to this day its blockade of Cuba, even though probably most of the population here no longer supports the blockade. It's gratuitous in a way, but it expresses the fundamental opposition of U.S. imperialism to the very existence of a society in which capitalism was overthrown.

Now, of course, there are two sides to this question. There have been intrusions of capitalist development into the remaining workers states, but they have not been overthrown yet. The European imperialists have invested considerable capital in Cuba, for example, which has gone on beggars' rations since the demise of the Soviet Union. The economic penetration and the military buildup are two sides of the same coin: both are directed at overthrowing the deformed workers states in East Asia and the Caribbean.

“Death of Communism” Ideological Campaign

At the same time, you have an all-out propaganda campaign, which has been conducted in literary journals by the intelligentsia both in this country and in Europe, directed at the history of the October Revolution and the history of Communism. In this country, it has taken the form of—if one reads the *New York Review of Books*, for example—any number of articles attempting to prove once again that the Rosenbergs were really guilty of spying for the Soviet Union and deserved to be executed in 1953, and that the American Communist Party (CP) was nothing but a nest of spies. In actuality, by the time of World War II the CP was simply a reformist organization. Its leader, Earl Browder, described Communism as “20th century Americanism.” The important thing for us was that the Soviet Union was able to obtain the atomic bomb as a counterweight to the intentions of U.S. imperialism.

In Europe, this ideological campaign is taking the form of an attack not only on the Russian Revolution but on the French Revolution of 1789. Every revolution, even that bourgeois revolution, is



Novosti

Above: Soldiers march through Moscow under banner of Communism in 1917. Right: First Congress of Communist International, March 1919. Lenin and Trotsky's Bolsheviks fought for world socialist revolution.



Y. Shteynberg

now seen as suspect by the bourgeoisie. David Horowitz, an ex-New Leftist from the 1960s, recently appeared at the University of Chicago. He's fairly well connected with right-wing Republicanism. Previously he did some work for Reagan down in El Salvador, and he was evidently part of Bush's troops in Florida during the "chad" controversy. He is currently beating the hustings with his peculiar notion that not only is there no racism in American society today, but that American society was always good, that slavery was pretty good and the slaves got a real good break. And if you don't believe this, then you are condemned in Horowitz's eyes as an opponent of "free speech" and the American Constitution. Moreover, if you get up and oppose him in one of his forums, he will have you shut up and dragged out.

One remembers that during the McCarthy period of the early 1950s there were two crimes: one, you believed in racial integration and fought for it; and two, you believed in a socialist future. Horowitz plays a role in an effort by the U.S. rulers to squash any sort of oppositional thought or social protest in the egg, before it begins.

The October Revolution and Soviet Russia

The October Revolution, better known as the Bolshevik Revolution, arose out of the holocaust of World War I. It was the signal act of the 20th century, which Lenin described as the epoch of imperialist decay and socialist revolution. It took the question of socialist revolution out of the realm of theory and made it real in the former tsarist empire.

The revolution's accomplishments were many and great. In backward Russia, it gave land to all the peasants, it eliminated discriminatory legislation against gays and others, it was the first country of any significance to give the franchise to women, which caused all the imperialist states to subsequently try to catch up. It also gave self-determination to the captive nations within the former tsarist empire. It expropriated the capitalists and took the first steps to building a socialist society.

Internationally, it inspired revolutionary uprisings throughout Europe, most notably in Germany, Italy, Finland and Hungary, and triggered colonial uprisings against the imperialist powers. The victorious Bolshevik Party forged an international party of world revolution, known as the Third International, which by 1921 had attracted over six million workers to its banner. It is important to realize that the Bolshevik Revolution, through the first four Congresses of the Third International, educated and organized the world working class in struggle.

Even in the rather politically backward United States, it was the leaders of the Russian Revolution who made the important connection between the cause of black liberation and working-class revolution, emphasizing Karl Marx's point that one section of the working class cannot prosper when the other section is in

chains. So that even in this country every struggle against black oppression, every effort to build the trade unions—including the building of the gigantic CIO industrial unions in the 1930s—was led by those who were inspired by the October Revolution.

But things did not go well in the Soviet Union itself. In 1918, it was plunged into civil war by an unending series of imperialist-sponsored interventions. The devastation of that civil war was then superimposed on the previous devastation of World War I. Because of this, in the early days of the Soviet workers state a huge governmental apparatus was necessary to simply ration out the scarcity that was prevalent in that starving society at the time.

The other thing that happened during the early years of the Russian Revolution is that the anticipated revolutions in Europe did not transpire. Several attempts at revolution in Germany failed. The revolution in Hungary was reversed. The revolution in Italy never happened, although there were two years called the *Biennio Rosso*—the "two red years"—when the bourgeoisie could not rule, and when the Social Democrats declined to do so.

The main reason that the revolutions did not succeed in Germany and elsewhere was that there was no truly revolutionary party ready to play the same role that the Bolsheviks had played in Russia. But there is another side to this story, too. The Social Democrats, the historic parties of the working class in Europe at that time, had become the labor lieutenants of capital, what Lenin described as *bourgeois workers parties*. They became that current in the labor movement which stood against revolution and on the side of maintaining the bourgeois order—if necessary, by shedding blood, as happened in Germany when the Social Democrats in bloc with right-wing militarists suppressed the Spartakist uprising in 1919, following which its leaders, Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht, were murdered.

The combination of the devastation of Russian society and the failure of the revolution to spread internationally led to what Trotsky later called the bureaucratic degeneration of the Soviet workers state. By early 1924, those who spoke for the interests of the developing Soviet bureaucratic caste—for its conservatism, for its right to material privileges—seized control of the Bolshevik Party and thereby of the Soviet state. In the following decade, the party was destroyed by Stalin and turned into a mere bureaucratic apparatus, plain and simple.

Our latest *Spartacist* (No. 56, Spring 2001), our theoretical magazine, has two very good articles that people might read that pertain directly to this period. One is on the 1923 revolutionary crisis in Germany and why the revolution failed to happen, and the other is on the early struggles of the Left Opposition led by Trotsky around the same time. My favorite description of what happened to the Russian Revolution comes



Red Army soldiers trample Nazi flag in Austria, 1945. Soviet victory over Hitler's Germany demonstrated power of collectivised economy.

from Trotsky, from his monumental book *The Revolution Betrayed*, which analyzed the complexity of the Soviet Union after the working class was politically expropriated:

"The proletarian character of the October revolution was determined by the world situation and by a special correlation of internal forces. But the classes themselves were formed in the barbarous circumstances of tsarism and backward capitalism, and were anything but made to order for the demands of a socialist revolution. The exact opposite is true. It is for the very reason that a proletariat still backward in many respects achieved in the space of a few months the unprecedented leap from a semifeudal monarchy to a socialist dictatorship, that the reaction in its ranks was inevitable. This reaction has developed in a series of consecutive waves. External conditions and events have vied with each other in nourishing it. Intervention followed intervention. The revolution got no direct help from the west. Instead of the expected prosperity of the country an ominous destitution reigned for long. Moreover, the outstanding representatives of the working class either died in the civil war, or rose a few steps higher and broke away from the masses. And thus after an unexampled tension of forces, hopes and illusions, there came a long period of weariness, decline and sheer disappointment in the results of the revolution. The ebb of the 'plebeian pride' made room for a flood of pusillanimity and careerism. The new commanding caste rose to its place upon this wave."

Stalinist Russia and the Trotskyist Program

When Trotsky analyzed this society in *The Revolution Betrayed*, he recognized that those who ruled in the Soviet Union and the way they ruled had fundamentally changed since the early years of the revolution. But what was ruled over had not changed. Soviet society maintained the same property forms that existed in the immediate aftermath of the October Revolution. There was still nationalized production, there was the state monopoly of foreign trade, there was no capitalist class. Nothing basic had changed at the economic level. To be sure, the Bolshevik Party had been replaced by a bureaucratic caste, nationalist in its orientation. It believed in "socialism in one country," not anywhere else in the world, which was a promissory note to the imperialists that "if you let us alone, we'll leave you alone." Now, you can't have, in a Marxist sense, socialism in one country. It's absurd. Socialist production has to exist at an even higher level than the imperialist economy, which was international from its birth.

What position should the workers movement take toward the contradictory phenomenon of the Soviet Union under the Stalinist bureaucracy? Well, Trotsky came up with the "trade union analogy." He said: In a way, the Soviet Union is no different than a reformist trade union, led by bureaucratic betrayers but nevertheless representing a historic gain of the working class. And the position that any militant would take toward such a phenomenon is defense against the bosses on the one hand and an effort to remove the betrayers who lead the union on the other.

Similarly with the Soviet Union, Trotsky argued for a program of unconditional military defense against imperialism and capitalist restoration while seeking proletarian political revolution to oust the bureaucratic betrayers, a program that we, uniquely on the planet, hold today for those societies that have expropriated capitalism. That is the basis on which the Fourth International was formed in 1938.

In the end, the Soviet Union was destroyed by a capitalist counterrevolution, which we hold to be a *historic defeat* for the world's working class. Our opponents on the left—the most prominent in Chicago being the International Socialist Organization (ISO)—hold differently. They hold that the existence of the Soviet Union was an obstacle to winning the working class to socialism and that its defeat would be a good thing. In other words, they sided with their own imperialists in their hostility toward the October Revolution, embodied (albeit in a degenerated form) in the Soviet Union. For them, as for the Social Democrats in World War I, capitalist democracy was superior to red revolution. Same thing, different context.

ICL Said: Defeat Yeltsin-Bush Counterrevolution!

The anti-Sovietism of the ISO goes back to its origins as a tendency, around the time of the Chinese Revolution of 1949. When U.S. forces invaded Korea in 1950 in an effort to overrun and reconquer North Korea—a move also aimed at the recent Chinese Revolution—the forerunners of the ISO refused to defend North Korea and China against U.S. imperialism. Many of the other assorted groups that call themselves Trotskyist—we do not call them Trotskyist but they would call themselves Trotskyists—were to demonstrate their own fervent anti-Sovietism at the time of the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan in December 1979.

