



Social-Chauvinist "Left" Pimps for Australian Imperialism

Australian/UN Imperialist Troops Out of East Timor!

Independence Now for East Timor!

DECEMBER 3—Under the guise of a "humanitarian" mission, Australian imperialism now rules over the desperately poor people of East Timor in all but name, and they plan to continue for at least the next three years. In the largest Australian military operation since its participation in the dirty, losing war against the Vietnamese workers and peasants three decades ago, Australian troops sweep through the streets as armoured vehicles rip up the roads and F-111 warplanes scream overhead. With brutal racist arrogance the Australian neocolonial occupiers enforce misery and squalor—lack of food, medical care and education—for the suffering people of East Timor while moving to disarm the independence fighters of Falintil.

This is what virtually every ostensibly socialist organisation in Australia called for as they lined up behind the racist Australian rulers. The International Socialist Organisation (ISO), Socialist Alternative (SA), Militant, Workers Power (WP) and especially the Democratic Socialist Party (DSP) leapt into hailing, attending, and in some cases leading the September chauvinist demonstrations of "national unity" which were screaming for "Peacekeepers in!" The fake-left wildly cheered the racist anti-Indonesia actions led by the Laborite union bureaucrats which were *explicitly* designed to hurry Australian military intervention and were promptly called off as soon as the army went in. Hostile to any independent mobilisation of the proletariat in its own class interest and to the socialist principle of "not one man, not one penny for the imperialist military," these "socialist" groups unashamedly subordinated themselves to the pro-imperialist Labor Party and trade-union bureaucracy who aggressively campaigned for troops.

Against these drumbeaters for white Australian imperialism, the Spartacist League has from the beginning campaigned in both word and deed against Australian intervention into East Timor, demanding that the Australian imperialists, the U.S., the UN and all their lackeys and camp followers get out of East Timor and stay out! The demand for the immediate withdrawal of imperialist troops is the precondition for the fight for East Timorese independence. As proletarian internationalists, opposed above all to our "own" ruling class, we call for the Australian workers movement to black ban arms and supplies

to the Australian-led military forces. Independence now for East Timor!

The idea that military intervention by Australian and U.S. imperialism can bring independence and "freedom" for the East Timorese is a horrible lie. These same imperialists backed Indonesia's annexation in 1975 and for 30 years supported and armed the bloody Indonesian regime. These are the imperialists who devastated tiny Serbia and who slaughtered millions in their losing effort to defeat the Vietnamese revolution. Whether under the fig leaf of the UN (a den of imperialist thieves and their victims) or otherwise, the imperialists are mass murderers who will stop at nothing to preserve their system of plunder and robbery.

As to the Australian rulers' credentials as opponents of genocide, one need only look at the barbarity they have meted out for the last 200 years to the Aboriginal peoples, who were nearly exterminated, their lands and even children stolen from them. During World War II the Libyan people knew the Australian troops as the most brutal racist marauders to march across that country. What the Australian capitalists have in mind for East Timor can be seen in Papua New Guinea and Fiji, neocolonies where the racist imperialist pigs lord it over the people who they brutally exploit while robbing the natural resources of these tiny countries. Australia out of PNG, Bougainville, Irian Jaya, Fiji! The main enemy is our "own" ruling class—for workers revolution!

Revolutionary Marxists understand, as Bolshevik leader V.I. Lenin explained in *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*, that imperialism is not a "policy" but the inevitable product of the capitalist system. The ruling class doesn't "choose" whether or not to be imperialist—the pursuit of profit ultimately compels the capitalists to wage war against small, dependent countries and against their imperialist rivals. The imperialist system of brutal exploitation and degradation cannot be reformed or pressured into serving the interests of the oppressed—it must be swept away through international proletarian revolution.

Despite the best efforts of the Laborite traitors and their left tails, the pro-imperialist rallies were overwhelmingly petty-bourgeois and white, and working-class support to the Australian imperialists' occupation of East Timor is shallow. Workers seething under union-busting attacks, minorities subjected to racist abuse, Aborigines denied even the most basic necessities of life, all have good reason to be distrustful of the Australian ruling class. So now the fake-lefts are desperately attempting to disappear their treacherous cheerleading for Australian imperialism. The ISO for example, is running articles about "Anger at UN arrogance" and "Labor and Militarism," while WP says, if

you look hard enough, "Australian and UN troops out now."

The fake-lefts' current attempts to paint themselves in "anti-imperialist" colours is just whitewash. Every one of them howled with the imperialist wolves, cheering capitalist counterrevolution in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. This historic defeat for the international proletariat has meant horrific destitution for the working people, especially women, unleashed murderous communalist bloodletting, and intensified interimperialist rivalries. While the fake-left rallied behind "democratic" imperialism, we Trotskyists, revolutionary Marxists, fought for the unconditional military defence of the bureaucratically degenerated and deformed workers states in the USSR and East Europe against imperialist attack and internal counterrevolution. We fought for proletarian political revolution to oust the conservative, nationalist Stalinist usurpers who undermined and ultimately strangled the gains of the Russian Revolution of 1917, the first and to date only successful workers revolution in history.

Having supported the anti-Soviet Cold War drive of the imperialists and their social-democratic frontmen, the fake-left traitors in short order were openly embracing the war aims of the NATO imperialists in the Balkans. Fuelled by and in turn fuelling murderous nationalism, capitalist counterrevolution ripped apart the deformed workers state of Yugoslavia, leading to all-sided reactionary "ethnic cleansing." As the imperialist powers manoeuvred to extend their influence, self-proclaimed "socialists" consistently lined up behind whoever "their" imperialist rulers were backing. In 1999 most of the "left" took up the imperialists' war cry over "poor little Kosovo." Workers Power, for a grotesque example, marched in London alongside those calling for NATO bombing of Serbia (see "Social-Chauvinist 'Left' in NATO's Baggage Train," *ASP* No. 168, Winter 1999).

We in the SL along with our comrades throughout the International Communist League fought against the NATO imperialist attack declaring: Defeat U.S./Australian imperialism through workers revolution! Defend Serbia! We gave not a shred of support to Milosevic & Co., a gang of capitalist, nationalist murderers. While the left hailed NATO's pawns in the Kosovo Liberation Army (UCK), we said that there was a just cause for self-determination for Kosovo but it had become subordinated to the NATO imperialists. Today, the imperialists and the UCK are now reversing the terms of oppression, beating, torturing and driving out Serbs and Roma (Gypsies). Against *all* the bloody nationalist regimes we fight for the proletarian internationalist perspective of a socialist federation of the Balkans. We say: U.S./UN/all imperialists out of the Balkans!

The Fraud of "Human Rights" Imperialism

As a cover for their murderous war against the Serb people which destroyed factories, power plants, bridges, hospitals and schools, the imperialists raised a hue and cry that they had to "act" in the name of "humanitarianism" to save lives. Now even the *New York Times* (11 November 1999) admits that:

"the number of the dead found so far seems significantly lower than the estimate of 10,000 ethnic Albanians killed by Serbs, issued by Western officials, or the suggestion by American and allied officials during the war that up to 100,000 were being killed."

So too has it come out that the stories of tens of thousands killed in East Timor were untrue. The London *Financial Times* (2 December 1999) reports that foreign

minister Alexander Downer "said it now appeared that somewhere between 500 and 1,000 people had been killed during the post-referendum violence...."

As we stated in our 1 October 1999 leaflet "East Timor Independence Now! All Indonesian and All UN Imperialist Troops Out Now!":

"The UN intervention has nothing to do with defending the East Timorese people and everything to do with defending the interests of the imperialist powers, chiefly the U.S. and its Australian junior partner. The UN mission's name—'Operation Stabilise'—captures its true intent: to enforce neocolonial stability in Australia's 'backyard' and prop up the Indonesian police-state regime in the face of massive social unrest."