In the late 1970s, a modernizing nationalist regime in Afghanistan, backed by the USSR, instituted some modest reforms in the direction of freeing women from enslavement and Islamic backwardness, like lowering the bride price, educating girls—really not all that radical steps toward social progress. As a result, the mullahs and tribal chiefs went into opposition to the regime. These *mujahedin*, "holy warriors," threw acid in the faces of unveiled women, murdered schoolteachers, did a variety of barbarous things. And these reactionaries were backed and financed by the CIA.

The Soviet bureaucracy, for its own particular reasons, intervened on the side of the Afghan reformers and sent in the Red Army after repeated requests by the Afghan government. We had no illusions in the motives of the Kremlin rulers. But we stood for the Red Army being there because what was involved was defense of the Soviet Union and a step toward social progress. A quarter of a million men out of a total Afghan population

continued on page 6



Members of Trotskyist Left Opposition exiled to Siberia commemorate anniversary of October Revolution, 1928. Banner calls for struggle against growing capitalist-restorationist danger: "Turn the Fire to the Right—Against Kulak, Nepman and Bureaucrat."

Soviet Union...

(continued from page 5)

of some 20 million at that time were mul-lahs. This gives you a sense of the human weight of social reaction in that society. The only hope for social progress for that sort of hideous society lay in the military and economic presence of the Soviet Union there over an extended time. The result of the withdrawal of the Red Army in 1988-89 by the government of Mikhail Gorbachev is exactly what we see in Afghanistan today, a society which will not allow women medical care because that means you have to show yourself to a doctor, which won't allow them to go to school, etc.

So, we were very much for the Red Army presence, and the anti-Soviet fake left was very much against, condemning it as a terrible act of "Soviet imperialism." By these lights, Cuba, for example, was just another victim of "Soviet imperialism." The reality was that the Soviet Union sold Cuba oil at below world prices and purchased sugar from it at above world prices. Now, if this is imperialism, every country should be so blessed. In fact, it was the opposite of imperialism, which invests capital in order to extract resources and prof-

itled "Soviet Workers: Defeat Yeltsin-Bush Counterrevolution!" (WV No. 533, 30 August 1991). That statement began:

"The working people of the Soviet Union, and indeed the workers of the world, have suffered an unparalleled disaster whose devastating consequences are now being played out. The ascendancy of Boris Yeltsin, who offers himself as Bush's man, coming off a botched coup by Mikhail Gorbachev's former aides, has unleashed a counterrevolutionary tide across the land of the October Revolution."

In a historic sense, Trotsky predicted what eventually happened in the Soviet Union in 1991-92. A portion of the bureaucracy became interested not just in maintaining its privileges but in having the power to transmit its privileges to future generations—in other words, being part not simply of a parasitic caste but of a capitalist class. Backed by the imperialists, a portion of the bureaucracy led by Yeltsin, who had until shortly before been a leading part of the ruling Communist Party, took over state power and launched the capitalist counterrevolution, while the rest of the vast bureaucratic apparatus melted away. The workers, having experienced decades of Stalinist betrayal, correctly saw the bureaucracy as both liars and thieves. Politically atomized, their consciousness eroded by decades of Stalinist

ICL call "Soviet Workers: Defeat Yeltsin-Bush Counterrevolution!" was distributed in tens of thousands throughout USSR. Below: ICL raises banner of Fourth International in Moscow's Red Square on Revolution Day, 7 November 1991.

Spartacist



Right: Afghan mujahedin backed by CIA in war against Soviet Army shot schoolteachers for teaching young girls to read. Below: Kremlin's ignominious withdrawal of troops from Afghanistan in 1988-89 set stage for counterrevolutions in East Europe and USSR.



its from impoverished countries. That doesn't mean the Soviet role in the deformed workers states it aided was without its chauvinist and other oppressive aspects. But generally speaking, these societies were able to exist because of the presence of the Soviet Union, and now their existence is threatened because of its absence.

All those same groups I have just discussed were on the barricades with Boris Yeltsin in August 1991 when, with the open backing of American imperialism, he seized power from the decomposing Kremlin regime of Gorbachev. Understand that some of these groups had the official position that one should defend the Soviet Union. But they were intoxicated with the smell of bourgeois democracy in the air. It is not accidental that each of those groups also believes in taking the unions in this country and elsewhere to court. It is exactly the same question, just on a different level: the notion that the bourgeois government will make the trade unions "democratic" and otherwise nice for the workers. If the bourgeoisie were so beneficent, the working class wouldn't need trade unions. But these fake-left groups support such government intervention in the unions and all of them were cheerleaders for the overthrow of the October Revolution.

We had comrades in Moscow at this critical juncture. And we put out a statement, distributing it in the thousands,

betrayals and lacking a revolutionary internationalist party, the Soviet workers didn't rise in defense of the gains of the October Revolution. The result was what we see today.

Global Immiseration in the Post-Soviet Period

Let's look at the impact now of the capitalist counterrevolution. First, in those societies in which it happened, what we see in every case is joblessness, the absence of health care previously present, the absence of educational opportunities previously present and a decline in life

span—a fantastic erosion of human well-being. Of course, the bourgeois literati will tell you the streets of Moscow now sparkle, you can get whatever meal you want, but the population unfortunately is wallowing in filth. The former Soviet Union is essentially a big junkyard where people pick apart what was built under the workers state and try to sell it in the marketplace.

Before the overturn of capitalism, Russia and the countries of East Europe were very backward societies, and the only reason that they developed to the level they did was precisely because of the overthrow of capitalism. China was even more economically backward.

There has not been a counterrevolution in China. But nevertheless today you can see with the introduction of capitalist exploitation in each new area of society a corresponding erosion of the gains of the 1949 Chinese Revolution for the masses. So now medical care must for the most part be purchased, as must education. Now there is massive unemployment in China, tens of millions. That didn't exist before. So these very backward societies, because of the power of a collectivized economy, were able to provide everyone with a job, everyone with a place to live, everyone with the right to education, everyone with the right to health care. Under capitalism, nobody has those rights.

Let's look at the world more generally, and not just the societies where the gains of social revolution have been overturned. Why are youth on the streets today in Genoa, in Seattle and in various other places? Well, some have a peculiar fondness for trees. The trade-union tops, for their part, are mostly out there to press for one form or another of trade protectionism. We are opposed to this because it's a knife in the back of the international working class, directly pitting workers in one country against those in other countries. But most youth, I think, are out there because they see that the imperialists are savaging the world. And in this they are correct.

In the last two decades, the rate of

growth outside of the imperialist countries has been 1 percent, and that was accrued during the ten good years that existed for places like South Korea and Indonesia, which are now going down the drain. You can be assured that who benefited during that period were the moneyed classes, while the masses continued to live in a cesspool.

Now, the youth on the street have the strange idea that this occurred because of some creation called multinationals, which are evidently a more evil form of exploitation than old-fashioned capitalism itself. In that they are mistaken. These are the same old imperialist policies that were seen before World War I: divide, conquer, destroy, savage, make money, get out of town. The youthful protesters tend to address their appeals—especially in the United States, especially in Seattle—to their own bourgeoisie to correct the situation, as though U.S. imperialism is going to make the world a better place for people to be in, contrary to anyone's experience in the last 30 years. The global economic summits where these protests happen are simply opportunities for the imperialists to meet together occasionally to discuss their differences—differences that can in a different context lead to war. It's simply a way of reaching interim understandings.

Everybody is upset that the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank are doing bad things—and truly they are. But these demonstrations wouldn't have occurred 20 years ago, when the Soviet Union existed. The IMF existed then, the World Bank existed then, but it didn't necessarily matter in and of itself what the imperialists decided, because there was a contending power on the planet that wasn't imperialist. If Third World countries didn't like the deal they got from the U.S., they sought a little Soviet aid and became allies of the Soviet Union for a period of time. They had a bargaining position, if you will. At the same time, the Soviet Stalinist bureaucracy repeatedly sold out revolutionary struggles in these countries, while embracing the bourgeois-



January 1990: Spartacists initiated 250,000-strong rally against Nazi desecration of Red Army memorial in East Berlin's Treptow Park. Statements of revolutionary solidarity issued by our comrades to Soviet soldiers, Vietnamese and Cuban workers in East Germany.

nationalist regimes as allies.

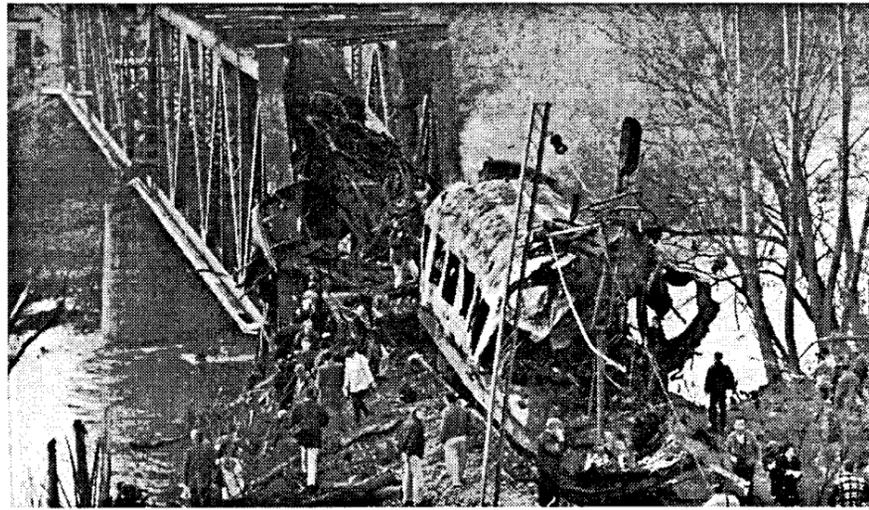
Look at the countries of Africa, where the overturn of the October Revolution has led to the intensification of imperialist bloodsucking, and with it increased starvation and bloodshed—tribe against tribe, country against country, everybody out for some advantage in a battle for survival. This has occurred because the IMF and World Bank demanded payment on the money they had given previously as a sop to these African countries during the Cold War against the Soviet Union. The imperialists further destroyed these societies, already devastated by imperialism, by forcing them to focus on a single cash crop (monoculture) for export to the world market, while the masses starve.

The Struggle for Revolutionary Marxist Parties

The condition of the working class internationally is also quite different. The fall of the Soviet Union didn't put an end to the contradictions between labor and capital, contrary to the "death of communism" ideologues. There has actually been quite a bit of class struggle since then, especially in European societies but also in the Philippines and most recently in Argentina. But what is different is that much of the working class no longer sees its ultimate goal as socialism or communism, in some sense, and you see a suspicion of political parties that, especially in places like Italy, leads a layer of more militant workers to identify with anarchism or syndicalism.

ence, it was exposed as bankrupt as a revolutionary force during the Spanish Revolution in 1936-38. This was a revolution that Trotsky described as being much more powerful at the outset than the Russian Revolution itself, which began with the overthrow of the tsar. During the course of the Spanish Revolution, the anarchists, who deplore forming a working-class government because they don't believe in governments, joined the bourgeois (Popular Front) government. That bourgeois government proceeded to undo the initial expropriations which the revolutionary workers had undertaken. Trotsky aptly described the role of the anarchists in Spain as like an umbrella with holes in it—it worked when it didn't rain but was not much good when there was rain.

Anarchism has no solution to the problems of capitalist exploitation and is therefore sort of perforce consigned to a role, as it was in Spain, of pressuring the bourgeoisie. But notice that even the rather mild struggles that have happened in various cities as the anarchist youth follow the imperialist confabs around are denounced by the fake Trotskyists and those social-democratically inclined. They complain about what we admire in the anarchist youth. We admire their impulse and their outrage against injustice. Our disagreement is that they have nothing to propose, no answer to imperialist oppression. The social democrats, on the other hand—and here I mean groups like the ISO, the fake Trotskyists and the



Passenger train demolished by U.S./NATO terror bombing of Serbia in 1999. Destruction of Soviet Union emboldened U.S. imperialists in their military adventures around the world.

terms of our program—the necessity of linking struggles against injustice and exploitation with the struggle for black freedom—was the one on the Charleston waterfront that occurred in January 2000.

This struggle occurred just subsequent to a large civil rights demonstration in South Carolina directed against the Confederate flag. The Charleston longshore union had played a role in that demonstration. We're not talking about radical revolutionaries; those in the leadership of these struggles are at best reformists. But nevertheless the state brought in hundreds of cops against these longshore workers fighting to defend their union against scab labor in Charleston, and the workers faced them down. This small example shows that our premises for socialist revolution in the United States are absolutely correct.

Now, I'll conclude with another story, about a loss. The International Communist League played a role in the German Democratic Republic (East Germany) in 1989-90. When the Berlin Wall came down in late 1989, we decided that this posed both a threat and an opportunity. It was a threat to the existence of the working-class property forms in the East German deformed workers state, but at the same time an opportunity for our Trotskyist program of defense of those gains, for the political overthrow of the ruling Stalinist party that undermined them and for a socialist revolution in capitalist West Germany. And so we intervened quite heavily. We had a very small group in West Germany at the time, and we sent many of our comrades from elsewhere in the ICL over there to assist them in raising the Trotskyist program. But understand, we are still talking about a small number, many of whom couldn't speak German.

Nevertheless, we put out a daily newspaper, and we distributed hundreds of thousands of copies of that newspaper. Partly in response to our agitation, there were soldiers committees in the East German army. There were also workers committees in the factories. We were

invited to both the barracks and the factories and spoke at both. When a war memorial to Soviet soldiers at Treptow Park in East Berlin was defaced by fascists, we said, everybody out! The working class has to get out and fight this! And the groundswell of popularity of that call, which was in reality nothing else but a call for the defense of the workers state in East Germany, was so strong that the ruling Stalinist party felt compelled to take over the demonstration. That was a mass demonstration—250,000 people or more. We spoke on the platform and denounced the Stalinists and warned against the sellout of the East German workers state to West German imperialism.

In the aftermath of Treptow, billions of deutschmarks flowed from the West to the East, as did Social Democrats and other cadres of counterrevolution. A few months later capitalist rule was restored in East Germany through reunification with the West German imperialist state. That set the stage for the overturn in the Soviet Union. Mikhail Gorbachev first made clear he would not stand for the existence of the East German workers state; and then when Yeltsin came out on the streets, Gorbachev had no impulse to defend his own base of power.

But if we lost in the German Democratic Republic, which we did, why am I bragging about it? If you look at what we had there, it is permissible to think that if we'd had a few more cadres, had gotten there a little earlier, had been a little more strategically placed, *we would have prevailed*. We awakened the working class and provided a banner to gather around, and did so with very limited forces. This again reaffirmed that if we are able to accrue the cadres to the program of revolutionary Marxism, the program of revolutionary Trotskyism, the working class will be more than able to throw out its reformist betrayers and unseat the imperialists at the centers of their power. And that is what the Spartacist League and the International Communist League are all about. ■



Reuters

Teamsters rally in Georgia, U.S. during 1997 UPS strike. Forging a revolutionary workers party is key to struggle for proletarian overthrow of capitalist rule.

What we see in Europe is that the workers' battles have, for the most part, been directed at what are called popular-front governments, that is, governments composed of (social-democratic or ex-Stalinist) bourgeois workers parties and outright bourgeois parties. The social gains of the European working class—health care, social security, a shorter workweek, etc.—came about in the aftermath of World War II. The reason they came about was because the Soviet Union existed and much of the working class was pro-Communist. So these programs were granted as a buyout to ward off the spectre of revolution. And now who is taking them away? The social democrats. The pseudo-Trotskyists also play a role in the labor movement in various countries, especially in France, and they, no less than the old social-democratic parties, support the various popular-front governments which are trying to destroy the previous gains of the working class.

A final difference is that the youth on the streets today wouldn't have called themselves anarchists 20 years ago. I'm referring to young radicals who have shed a political identification with capitalism and want to adopt a sense of opposition to that system. They might have called themselves Trotskyists, they might have called themselves Guevarists, they might have called themselves Maoists, but they wouldn't have called themselves anarchists.

The best of the anarchists and syndicalists of their day were won to Bolshevism after the October Revolution. In Spain, where anarchism retained influ-

like—actually deplore the fact that these young radicals challenge the cops, the bourgeois order. The problem with even the most left-wing anarchists—the ones who aren't anti-communist liberals at heart—is they don't see that if you are going to threaten the existing order, you better have something to replace it—and that means a struggle for proletarian state power. Because if you don't replace it, they'll massacre you. And the ones who will eagerly massacre you are the ones who did it very eagerly in Germany in 1919, the sham socialists.

I wanted in this forum to point to the importance of the October Revolution and what the Soviet Union represented. But, as importantly, I also wanted to point to the role of consciousness—the subjective factor, the revolutionary party—as a necessary ingredient for socialist revolution, which alone can open the door to social progress on the planet. In the only society in which there was a proletarian revolution, there was such a party of working-class revolution, the Bolshevik Party. The erosion of the gains of the October Revolution was dependent, in large measure, on the absence of revolutionary parties, and as a result the failure of socialist revolution, in the advanced capitalist countries.

And that absence is what we seek to redress. The world has actually been awash in class struggle. There's no absence of working-class combativity. Even in the United States there have been several major strikes in the past years, notably UPS and General Motors. The battle that most impressed me in

SPARTACIST PAMPHLET 52

Stalinism—Gravedigger of the Revolution

How the Soviet Workers State Was Strangled

For Socialist Revolution to Sweep Away Yeltsin Counterrevolution!

August 2001

SPARTACIST 4

A Trotskyist Critique of Germany 1923 and the Comintern

Trotsky and the Russian Left Opposition

Susan Adams, 1948-2001

Women and the French Revolution

Spartacist pamphlet **Spartacist No. 56, Spring 2001**

\$2 (64 pages) **\$2 (64 pages)**

Mail/make cheques payable to

Spartacist ANZ Publishing Co., GPO Box 3473, Sydney NSW 2001

"Anti-Terror" ...

(continued from page 12)

country the first internal targets of the "war on terror" have been immigrants and refugees, branded as possible "terrorists."

The deepening worldwide recession, which began *before* 11 September, not only means even harder times ahead for millions of workers and others, but sharpened antagonisms between the world's leading capitalist powers. With this comes intensified militarism and social regimentation. So the rulers of the capitalist "democracies" internationally are cracking down on workers and immigrants while intensifying exploitation at home and abroad to ensure competitiveness on the world market.

The U.S. imperialists are using their military adventure against impoverished Afghanistan and their open-ended "war on terrorism" to launch an expansion of the repressive powers of the state breathing in its sweep. Referring to U.S. president George W. Bush's green light to the CIA to assassinate "suspected terrorists," investigative journalist Brian Toohey noted "The crucial backdrop to the new law is that Australia's allies have tossed the normal presumption of innocence out the window and authorised their intelligence agencies to condemn people to death without having to bother with the niceties of a trial" (*Australian Financial Review*, 1-2 December 2001).

Both France and Spain have escalated their attacks on the Basque nationalist ETA, and the French parliament has authorised wider search powers for the police, including body-searches at airports, stadiums and stores. In Germany, Social Democratic Party interior minister Otto Schily proposed dismantling restrictions on wiretaps, monitoring emails and bank accounts. In Britain, Tony Blair's "New" Labour government is proposing legislation declaring a "state of public emergency" and calling for the detention without trial of immigrant "terrorism" suspects.