We say that the real and only allies of the desperately poor people of East Timor are the international working class, from the multi-millioned proletariat of Indonesia to the workers of the imperialist countries in the region, Australia and Japan.

In Indonesia the road to overthrow the blood-drenched regime requires that the proletariat struggle to transcend the dominant Javanese chauvinism fostered by the bourgeoisie, championing the right of self-determination for all the oppressed peoples in the archipelago. This means a struggle against bourgeois forces like Megawati Sukarnoputri, a vicious chauvinist who supported the annexation of East Timor and to whom much of the fake-left has given back-handed support. As the new government of Abdurrahman Wahid, Megawati and Amien Rais demonstrates, all wings of the bourgeoisie in countries of belated capitalist development are so tied to imperialism and fearful of the proletariat that they are incapable of fulfilling the tasks historically associated with the bourgeois-democratic revolution. Achieving these tasks and putting an end to the brutal exploitation of the masses requires the proletarian seizure of power—the Trotskyist program of permanent revolution. To this end the working class must forge a revolutionary leadership—a Leninist-Trotskyist party. If it is not to be strangled by economic and social backwardness and imperialist intervention, the struggle for proletarian revolution in Indonesia must be linked to the fight for workers rule in the advanced capitalist countries not least Australia, Japan and the U.S.

The imperialist occupation of East Timor is also a dagger aimed at the bureaucratically deformed workers state in China, where the Stalinist bureaucracy is driving headlong toward capitalist restoration. Their seeking to join the World Trade Organisation is their latest move in a series of attacks which threaten the gains of the 1949 overthrow of capitalist barbarism. For the imperialists, the "magic of the market" means driving fully one-third of all workers in China's state industries out into the streets. We stand for the unconditional military defence of China—as well as of North Korea, Vietnam and Cuba—against imperialist attack and internal counterrevolution. We fight to mobilise the proletariat of China and the other deformed workers states to prevent capitalist counterrevolution through a political revolution which ousts the nationalist Stalinist bureaucracies.

The Australian-led occupation of East Timor underscores that Southeast Asia is a hotbed of interimperialist rivalries. As our comrades in the Spartacist Group Japan wrote on 20 October 1999, "the Japanese ruling class is bankrolling this imperialist military operation while simultaneously using it as a pretext to further expand and strengthen its imperialist military." There are 200 Japanese soldiers now in Surabaya and West Timor. Meanwhile the Australian imperialists' armed forces are now much closer to resource-rich Aceh where agitation for independence

from Indonesia is growing. Reportedly Indonesian radar has detected Australian military aircraft "intrusions" around Aceh—most likely from the Butterworth airbase in Malaysia. Aceh sits directly astride the Straits of Malacca, a strategic waterway through which most of Japan's oil passes, including its major operations in Aceh itself. While having their own particular interests in the region, the Australian jackal imperialists very much act as Washington's "deputy sheriff" in Asia.

Down with the Bipartisan War on Immigrants!

Anti-Asian racism is the bedrock of Australian capitalist imperialism. Even as the Australian rulers posture as "defenders" of the East Timorese, they have launched a campaign of racist hysteria against refugees from Asia and Iraq—victims of continued bombing and a starvation blockade by "human rights" imperialism. Screeching about "a national emergency" immigration minister Philip Ruddock has tried to outdo the fascistic One Nation party of Pauline Hanson in targeting nonwhite people. The government fully supported by Kim Beazley's ALP has all but abolished the right of asylum while mandating Australian interception of foreign ships in international waters! Recently arrived East Timorese refugees are being pressured to return—with only a blanket and a sack of rice. Against this bi-partisan war on immigrants we say: Down with the racist immigration laws! No deportations! Immigrant workers, a bridge to the toilers throughout Asia, are a vital component of the forces capable of destroying this racist capitalist system. The multiracial working class, suffering under the profit-gouging bosses, has a special duty to take up the struggle to defend refugees and to fight for full citizenship rights for all immigrants!