The sections of the International Communist League in France, Germany and Britain opposed any electoral support to the pro-imperialist social democrats Jospin, Schroeder and Blair, denouncing the fraud pushed by the sellout trade-union tops and fake left that these governments represent a "lesser evil" for workers and the oppressed. The treacherous reformist and centrist left have thus helped pave the way for the racist attacks on immigrants and the shredding of democratic rights.

On 9 February the labour/black-centred mobilisation initiated by the Bay Area Labor Black League for Social Defense and the Partisan Defense Committee around the demands "Anti-Terrorism Laws Target Immigrants, Blacks, Labor—No to the USA-Patriot Act and the Maritime Security Act! Down With the Anti-Immigrant Witch-hunt!" mobilised workers, immigrants, blacks and youth in Oakland, California (see article page 1). This points to what is needed internationally: mobilising the

social power of the multiracial working class against the bosses' attacks.

ALP: Anti-Communist, Anti-Working Class

In Australia the key obstacle to mobilising workers in their own defence is the pro-imperialist ALP. Just as they were gung-ho for the bloody, punitive war on Afghanistan, the ALP welcomes "the strengthening of Federal counter-terrorism capability" and backs the creation of the offence of "terrorism," even bragging that they had proposed these measures as early as 13 September 2001. The ALP is committed to the defence of capitalism and has an unbroken history of anti-Communist, anti-working-class subversion. When in power the ALP administers the bourgeois state, including, necessarily, its spies and cops. In fact it was the Chifley Labor government which established ASIO in 1949, the same year the ALP called out the army to break the coal miners strike. During the Cold War 1980s it was Labor that ran Australian imperialism's offensive against the then Soviet Union, Vietnam and the other bureaucratically deformed workers states where capitalism had been overthrown. The domestic reflection of the imperialists' drive for counterrevolution was heightened state repression and attacks on workers at the hands of the Hawke and Keating Labor governments as ASIO spies were unleashed against the left.

Reflecting the political hold of Laborism on the union movement and left, the opposition to the "anti-terror" laws has been muted. The ACTU (Australian Council of Trade Unions) and even the MUA, target of incessant government provocation, have been very quiet. Yet there are cracks in the bosses' "national unity" crusade. Just a few months after Howard swept back into office on a tide of vicious anti-refugee demagoguery, and with the "White Australia" Labor Party tops vying in anti-immigrant fervour, thousands have protested in defence of refugees. Elements in the Laborite union bureaucracy, feeling pressure from sections of the working class, have formed "Labor for Refugees" which avows opposition to mandatory detention, a significant break in the climate of racist reaction.

Similarly, reflecting fear and unease amongst workers and immigrants and recognition of the danger these laws pose to unions as a whole, the powerful Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union (CFMEU) stated the laws "would breach civil rights and smack of a 'police state'" (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 3 December 2001). National CFMEU secretary John Maitland continued:

"If laws like this were around 20 years ago the CFMEU...could have been destroyed as an organisation and its leaders detained for financially supporting Nelson Mandela and the African National Congress, who John Howard himself used to call 'terrorists'. Similarly, the CFMEU has a strong record of support for the Palestinian people and for the republican cause in Ireland."

Yet the CFMEU tops are nothing if not loyal to the capitalist order. Maitland himself says "there's sufficient power in

the hands of Australian law enforcement agencies." In this he echoes various civil liberties groups whose objections are framed by the standpoint that Australia's existing laws are adequate to waging the "war on terror." The CFMEU is very much in the gunsights of these "agencies." The current Cole Royal Commission is meant to subject the still heavily unionised building industry to union-busting state repression. Far from mobilising the union to defeat this, the CFMEU tops want to use the bosses' inquiry to pursue their ugly racist campaign against so-called "illegal" workers on building sites as part of their "exposure" of corrupt bosses.

Targeted by the state, the CFMEU and MUA could in fact spearhead a concerted fight against this state repression. Instead, the misleaders of these unions chain workers to the ALP, which diverts opposition into the shell game of parliament. The ALP has signalled it will call a "parliamentary inquiry" where the opinions of "law enforcement agencies, ASIO, legal experts and the community" can be "canvassed"! Lapping this up is the Laborite reformist left. The Communist Party of Australia's *Guardian* carried an article by Joan Coxedge, a civil rights activist and former Labor MLC in Victoria, which called to oppose the new laws and to "Make your views known... especially to your local member of parliament" (12 December 2001).

Similarly, the reformist Democratic Socialist Party (DSP) whinges, "Unfortunately, the ALP has welcomed the 'general thrust' of the changes." The DSP notes hopefully that the bourgeois Democrats and Greens "have indicated that they will not support giving ASIO powers of detention" and Labor "does not yet have a position on the increased ASIO powers" (*Green Left Weekly*, 23 January). Believing that the capitalist state is fundamentally "democratic" and can be made to serve the interests of working people and the oppressed, these reformists aim to lobby parliament, hoping to push the ALP, along with the Greens and Democrats, to amend or block the new laws.

All historical experience has shown that the proletariat cannot reform the capitalist state and use it in its own interest but must create its own state, a workers state where the tremendous resources of this society are used to serve the needs of the many, not the profits of a few. As V.I. Lenin, leader of the 1917 Russian Revolution, wrote in *State and Revolution*, "the state is an organ of class rule, an organ for the oppression of one class by another."

What is key is a fight for the class independence of the proletariat from the capitalists and their state. But the ALP parliamentary and trade-union misleaders shackle the working class to the capitalist state, undermining and strangling workers struggles. The perspective of communists is to unleash proletarian power, splitting the base of the ALP from the pro-capitalist leadership, centrally through fighting to forge a class-struggle leadership in the trade unions.

Workers Party Has a Right to Organise

Though illusions in the supposed class neutrality of the Australian capitalist state run deep, this state, under Liberals and Labor alike, has repeatedly tried to repress leftist political opponents. In

1916, twelve members of the Industrial Workers of the World were jailed by the federal ALP government of Billy Hughes for their opposition to the imperialist war. In 1950-51, at the height of the first Cold War, the virulently anti-Communist Liberal government of Robert Menzies sought to outlaw the Communist Party, seize its property and drive CP members out of the unions. But the 1951 referendum campaign, which saw Communist Party members demonised as "vermin," "traitors" and "foreigners," was *defeated*, reflecting recognition in sections of the union movement that suppression of the Communists posed a danger to the whole of the working class.

In our statement of program, "For a Workers Republic of Australia, Part of a Socialist Asia" we wrote:

"the ruling class has an apparatus of repression at the ready to smash perceived threats to its 'order.' Agencies like the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation (ASIO) and Australian Secret Intelligence Service (ASIS) exist to subvert, at home and abroad, through provocation and violence, the organisations of the workers and oppressed, and above all are aimed at preventing workers revolution."

Thus the revolutionary Spartacist League has been the target of surveillance and disruption. In 1977 ASIO paid an agent, one Janet Langridge, to spy on our organisation. After two months as a candidate member of the SL, she voluntarily revealed her spy role, because, she claimed, she came to "respect them and...what they stand for." We immediately expelled her and made a concerted effort to inform the workers movement and left of this ASIO dirty work and the existence of this individual.

As we said then, this spying was "an intolerable violation of our democratic rights. We are a fully legal political organisation, entitled to carry out our activities, openly propagating our political views, without subversive infiltration by government bodies." Our aggressive campaign garnered front-page and major TV news coverage across the nation, embarrassing both ASIO and the government. Two years later new laws made publicly identifying an agent or employee of ASIO illegal, punishable by jail and fines.

In 1997 when the *Melbourne Age* exposed the massive spying operations of Victoria police's Operations Intelligence Unit (OIU) under successive Labor governments between 1985 and 1992, we publicised this here and internationally in the workers movement. We told the truth, that this was a deadly threat to workers and minorities as was seen by the fact that the OIU targeted more than 1,200 individuals and organisations—socialists including the SL, trade unions, Aboriginal, immigrant, civil rights groups and women's rights activists.

The capitalists' campaign of "national unity" can and must be punctured by the struggle of workers and the oppressed in defence of their rights and livelihoods against the bourgeoisie's onslaughts. Such struggles need to be based on the understanding that it will take a workers revolution to finally get rid of the capitalists' criminal secret police once and for all. The Spartacist League/Australia, section of the International Communist League fights to forge the necessary instrument to achieve this, a revolutionary workers party committed to the abolition of capitalism around the world. ■

Available in Chinese!

"Market Socialism" and
the Legacy of Mao
Whither China?

Defend China Against Imperialism,
Counterrevolution!
For Workers Political Revolution!

\$1.50 (24 pages)

Mail/make cheques payable to:
Spartacist ANZ Publishing Co.,
GPO Box 3473, Sydney NSW 2001



Spartacist League of Australia

Web site: www.icl-fi.org

Melbourne GPO Box 2339, Melbourne Vic 3001; Phone: (03) 9654 4315
E-mail: melb.spartacist@bigpond.com

Sydney GPO Box 3473, Sydney NSW 2001; Phone: (02) 9281 2181
E-mail: spartacist@bigpond.com

International Communist League

Box 7429 GPO, New York, NY 10116, USA

Refugees...

(continued from page 2)

Social Defense led a labour/black united-front mobilisation against new laws targeting immigrants, blacks and workers, demanding "No to the USA-Patriot Act and the Maritime Security Act! Down With the Anti-Immigrant Witchhunt!" This demonstration of the power of the proletariat, together with black, youth and immigrant organisations, is a blow against the bosses' "National Unity" campaign, and not only in the U.S. In Australia as workers and minorities confront the same attacks, backing for this protest came in from Iraqi, Kurdish and prisoner-rights organisations as well as union officials.

Labour Lieutenants of Capital

The brutal incarceration of asylum seekers has sharply polarised society. In the November elections the Liberals and social-democratic ALP competed in support of the war against Afghanistan and anti-refugee racism. Yet a few months later, there is disquiet about the latter among a section of the bourgeoisie, echoed in the ALP, that this is "bad for business." Even the reactionaries that run the Catholic Church are critical of the government. Thousands of people have said they are willing to shelter escaped refugees, and there have been many protests in cities around the country.

The ALP under Paul Keating introduced mandatory detention of asylum seekers, and the ALP leadership does not intend to jettison it. As NSW premier Robert Carr declared, "Detention centres are a fact of life." Grotesquely, shadow immigration minister Julia Gillard joined immigration minister Philip Ruddock in whitewashing the hideous conditions at the malaria-ridden camp on PNG's Manus Island. But the ALP's vicious racist election campaign has fuelled anger among immigrant workers, discrediting it in the eyes of many former Labor voters. Thus sections of Labor and the union bureaucracy—with the fake left in tow—aim to refurbish the ALP's image and woo back the disaffected. Victorian Trades Hall Council secretary Leigh Hubbard told a 2 February refugee rally, "it is true we were silent [on refugees] during the election, but we won't be silent any longer..."

The emerging rifts in the ALP reflect this party's contradictory character as a bourgeois workers party based in the trade unions but thoroughly pro-capitalist in program and leadership. "Labor for Refugees," a group set up by the union tops, say they oppose mandatory detention and aim to pressure Labor into a more "compassionate" policy. Yet John Robertson, one of its leaders and head of the NSW Labor Council, told a 31 January Sydney rally that detention should be a "last resort"! These bureaucrats don't call to get rid of the camps, and they *organise* into unions the same racist screws that torment the detainees! Cops, prison and security guards—part of the capitalist class's arsenal of state repression—should be driven out of the unions.

The capitalists try to poison class consciousness and solidarity among workers by fomenting religious, national and ethnic divisions, and the pro-capitalist union misleaders transmit this to the working class. The Maritime Union held a stop-work last August in defence of the besieged Tampa crew, but far from defending the refugees on the ship, MUA national secretary Paddy Crumlin inveighed against "people smugglers." Reflecting a heavily immigrant membership, the CFMEU tops tout their anti-racism, but they openly bring DIMA cops on to construction sites and turn in so-called "illegal" workers for deportation! At Sydney rallies, Spartacist placards demanded: "DIMA cops off job sites! Down with racist hunt for 'illegal' workers!"

Aiming to improve their standing among their combative immigrant mem-

berships, Victorian leader of the Textile, Clothing and Footwear Union Michele O'Neil addresses refugee rallies, and Doug Cameron, leader of the Australian Manufacturing Workers Union (AMWU) has deplored the ALP's mandatory detention policy. Yet these unions push strident protectionism, such as the AMWU's campaign to "make it here or jobs disappear." Instead of forging international solidarity, they line up workers behind their exploiters on the basis of a mythical common "national interest."

The capitalist class always tries to maximise profits, shifting production to low-wage neocolonies and seeking out the cheapest sources of labour at home: foreign-born workers and youth. The anti-immigrant chauvinism of the union tops must be answered by a struggle to bring undocumented workers and the

called this a "massive boost to every refugee." Hardly the break in the "rotten policy of 'bipartisanship'" the ISO claims, the government was already taking refugee children from their families, just as they tore generations of Aboriginal children from their families! Tailing the Laborite union tops, the ISO calls Labor for Refugees a "terrific breakthrough" (*Socialist Worker*, 1 February), highlighting that their role is to channel the discontented back into a cleaned up ALP, deepening workers' illusions in it.

We Trotskyists seize on worker discontent as an opening in the necessary political struggle to break workers from the ALP and win them to a revolutionary program. The fake left, either directly or via Socialist Alliance, called to support the ALP in the November federal election. SA wanted "a Labor government

Custody *exonerated* every killer cop. Today racist state brutality against Aborigines is unchecked, and they are executed in soaring numbers in the lockups and on the streets.

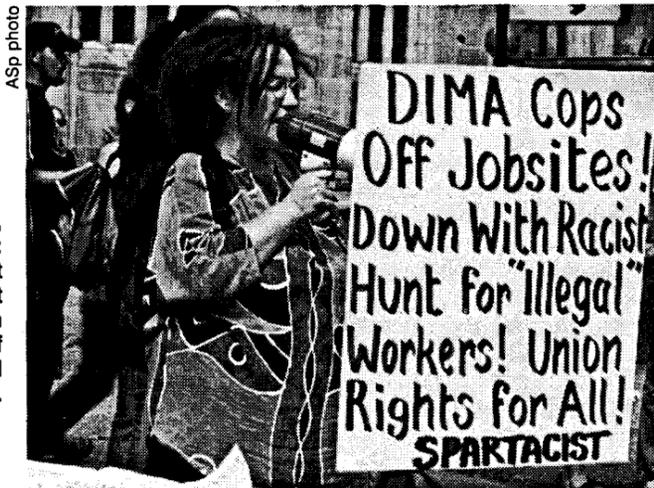
Beseeking the government, these fake lefts perfectly fulfill the role of reformist parties, which is, as Bolshevik leader Leon Trotsky noted: "the actual training of the masses to become imbued with the inviolability of the bourgeois state," versus the revolutionary program of destroying the capitalists' state and replacing it with a workers state.

The ISO, DSP and RAC protest organisers don't want to scare away their liberal and ALP bloc partners. At a Melbourne protest, when youthful members of the Socialist Party (SP) tried to take pieces of Maribyrnong's fence down, RAC organisers violence-baited them, trying to keep them from the speakers platform. While their SP elder looked the other way, our comrades defended them. Later the ISO's Judy McVey denounced them to the media.

Immigrant workers have often been at the forefront of class struggle and have fought bitterly against the sell-outs of the Laborite union misleaders. Strategic to workers struggles here, they also form a living bridge to class struggles throughout the world. In 1996, unionised workers defended Aboriginal protesters against a cop assault outside parliament in Canberra, forcing the cops to retreat. In 1998, union action in Perth prevented a Somali man from being deported to death as the pilots refused to fly the plane and ground crew refused to refuel it. If the power of the unions were unleashed this would strike a great blow against the bipartisan anti-immigrant offensive.

The accumulating social tinder in this country cries out for *proletarian* leadership. On 12 February, a national protest will converge on Canberra to pressure the Liberal and Labor MPs. But the only way to put an end to war and rid society of the racism, bigotry and brutality that are part of the air we are forced to breathe in this country is to get rid of the capitalist system. Unlike those who bow before the ALP and trade-union tops, we fight to transform the working class from a class in itself to a class for itself, conscious of its role as the gravedigger of capitalism. This requires a struggle against the bosses' agents and their "left" tails. Independent of the bosses and their state, a revolutionary vanguard party would champion the cause of immigrants and Aborigines, exposing all capitalist tyranny and injustice, winning the advanced layers of the proletariat to its banner while fighting for the destruction of the capitalist state through victorious socialist revolution. It is to this task that the Spartacist League is dedicated. ■

Sydney, 2 February: Spartacist contingent at demonstration in defence of refugees and immigrants.



exploited women outworkers into the unions with full union rights and conditions and full citizenship rights, as part of a class-struggle fight for jobs for all.

Peddling Laborite Illusions

At refugee defence protests Socialist Alliance (SA) has underscored that they act to prettify the Australian capitalist government. A Democratic Socialist Party (DSP) speaker for SA told protesters in Sydney on 2 February that "In 1999 we forced the government to reverse another bipartisan unjust policy. That was Timor." Saluting "human rights" imperialism, they bragged about their support to the Australian military, just as almost every left group marched for Australian troops to occupy East Timor. Now the fake lefts are reaping what they sowed as their backing of the Australian imperialists has directly aided the racist rulers and their Labor frontmen in the war on Afghanistan abroad and anti-immigrant attacks at home.

When Labor leader Simon Crean called for detained children to be released to foster care, the International Socialist Organisation (ISO) ecstatically

exploited women outworkers into the unions with full union rights and conditions and full citizenship rights, as part of a class-struggle fight for jobs for all.

electd in spite of its war and refugee policy" and described that as "the best possible scenario for Australian politics after November 10" (*Green Left Weekly*, 31 October 2001). We're proud we called for no vote to the racist Labor Party or its Socialist Alliance lackeys!

The bourgeois Greens, sections of the ALP, union bureaucrats and reformist left are demanding a Royal Commission into conditions in detention centres. Leading the charge is the DSP, along with the Refugee Action Coalition (RAC). Prominent ISOer and RAC honcho Ian Rintoul signed a call for such an inquiry. The last thing desperate asylum seekers need is an investigation by their jailers. At protests and meetings we have exposed this as a terrible hoax and whitewash of the racist capitalist state: the government "investigates" itself, does some image-cleaning fakery, and it's back to business as usual. It is also cynical. In the late 1980s many of these leftists called for a government inquiry into Aboriginal deaths in custody. After four years of investigations of 99 deaths, many clearly murder, in 1991 the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in

Australasian Spartacist Subscription Drive

Quotas for 2002 (in points)	
Melbourne	100
Sydney	200
Total	300

28 February
to
10 April



SUBSCRIBE NOW!

Workers Vanguard/Australasian Spartacist
Marxist working-class biweekly of the Spartacist League/U.S. and Marxist newspaper published quarterly by the Spartacist League of Australia (includes English-language *Spartacist* and *Black History and the Class Struggle* plus another Spartacist pamphlet)
 \$20 for 22 issues WV and 4 issues ASp

Australasian Spartacist
(includes English-language *Spartacist*)
 \$5 for 4 issues Overseas: \$7

Workers Vanguard
(includes English-language *Spartacist* and *Black History and the Class Struggle*)
 \$15 for 22 issues

Name _____
Address _____ Suburb _____
State _____ P'code _____ Phone _____
Country _____ E-mail _____

178

Mail/make cheques payable to: Spartacist ANZ Publishing Co., GPO Box 3473, Sydney NSW 2001

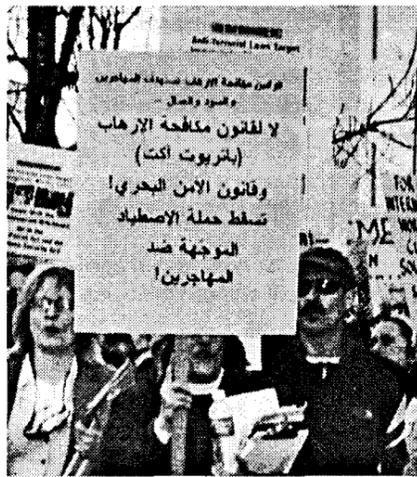
Mobilisation...