Meanwhile ALP/Liberal unity extends to Howard's new tax—an increase in the Medicare levy for those earning more than \$50,000 to fund the imperialist occupation of East Timor and increase the size of the armed forces. Raising money for imperialist murder in the name of "health" is truly Orwellian. But even this is not enough for Beazley: he wants the bosses to grant leave for workers to join the Army Reserve and stand alongside the gun-toting Australian army thugs in oppressing the East Timorese! Down with Howard/Beazley's war tax!

From its very origins the ALP has been even more aggressive than the outright bourgeois Liberals in pushing Australian imperialist military interventions in the name of the "national interest." Preaching the lie that there is a "partnership" between the working class, forced to sell its labour power as its sole means of existence, and the tiny minority of capitalist exploiters, the social democrats are *defenders* of the capitalist order. Thoroughly bourgeois in its program, outlook and leadership while based on the trade unions, the ALP is a bourgeois workers party, representing not the class interests of the proletariat, but the material privileges of an "aristocracy of labour," bribed by crumbs from the profits the imperialists' reap from exploiting and oppressing millions of people around the world.

Fully imbibing the "values" of the capitalist rulers of this white imperialist enclave in Asia, the ALP has been in the forefront of racist anti-immigrant, anti-Asian hysteria, from the founding "principle" of "White Australia" to today targeting desperate refugees. Ruling for the bosses, the federal ALP in power oversaw a hideous escalation of the murder of Aboriginal people and laid the basis for the Howard government's vicious union-

busting and slashing of social services. Opposing and demobilising any concerted fight against the capitalists' one sided class-war, the social-democratic traitors found energy, purpose and drive in whipping up support for Australian imperialist occupation of East Timor. And right behind them came the pseudo-left.

Little Drummer People for Imperialism

In the vanguard of the reactionary chauvinist mobilisations demanding Australian imperialist troops "liberate" East Timor were the Democratic Socialist Party and its youth group Resistance. A hallmark of the DSP and its predecessors has been to appeal to the racist Australian imperialists to adopt "a progressive foreign policy" while welcoming Australian military adventures under the guise of providing "humanitarian" assistance from Somalia to Cambodia to Irian Jaya. Sneering that opposition to their grotesque support to Australian imperialism was "left-wing dogmatism," the DSP bragged that they "forced" the imperialists to act, declaring the occupation of Timor a "victory."

Now they want to claim that championing "Australian/UN troops in Now!" in order to "save" the East Timorese was, in Lenin's words, "a compromise enforced by objective conditions...which in no way minimises the revolutionary devotion and readiness to carry on the struggle." This is an obscene and breathtaking falsification of everything Lenin and the Bolsheviks stood for. Lenin *split* the Second International and demanded a complete break with those who supported their "own" imperialist rulers in World War I. The Third, Communist International was founded in battle against the self-same social chauvinism which the DSP peddles today.

The Militant Socialist Organisation (MSO), supporters of the British Taaffe group, repeatedly hailed the chauvinist rallies and union bans as "the magnificent response of the Australian people" to East Timor. Like the DSP they claim "If it wasn't for the pressure of the Australian people, Canberra and 'our' armed forces would be once again putting the 'national interest' (ie protecting the interests of Australian bosses in Indonesia) before the massacres of the people of East Timor" (*Militant*, October 1999). So according to these Laborites, Australian imperialism is actually acting against itself by occupying East Timor!

Refusing to take a stand against their "own" rulers, the MSO writes of "UN forces" and "Western forces," barely mentioning the *Australian* forces. Even so, while the MSO goes on about how "UN interventions (with Australian involvement at times) in the past" have been "to defend the interests of imperialism" their demand isn't that the imperialists get out, but only "No trust in the UN!" Even bourgeois liberals can, and do, agree with that.