(continued from page 1)

the straitjacket of "national unity" promoted by the U.S. capitalist rulers and break down the poisonous racial and ethnic divisions among the oppressed that they promote. Marching through downtown Oakland, past the headquarters of the shipping employers' Pacific Maritime Association and the Federal Building housing the government enforcers of the capitalist attacks, the multiracial, working-class protesters chanted: "National unity is a lie—Bosses profit, workers die!" and "Immigrant rights, black rights: Same struggle, same fight—Workers of the world unite!" Banners of the SF Day Labor Program; AFSCME Local 444; National Parks and Public Employees, Laborers International Local 1141 and the Spartacist League joined those of the PDC and LBL on the march.

For many black longshoremen, acting in defense of immigrants—including the unorganized port truckers—represented a conscious break with widespread sentiment that immigrants and blacks are competitors, not allies—a lie cultivated by the capitalist rulers and their labor lieutenants in the trade-union bureaucracy. At the rally, they joined forces with the Filipino Workers Association and with the largely Latino immigrant workers of the SF Day Labor Program, whose spokesman Eduardo Palomo declared: "We are here to resist the Patriot Act, the law that is going to harm all the workers of this nation.... We want all the workers in all parts of this nation to come out to protest this law." In mobilizing for the rally, *Workers Vanguard* supporters sought to win workers to the understanding that in defending immigrants, they were defending the whole working class.

This was no abstraction but flesh and



Workers Vanguard

Arabic sign proclaims: "Anti-Terror Laws Target Immigrants, Blacks and Labour." Mobilising leaflets were issued in English, Spanish, Arabic and Chinese.

blood reality to longshoremen threatened with losing their hard-won union jobs under the background checks mandated by the Maritime Security Act, a law pending in Congress aimed at purging the waterfront of blacks, Latinos and other immigrants and at undermining union power. The political impact of this mobilization spread far beyond those who came to the rally, raising the class consciousness also of the hundreds who took stacks of leaflets to distribute, and the thousands reached through discussion, leaflets and copies of *Workers Vanguard*.

The protest was built in distributions to key workforces: longshore dispatch, port truckers, bus barns and BART yards, postal facilities, municipal utilities, industries with heavily immigrant workforces organized by ILWU Local 6 and the Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees union, in Chinatown and other immigrant neighborhoods, cam-

puses and high schools. The campaign intersected struggles from Santa Clara—where the husband of Alia Atawneh, a Palestinian woman fired in an act of anti-immigrant persecution by Macy's, endorsed the rally—to Salt Lake City, where hundreds of immigrant airport workers were fired. Solidarity greetings from one of the lawyers representing these workers were read to the protest.

The seriousness of longshoremen at the rally, which Local 10 endorsed, was underscored by the fact that a number of lower-seniority B-men had foregone a trip to L.A. to pick up a weekend's work, a real sacrifice during a slow month at the Port of Oakland. At the end of the protest, several longshoremen made a point of taking home the mobilization placards on which they had written the name of their union. Discussions afterward at a celebration in a local bar and restaurant grappled with key questions: which way forward for workers, why we need a revolutionary workers party to get rid of capitalism and how to build it, why unions in themselves are not enough. One youth joined the Bay Area Spartacus Youth Club at the party, and a number of workers expressed interest in joining the LBL.

Many longshoremen take a great deal of pride in their union, particularly in the gains that were won for black workers. At the same time, several longshoremen asked us why it took communists to fight to mobilize the social power of labor in defense of immigrant rights and in defense of the unions. To mobilize the multiracial proletariat in defense of immigrants, black people and all the oppressed requires a conscious struggle against the million and one ways the capitalist exploiters, aided and abetted by their labor lackeys, foster the racial and ethnic antagonisms that divide the proletariat and undermine its fighting strength. At bottom this is a question of program and

perspective. The worldview of the labor tops—even those of the most "progressive" stamp—is defined by what is possible or "practical" under capitalism, a system which is predicated on the exploitation of labor. We communists pursue another road, one based not only on improving present conditions but fighting to do away with the entire system of capitalist wage slavery.

This rally was held during Black History Month to underscore both the common interests of black and immigrant workers and the need for the labor movement to take up the fight against racial oppression. In a speech for the Labor Black League that was translated into Spanish, Adwoa Oni declared:

"The frenzied anti-Arab and anti-immigrant witchhunt is a deadly danger to all racial and ethnic minorities. This is especially true for the black population, whose forcible segregation at the bottom of this society is rooted in the history of chattel slavery and the defeat of Radical Reconstruction. Black oppression is the very foundation of this racist capitalist system—but also its Achilles' heel. It's time to finish the Civil War! Forward to a workers state!"

Death row political prisoner, MOVE supporter and former Black Panther Mumia Abu-Jamal sent his endorsement, and a statement of support was read out at the rally. Speaking for the PDC, the legal and social defense organization associated with the SL, Steve Bull called for "mass protests centered on the social power of the labor movement to demand Jamal's immediate release." Also endorsing was Geronimo ji Jaga (Pratt), the former Black Panther who spent 27 years in prison on a similar government frame-up before mass protest brought about his release. Speaking at the rally, former Panther Kiiilu Nyasha brought attention to the plight of Haitian immigrants as well as that of Hugo Pinell and Ruchell Cinque Magee, political prisoners who have spent well over three decades in the prisons of the U.S. capitalist system of racist injustice.

This united-front action intersected contradictions within the labor bureaucracy and exposed how this conservative layer resting atop the workers organizations acts as the key internal obstacle to mobilizing workers power. From the time the new "anti-terror" legislation was introduced in September, ILWU International officials, instead of opposing the MSA, proposed that the capitalists make the ILWU a partner in the "national security" war, including against other sections of dock workers who are heavily immigrant. The Teamsters and East Coast International Longshore Association tops likewise refused to oppose the MSA. It was the ILWU tops who pointed to the port truckers to be targeted by the bill. As the call for the demonstration pointed out: "It is not the job of the



Oakland mobilisation struck a chord among immigrants (clockwise from left): Chinese-language *Singtao Daily* and *World Journal*, local Japanese community daily, Spanish-language biweekly.

"We endorse and will help build a united front labor/black demonstration with the following demands: 'Anti-Terrorist Laws Target Immigrants, Blacks, Labor—No to the USA-Patriot Act and the Maritime Security Act!' and 'Down With the Anti-Immigrant Witchhunt!'"

Initiated by the Bay Area Labor Black League for Social Defense and the Partisan Defense Committee

- Endorsers of the February 9, 2002 Mobilization
- Mumia Abu-Jamal, Revolutionary Journalist, Death Row, PA
- Larry Adams, Local President, Mail Handlers Local 300,* New York, NY
- African Students Union, Hunter College,* New York, NY
- AFSCME Local 444, Oakland, CA
- Al-Awda/Palestine Right To Return Coalition - NY/NJ Committee
- Robert Allen, Ethnic Studies, University of California Berkeley*
- Amalgamated Transit Union Black Caucus
- Asociacion Tepeyac de New York, New York, NY
- Association des Palestiniens en France
- Marcellus Barnes, President, Amalgamated Transit Union Black Caucus
- Jan Bartlett, Producer, Radio 3CR Melbourne,* Australia
- Willie Lee Bell, retired Recording Secretary, IAM&AW Local 739 and 1584,* Oakland, CA
- Berkeley Stop the War Coalition, Berkeley, CA
- Berlin Afrikanisches ImmigrantInnen Projekt, Berlin, Germany
- Wanda J. Black, President/Bus Agent, Local 241, Amalgamated Transit Union,* Chicago, IL
- Jackie B. Breckenridge, International Vice President, Amalgamated Transit Union AFL-CIO*
- Canadian Arab Federation, Toronto, Canada
- Canadian Union of Postal Workers, Metro Toronto Region
- CARECEN, Central American Resource Center, San Francisco, CA
- Caribbean Students Union, New York, NY
- Daniel Carreno, Section Syndicale SUD PTT CRETEIL PFC, France

- Leroy Collier, President, National Association of Letter Carriers, Branch 2200,* Pasadena, CA
- Comité de Lucha Conciencia y Libertad-CGH, Mexico City, Mexico
- Coordination Nationale des Sans Papiers, Paris, France
- Patricia Osorio Córdova, Sindicato Independiente Nacional de Trabajadores del Colegio de Bachilleres (SINTCB),* Mexico City, Mexico
- Michael Crahan, President, LIUNA Local 1141,* San Francisco, CA
- Day-Mer, Turkish/Kurdish Community Centre, London, England
- Saikou A. Diallo, President, Amadou Diallo Educational Humanitarian & Charitable Foundation,* Maspeth, NY
- Ron Dicks, V.P. for Political & Legislative Action, International Federation of Professional & Technical Engineers Local 21,* San Francisco, CA
- Filipino Workers Association, Richmond, CA
- Freedom Socialist Party
- GEW, Landesverband Hamburg, Hamburg, Germany
- Nicholas Harrigan, Love & Rage,* Sydney, Australia
- Leon Harris, Interim Secretary-Treasurer, International Longshore and Warehouse Union, Local 6, Oakland, CA
- John Holmes, Delegate, Representative Assembly, Typographical Sector, Northern California Media Workers Union #39521, CWA*
- Mustapha Houamed, Secretary, Student Committee for Peace in Palestine, St. Denis University, Paris, France
- Paul Howes, Organising & Research Assistant, Labor Council of New South Wales,* Sydney, Australia
- Hakim Husien, Chicago Chapter President, Palestine Aid Society,* Chicago, IL