ISO/SA: Imperialism with a "Labour" Gloss

The International Socialist Organisation repeatedly joined the "Send in the Troops" crowds, describing one such rally as "fantastic," and *endorsed* two "Peacekeepers In" demonstrations in Melbourne on 8 and 10 September. Now they want to cover their tracks over East Timor. So *Socialist Worker* has had numerous articles warning against any "reliance" on the UN, detailing the bloody nature of UN interventions over the years, and even a few criticisms of the ALP's "gung-ho support for Australian militarism" (22 October 1999).

The ISO might write about bloody UN interventions, but there is one they say nothing about: the Korean War

in which millions were slaughtered. That's for good reason—their organisation was born in their leader Tony Cliff's refusal in 1950 to defend North Korea, China and the USSR against the U.S. imperialist-led "police action" in Korea under the cover of the UN. At the time nestled in the British Labour Party which was prosecuting the war in Korea, Cliff was expelled from the Trotskyist Fourth International for this despicable siding with "democratic" imperialism against the deformed workers states.

It was the union bans against Indonesia carried out by the pro-imperialist Laborite union bureaucracy which the ISO cheered most of all, as they marched in the chauvinist rallies with "trade union bans now" banners. To this day the ISO wants the bans not only reinstated, but increased. The very grotesqueness of the "union bans" was shown by the fact that the MUA banned *wheat* shipments to Indonesia, where workers are facing starvation due to the Asian capitalist economic crisis.

When challenged by SL supporters some ISOers said they didn't endorse the Melbourne pro-imperialist marches—only to later admit they did, claiming the demands were changed without their knowledge. In Sydney, ISOers have declared that their "Melbourne comrades" were wrong and/or must have made a mistake. ISOers have told our comrades they "personally" were *for* Australian troops, while others claimed the ISO opposed them.

In fact not only does the ISO refuse to call for the Australian/UN troops to get out of East Timor, their actual position was that there weren't enough troops! Under the headline "Troops no answer to Timor's agony" (*Socialist Worker*, 24 September 1999), the ISO laments:

"The 7000 troops of the 'peace-keeping' force are not a serious attempt to deal with the East Timor's [sic] crisis.

"According to the government's own military analysts, it would take 4000 just to monitor the border between East and West Timor."

Just days earlier a Socialist Workers Party speaker (the ISO's British parent group) at a "Freedom for East Timor" meeting in London criticised Tony Blair's Labour government for doing too little too late in East Timor and complained that Britain had contributed only "a few Gurkhas"!

The Socialist Alternative group, a split from the Cliffites, shares the ISO's politics—and draws out the pro-imperialist conclusions. They too declare that "peace-keepers are not the answer" because, "For a start, there will only be about 8,000 UN troops. The Indonesian army has 25,000 troops in East Timor" (*Socialist Alternative*, September 1999). They too wanted the bans "extended"—by the imperialists! "If the US, Japan and Australia had immediately announced stiff economic sanctions," they wrote, "the atrocities could well have been brought to a halt before the devastation was so complete." These "socialists" openly side with the imperialists against Indonesia whose millions and millions of toilers suffer daily the yoke of imperialist exploitation.

Workers Power: Laborite Charlatans

The Workers Power group attempts to distinguish themselves from their coinhabitants in the pro-imperialist, "socialist" swamp. Their pamphlet "Independence for East Timor, For a working class solution" states that the DSP's "troops in" line "is scandalous, it is wrong, and it is in contradiction with all Marxist principles." Indeed. But this applies equally to WP themselves, who enthusiastically participated in the "Peacekeepers IN!" mobilisations, including the Melbourne 8 and 10 September rallies!

Furthermore they wildly hailed the pro-imperialist "solidarity campaign," grieved that "The momentum of the campaign, however, has slowed now that the INTERFET forces are in East Timor" and cheered the anti-Indonesian trade-union bans that egged on the Australian troops as "excellent demonstrations of working class solidarity" (*Workers Power*, November 1999-January 2000).