- International Federation of Iraqi Refugees (Sydney) Inc., Sydney, Australia
- International Longshore and Warehouse Union Local 6, Oakland, CA
- International Longshore and Warehouse Union Local 10, San Francisco, CA
- Internationalist Group
- Geronimo ji Jaga
- Justice Action, Sydney, Australia
- Kaws.El.Karama (newspaper), Tunis, Tunisia
- Zak Khanfar, Santa Clara, CA
- Randell Kim, previous 2nd Vice President, AFSCME Local 444
- Fidan Kucuktepe, Kurdish, Turkish Human Rights Committee, Melbourne, Australia
- Kurdish, Turkish Human Rights Committee, Melbourne, Australia
- La Raza Centro Legal, San Francisco, CA
- Labor Black League for Social Defense, Oakland, CA
- Labor Council for Latin American Advancement - SF (LCLAA), San Francisco, CA
- Latino Workers Center, New York, NY
- Adam Lincoln, Industrial Workers of the World,* Sydney, Australia
- Patricia Loya, Executive Director, Centro Legal de la Raza,* Oakland, CA
- LTS-Contracorriente, Mexico City, Mexico
- Stephen Lysaght, President, East Bay Area Local, American Postal Workers Union,* Walnut Creek, CA
- Patricia Macarthy-Schaefer, Advisor, Berlin Afrikanisches ImmigrantInnen Projekt, Berlin, Germany

workers to enforce the laws, 'security' or otherwise, that will be used against them: cops and security guards have no place in the union movement!"

In Local 10, however, with its heavily black membership, there was a lot of pressure from the ranks to do something to oppose this attack. Secretary-Treasurer Clarence Thomas helped build and spoke at the rally. Also present were both business agents, Trent Willis and Jack Heyman, who put the motion at a Local 10 meeting that the union endorse the mobilization. In his speech, Thomas noted, "There are people here today that don't necessarily share the same political views" but "we're all here to stand together against the issue of the USA-Patriot Act and the Port Maritime Security Act." All those at the rally were able to compare openly Thomas' views with those of the Spartacist League speaker, Brian Manning, as they presented two different perspectives on which way forward for the working class—class collaboration vs. class independence from the capitalists and their state.

Thomas upheld as a model the "legacy of Harry Bridges," under which in the 1930s "longshoremen refused to load and unload cargo in the form of scrap iron that was destined for Japan." Far from an act of international working-class solidarity, this boycott was rather very much in line with U.S. imperialism's battle with their Japanese capitalist competitors over which of these gangs of robbers would dominate the Pacific. The pre-World War II longshore action is an example of the same poison promoted today by the labor tops that pits workers of different countries against each other. This protectionism, premised on defending American capitalism, is part and parcel of the union bureaucracy's support for the capitalist Democratic Party.

In contrast was the powerful example of Japanese dock workers described in greetings read to the rally from the Spartacist Group of Japan: "To protest Japanese imperialism's cooperation in the U.S.-led war in Afghanistan, dock workers near Nagasaki showed some of their potential power by refusing to load Japanese warships bound for the Indian Ocean." ILWU members also greatly appreciated meeting a young German worker who read greetings to the rally from the Spartacist-Jugend, youth group of the Spartacist Workers Party of Germany, section of the International Communist League.

This joint action by immigrant, black and white workers here in the U.S. against the bloodthirsty U.S. imperialist rulers struck a chord internationally. Reflecting the international character of the world market and common interests of the working class of all nations, greetings to the rally brought attention to



Bay Area longshoremen (left) were at core of labour-centred mobilisation. Union contingents included AFSCME water utility workers. Workers Vanguard photos

the struggles of immigrant workers from Zimbabweans, Mozambicans and Basothans in South Africa to North Africans, Turks and Kurds in Europe, from Koreans in Japan to Asian and Middle Eastern immigrants in Australia. A solidarity statement to the rally by Pedro Wasiejko, secretary of international relations for the Central de los Trabajadores Argentinos union in Buenos Aires, declared that in the "profound political and economic crisis" of that country, "the social disciplinarians of today are basically two: unemployment on one side and judicial prosecution of social struggles on the other."

Other messages of support came from the National Federation of Undocumented Workers of France (Coordination Nationale des Sans-Papiers de France), Australia Asia Worker Links and the Brescia branch of the Italian FIOM (Federation of Metal Workers and Employees), which has been very actively involved in defense of Pakistani, North African and Senegalese immigrants in Italy. Statements were sent by sections of the ICL not only in Japan but Mexico, South Africa, France, Britain, Ireland, Germany, Italy, Canada and Australia.

The Oakland demonstration repudiated in action the equation of the working class in the U.S. with the racist, imperialist U.S. state—an equation pushed both by the U.S. ruling class and those who killed thousands of working people in the attack on the World Trade Center, as well as nationalists of all stripes, and widely believed by people throughout the world. The statement by the Grupo Espartaquista de México in particular had a strong impact when read out near the end of the demonstration. Noting that Mexican

immigrant workers in the U.S. create "a broad human bridge between the working class of the two countries," it went on:

"It is of great importance for workers and the oppressed in Mexico to see American workers, blacks, immigrants and youth fighting against the repressive and racist measures of the U.S. imperialist rulers. Down with the lie of national unity!"

"A fundamental part of our fight to forge a revolutionary and internationalist workers party in Mexico is to expose the lie of nationalism, an ideology that seeks to deceive the workers, tying them to their own exploiters.... The true allies of the Mexican workers are not their brutal exploiters. Their true allies are you: the American workers fighting for their rights and those of all the oppressed. For joint class struggle against capitalist rulers in Mexico and the U.S.!"

While the demonstration helped workers to concretely see the need for and be part of joint struggle with immigrant workers, radical-minded students who came from as far away as Santa Cruz and Los Angeles were impressed to see the presence of workers who represent the only force that can defeat the imperialist rulers of the U.S. and put an end to racism, exploitation and war. Students who drove up from the University of California at Santa Cruz were joined by a contingent of high school students from San Francisco's School of the Arts; among others were students from Berkeley High, UC Berkeley, San Francisco State and Oakland's Laney College.

In contrast to other recent protest demonstrations, this rally was a mobilization of the working class and the oppressed *independent of the capitalists*, their parties and their state. It was built despite the boycott by most of the rest of the left, who claim to fight for an end to war and for solidarity with

immigrants but who will not breach the bourgeoisie's "national unity" campaign, instead placing their hopes in allying with the liberal Democratic wing of the class enemy. The International Socialist Organization flatly refused to endorse the protest, falsely counterposing a rally at the San Francisco Marriott for largely immigrant hotel workers. The Bolshevik Tendency attended but would not endorse the demonstration; the Socialist Workers Organization and Freedom Socialist Party endorsed but did not attend.

This demonstration illustrated on a small scale what a revolutionary workers party would do. The task ahead of us is to forge such a party, in political struggle against the pro-capitalist misleaders of the working class, which will mobilize all the oppressed in a united struggle for workers power. Those who labor must rule. Join us! ■

It Took \$\$\$ to Mobilise in Defence of Immigrant Rights

Building the successful 9 February labour/black/immigrant mobilisation in Oakland cost a lot of money for posters, thousands of flyers and other demonstration expenses. Show your support for this crucial labour-centred protest! Send donations to: Partisan Defence Committee, P.O. Box Q217, QVB, Sydney NSW 1230. Please earmark cheques "Immigrant Defence Demonstration."

Bro. Joel Magallan, S.J., Executive Director, Asociacion Tepeyac de New York, New York, NY
 Thomas Mahoney, Local Rep, Finsbury Park Group, RMT*, London, England
 Fausto Basurto Maleno, Secretary of Political Matters, Sindicato de Trabajadores de la Industria Química, Petroquímica, Carboquímica, Similares y Anexos de la República Mexicana, CTM., Local 97, Michoacán, Mexico
 Ronald Malone, Shop Steward, HERE Local 2, * San Francisco, CA
 Martin M. Manteca, Executive Director, Pilsen Alliance, Chicago, IL
 Poumier Maria, Maître de conférence, Université Paris VIII*
 Brian McWilliams, SFLC delegate, International Longshore and Warehouse Union, * San Francisco, CA
 Charles Minster, Steward and SFLC delegate, National Park and Public Employees, LIUNA Local 1141, * San Francisco, CA
 National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (NUMSA)
 Eugene "Gus" Newport, former Mayor, Berkeley, CA*
 NY Labor Black League for Social Defense, New York, NY
 Killu Nyasha, Producer/Programmer, "Connecting the Dots" KPOO 89.5 FM, * San Francisco, CA
 October 22nd Coalition, San Francisco, CA
 Gary Okhiro, Professor, Columbia University, * New York, NY
 One World Society, Trinity College, * Dublin, Ireland
 Ontario Coalition Against Poverty, Ontario, Canada
 Béhija Ouezin, Citoyennes des 2 rives, * Paris, France
 David D. Owen, Executive Board Member, Amalgamated Transit Union, Local 308, * Chicago, IL
 Pacific Islanders' Club, San Francisco State University, San Francisco, CA
 Partisan Defense Committee
 Raylene Pileggi, Regional Education Organization Officer, Canadian Union of Postal Workers, Metro Toronto Region
 Pilipino Workers Center of So. Cal., Los Angeles, CA