So how then are WP any different to the DSP? Only in the fact that as cynical centrists, they attempt to cover their *deeds* in support of Australian troops with *words* critical of imperialist intervention. Stung by Spartacist comrades' interventions at a recent WP forum, WPers absurdly claimed that because they handed out leaflets against "illusions" in the UN, joining the grotesquely chauvinist "troops in now" marches was really an act against imperialist intervention! You will find somewhere in their material, if you look hard enough, the call for Australian and UN troops to get out of East Timor. But this is linked with the ludicrous plea for the racist neo-colonial invaders, who have begun forcibly disarming Falintil, to "hand over your weapons to the East Timorese so that they can defend themselves!" Sure, and perhaps General Cosgrove should lead a workers insurrection? This appeal to the imperialists to arm the East Timorese highlights that in common with the DSP and ISO, WP upholds the Laborite, nationalist lie that white "democratic" Australian imperialism can serve the interests of the working class and the oppressed.

WP's main call upon the Australian working class is, like the ISO and SA, to "Maintain and extend the workers' boycotts of Indonesian companies." As a cover they add "and complicit Australian and other multi-national companies!" This is not opposition to the Australian capitalist class but a Laborite call for imperialist sanctions against Indonesia. It serves to line up the Australian working class behind their "own" exploiters on the basis of anti-Indonesian chauvinism and fuels support for Australian "human rights" imperialist intervention in East Timor and beyond.

In thrall to the chauvinist ALP and union tops at home, WP then has the gall to call upon the tiny *East Timorese* population to "pick up the gun." Just as they did last May when NATO occupied Kosovo, WP call for the adoption of a "revolutionary programme" by those people being trampled by direct imperialist military rule (in which WP was complicit)! WP claims to be for socialism in East Timor, but not one of the 13 slogans listed in their pamphlet is for socialist revolution *in Australia*. In short what these left-Laborites have to say to the East Timorese is: you should fight for revolutionary action to the last drop of your blood, under the bayonets of the imperialist butchers, while we armchair "radicals" here will keep on marching *for* imperialist troops and campaigning for a "Bomber" Beazley ALP government.

Bizarre Reformists and Political Bandits

Posturing to the left are the quirky reformists of the Communist League (CL), affiliated with the U.S. Socialist Workers Party (SWP) of Jack Barnes. They condemned the pro-war mobilisations and unions bans and demand "Australian, U.S. troops out of East Timor now!" (*Militant*, 4 October 1999). But the CL is hardly a political opponent of the pro-imperialist trade-union bureaucracy. Only a year ago they, with the rest of the left, hailed the sell-out of the waterfront struggle as a victory, alibiing the very same Maritime Union leaders who organised the chauvinist anti-Indonesian bans.

Long ago the SWP/CL explicitly repudiated the Trotskyist program of permanent revolution in order better to tail all manner of "progressive" forces (among which they include the reactionary Iranian ayatollahs!). Under headlines such as "Deepening struggles by working people mark discussion on Indonesian elections" (2 August 1999) the *Militant* is full of reportage uncritically featuring people lauding "reformasi," i.e., reforming Indonesian capitalism. Opposed to the fight for proletarian revolution, their be all and end all is extolling the virtues of opening up "political space." It was under the banner of widening "political space" that the Barnesites *sided with imperialism* in cheering the capitalist counter-revolution in the USSR and Eastern Europe. While proclaiming themselves "Fidelistas," they supported and pushed the very forces intent on strangling the Cuban Revolution. Hailing Boris Yeltsin's American-backed power grab, their front-page headline said "Soviet Workers Win Giant Victory by Defeating Coup" (6 September 1991).

Incredibly, the SWP/CL blandly declared "World capitalism has suffered an historic defeat in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union." Even today in a world of heightening interimperialist rivalries and increased imperialist military attacks on the peoples of the world, the Barnesites assert "It was imperialism which lost the Cold War" (6 December 1999). That must certainly come as news to the people of the former Soviet Union where capitalist counterrevolution brought mass unemployment, hideous impoverishment, and plummeting life expectancy. One does have to ask, what planet does the SWP/CL live on? The SWP/CL's support to capitalist counterrevolution and their bizarre contortions ought to repel anyone looking for a revolutionary Marxist program of struggle to overthrow capitalism.

And then there is the Socialist Equality Party (SEP) of David North and Nick Beams. Sometimes capable of putting some orthodox-sounding lines on paper, the SEP are, to use Lenin's term, "political bandits"—that is political pirates who will say and do anything to serve their grotesque opportunist appetites. Their "World Socialist Web Site" (into which they have liquidated all their newspapers) carried an item dated 17 September which states "its opposition to a military intervention in East Timor." They even write that "the Australian political and military elite owe a major debt of gratitude to the protest leaders" of the "troops in" demonstrations. At the same time, they deliberately cover up the anti-Indonesian racism that was the hallmark of the chauvinist mobilisations and portray the participants as people who merely wanted "to express outrage at the Indonesian military-organised carnage in East Timor." The SEP knows full-well otherwise because they were there, handing out leaflets from tables to people yelling "Peacekeepers in now!"

Meanwhile the SEP hid the fact that they *oppose* independence for East Timor. When the demand for national self-determination served as a "democratic" fig leaf for imperialist attacks on the Soviet degenerated

workers state, North/Beams were unswerving in their support to "national rights." But now that the USSR is no more, they reject the right of self-determination for nations. The SEP denies the rights of East Timorese, Tamils, Québécois, Chechens and other oppressed nationalities. Thus they cover for the chauvinism of the oppressor nations.

Having for years demanded the trade-union bureaucracy and "left" wing of the ALP kick out the "right" and form a "workers government," today the SEP preaches that the unions are totally bourgeois institutions and that union struggles against the bosses' attacks are useless. The "politics" of these sewer "socialists" are based on opposition to almost all struggles of the oppressed.

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

However much they would like to disguise the fact, the Australian "left" today openly embraces the "national interest" of their "own" capitalist exploiters. Their backing of the "human rights" credentials of the Australian imperialist state has directly assisted the attempts of the bourgeoisie to overcome Australia's own "Vietnam syndrome": the bourgeoisie's humiliating memory of Australia and the U.S.' *defeat* at the hands of the heroic Vietnamese workers and peasants. The result is increased racist reaction and militarist buildup.

Yet the same capitalist class, whether represented by the Liberals or ALP, that yearns to enslave the East Timorese is attacking the unions, women's rights, Aboriginal peoples, immigrant workers and youth. Many people want to fight back, and there have been a series of popular, defensive strikes. But under the leadership of the Laborite, pro-imperialist trade-union bureaucrats these struggles have been demobilised, channelled into parliamentarist lobbying, electoral campaigns for the ALP, and the bosses' arbitration courts.

Our aim is to build a proletarian, revolutionary internationalist party, a tribune of the people, that seeks to transform the consciousness of the working class—to understand its social power and unique historical interest—in order to lead a socialist revolution to destroy the entire system of capitalist imperialism. This requires a fight to split the working-class base of the ALP away from its pro-capitalist tops, not least through forging a class-struggle leadership in the unions that opposes the ruling class all down the line.

In this country solidarity with the Indonesian and East Timorese masses means above all the struggle to overthrow the Australian ruling class through workers revolution. The complete social and national liberation of the East Timorese and myriad other oppressed peoples of the region requires the smashing of imperialism and the construction of a socialist Asia, from Indonesia to Korea, from Australia to Japan. It is to this task that the International Communist League is dedicated. Independence now for East Timor! Australian imperialists get out! For a workers republic of Australia, part of a socialist Asia!

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