Pilsen Alliance, Chicago, IL
 Politistiko Kentro ton Laon tis Anatolis (Gefira), Athens, Greece
 Radical Women
 Agustin Ramirez, International Organizer, International Longshore and Warehouse Union*
 Raza Recruitment and Retention Center, Berkeley, CA
 Revolutionary Reconstruction Club @ Bronx Community College, Bronx, NY
 German Reyes, Shop Steward, SEIU Local 87, * San Francisco, CA
 Wilson Riles, candidate, Riles for Mayor, * Oakland, CA
 Eduardo Rosarlo, Vice President, GCIU Local 4N, * and President, LCLAA-SF, San Francisco, CA
 Michael Rossman, archivist, Free Speech Movement Archives, * Berkeley, CA
 Stephanie Ruby, Secretary-Treasurer, HERE Local 2850, * Oakland, CA
 Renée Saucedo, Director, SF Day Labor Program, San Francisco, CA
 SF Day Labor Program, San Francisco, CA
 Gordon Saticlell, Accredited Union Representative, Sydney East Letters Facility, Communications, Electrical, Electronic, Energy, Information, Postal, Plumbing and Allied Services Union, * Sydney, Australia
 Section Syndicale SUD PTT CRETEIL PFC, France
 Earl Silbar, Chief Steward, AFSCME Local 3506, * Chicago, IL
 Dwight James Simpson, Professor, International Relations Department, San Francisco State University, * San Francisco, CA
 Sindicato de Trabajadores de la Industria Química, Petroquímica, Carboquímica, Similares y Anexos de la República Mexicana, CTM, Local 97, Michoacán, Mexico
 Sindicato Independiente de Trabajadores de la Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana (SITUAM), Mexico City, Mexico
 Sindicato Nacional de Trabajadores de la Educación, ESIA-IPN, Tecamachalco, Mexico City, Mexico

Donald A. Smith, Executive Board-Trustee, NALC, * Pasadena, CA
 Stephen Noble Smith, Living Wage Campaign, * Cambridge, MA
 Socialist Workers Organization
 SOS Struggle of Students, Hamburg, Germany
 Spartacist League/U.S.
 Spartacus Youth Club, San Francisco Bay Area
 M. Still, Staff Rep, National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport, * London, England
 Student Committee for Peace in Palestine, St. Denis University, * Paris, France
 Senfo Tonkam, Chairman, SOS Struggle of Students, Hamburg, Germany
 Union of Workers of the National Autonomous University of Mexico (STUNAM), Mexico City, Mexico
 David Villarruel Velasco, Secretario de Relaciones y Solidaridad, Sindicato Independiente de Trabajadores de la Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana, Mexico City, Mexico
 Ted Wang, Policy Director, Chinese for Affirmative Action, * San Francisco, CA
 Everette Whitfield, Steward, SEIU Local 73, * Chicago, IL
 Ilona Wilhelm, Pressesprecherin, GEW, Landesverband Hamburg, Hamburg, Germany
 John Williams, Shop Steward, General Motors Holden, Australian Manufacturing Workers' Union, * Melbourne, Australia
 Alejandro Echevarría Zarco, Comité de Lucha Conciencia y Libertad-CGH, Mexico City, Mexico
 Steve Zeltzer, Bay Area Workers Democracy Network, * San Francisco, CA
 Gerald Zero, Secretary-Treasurer, Teamsters Local 705, * Chicago, IL

*Organizational affiliation for identification purposes only.



Sinister "Anti-Terror" Laws Target Workers, Minorities

In a wholesale assault on democratic rights, the right-wing tory government of John Howard plans in the next few months to ram through parliament a panoply of extremely repressive laws. The Australian rulers, like capitalists everywhere, are using the fear and uncertainty following the horrendous killings of thousands in the World Trade Center on 11 September to sharply increase their arsenal of state repression at home. Seizing on the battle-cry of the "war on terror" abroad, they are pushing the lie that more cops and fewer rights are for our own "protection."

A new offence of "terrorism" is being created carrying the threat of life imprisonment. This includes "violent attacks and threats of violent attacks intended to advance a political, religious or ideological cause which are directed against or endanger Commonwealth interests" (*Australian*, 13 December 2001). While the Howard government has attempted to keep details of the new laws under wraps, at the heart of the Criminal Code Amendment (Terrorist Bombing Offences) Bill is sweeping new powers for the Aus-

ALP Backs State Repression and War

tralian Security Intelligence Organisation (ASIO), the sinister domestic spying agency. ASIO will now legally have the power, in conjunction with federal and state police, to arrest, detain and interrogate any who, as attorney-general Daryl Williams ominously stated, are not "themselves suspected of terrorist activity, but who may have information that may be relevant to ASIO's investigation into politically motivated violence," (*Australian Financial Review*, 1-2 December 2001).

If you get caught in ASIO's dragnet you can be held incommunicado for 48 hours or more without charge. If you refuse to answer questions of anonymous agents you can be jailed indefinitely. You will *not* have the right to an attorney or a phone call. You will *not* have the right to remain silent. You will *not* have the right to face your accusers, cross examine them, or even know who they are!



Andrew Batsch

Liberals, ALP seek escalation of capitalist state repression. Above: Cops attack Melbourne anti-"globalisation" protesters, September 2000.

Among some six proposed new "anti-terror" laws is one aimed at nailing "whistleblowers" who leak information from *any* government department and journalists who publish "leaked" information with the charge of "espionage." Even "receiving" leaked material can get you jail time! Another law gives ASIO *carte blanche* to read people's email. Security at airports (i.e., racist harassment) will be further jacked up.

The capitalists have ratcheted up anti-immigrant racism in the name of the "war on terror." In December the Howard government, backed by the Australian Labor Party (ALP), outlawed numerous groups as "terrorist," ranging from Islamic fundamentalists to groups fighting against national and imperialist oppression. These include Irish, Tamil and Filipino organisations, the Basque separatist group ETA, the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK), the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, the Turkish leftist group Devrimci Sol and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC). Anyone in Australia who financially supports these now proscribed groups faces penalties. By criminalising political activity, the government aims to turn political parties and activists into nameless, faceless people who can be blown away in the night.

Going after immigrants who are on the receiving end of racist state violence is just the thin edge of the wedge. The new laws are so sweeping and vague that

they could be used against hard-fought strikes and solid picket lines, anti-"globalisation" protests or opponents of jackal Australian imperialism's wars abroad and racist oppression at home.

Already in place are a series of laws quietly enacted in bipartisan fashion by the federal Coalition government and ALP opposition in recent years. Last June the Howard government gave Australian Secret Intelligence Service (ASIS) and the Defence Signals Directorate (DSD) blanket immunity from prosecution, removing virtually all legal restrictions to their deadly provocations. During the 2000 Olympics, thousands of cops, soldiers and security guards turned Sydney into a police state. At the same time the Defence Legislation Amendment (Aid to Civilian Authorities) Act was passed, allowing the army to use "lethal force" against anyone deemed a "threat." This paved the way for the enormous cop and army mobilisation against protesters at the 2-5 March Commonwealth Heads of Government (CHOGM) confab on the Queensland Sunshine Coast. In a move unprecedented since World War II, Air Force fighter jets can shoot down any aircraft in the area considered a "danger."

As sinister as these new laws are, what the government can actually get away with will be determined by the level of social and working-class struggle. For months angry Qantas maintenance workers have fought both the company and their sellout union tops, carrying out strikes and work bans. BHP workers at 15 sites across Australia have just struck, and some 10,000 may strike again in coming days.

A fine example of such class struggle was seen in the social upheavals of the 1960s as the U.S. and Australian imperialists were waging their dirty, losing war against the Vietnamese workers and peasants. In 1969, Victorian Tramways Union leader Clarrie O'Shea was jailed for defying the anti-union penal laws. O'Shea had refused to pay fines levied by the bosses' Arbitration court. But a wildcat near-general strike that swept across Victoria and beyond forced the bosses to free O'Shea and made the penal laws a dead letter. By the same

token, militant class struggle today would throw a wrench in the government's plans.

The link between the "anti-terror" laws and the capitalists' war on unions was made clear by a Perth construction boss who branded as "terrorism" a blockade of a scab site by 500 construction workers. Howard and his gang are tabling a "third wave" of union-busting legislation along with the "anti-terror" laws. These include: secret strike ballots; a ban on collecting dues from "non-union" members on union jobsites to prevent signing up new members; laws to make it much easier for small businesses to fire people at will; further lengthening the "process" before "legal" strike action can be taken.

It is in the direct interest of the working people to fight these moves. The rights of workers and immigrants must go forward together; separately, they will fall back. This was dramatically underscored in recent revelations that last August the DSD eavesdropped on phone conversations between the besieged crew of the *Tampa* which had rescued 460 asylum seekers, the Maritime Union of Australia (MUA) and the International Transport Workers' Federation. Information gathered in this menacing covert operation was immediately given to the government as they worked hour-by-hour to stop *any* refugees landing on Australian soil. While the MUA leadership protested this, militant political strike action in defence of the union and refugee rights could have punched a hole in the bosses' reactionary crusade.

Imperialists Blitzkrieg Civil Liberties

The Australian state power is buttressed by a host of anti-democratic laws and institutions. Nevertheless in "normal" times, the class dictatorship of capital over labour, of wealth and privilege over the poor and oppressed, lies partly hidden in a wrapper of laws and rights—many the result of hard-fought struggle—treaties and conventions, elections and parliamentary debate. But the "war on terrorism" is lifting that cover, revealing the democratic imperialist state—the cops, courts, prisons and army—as nothing but the instrument of organised violence to protect the interests of the filthy-rich capitalists against the workers who produce society's wealth.

The bosses are fully aware that they sit on a cauldron of growing discontent and anger. Ever since the counterrevolutionary destruction of the Soviet and East European bureaucratically degenerated and deformed workers states, the capitalists have enormously increased the rate of exploitation of the working class through slashing jobs, welfare, health care, education or anything that benefits immigrants, the poor, women, Aborigines and youth.

In order to maintain their profits and power the bosses use anti-immigrant racism to divide workers and state repression to intimidate those who would struggle against their rapacious rule. In every

continued on page 8



Quality Press

Melbourne, 1969: Mass workers action defied Arbitration, made penal laws a dead letter and won freedom for jailed Tramways Union leader Clarrie O'Shea.