



No U.S./UN/EU/Australian Intervention in the Near East!

Defend the Palestinian People!



All Israeli Troops, Settlers Out of the Occupied Territories!

Photos: Reuters, Fremson/NY Times

Unprecedented Israeli onslaught on Palestinian people has reduced much of West Bank to rubble, like Jenin above.

MAY 29—The Zionist butchers continue to stage murderous raids against Palestinian communities in the Occupied Territories. Residents in the Gaza strip are bracing themselves for a threatened full-scale invasion. They know all too well the roll call of Palestinian communities devastated by Israeli troops, tanks and helicopter gunships during their ferocious assault on the West Bank: Ramallah, Nablus, Bethlehem, Jenin, Qabatyia, Qalqilya, Yatta, Samua, Ber Zeit. Upwards of 200 Palestinians were slaughtered in the Jenin refugee camp alone—where nearly 15,000 people are crammed into little more than a third of a square mile—as defiant fighters armed with automatic rifles tried to defend homes and families against the Israeli juggernaut. Likening Jenin to Vietnam, carpet bombed by the U.S., one Israeli soldier said, “There’s nothing left there now.”

Over 4,000 Palestinians have been arrested, including Marwan Barghouti, second only to Palestinian Authority (PA) leader Yasir Arafat in the Fatah party. Estimates of the death toll during Israel’s spring assault range to 500—on top of more than 1,200 killed and 50,000 wounded over the previous 18 months. In Jenin, Israeli troops reportedly dug mass graves to conceal the actual number killed, and army trucks were reportedly loaded with bodies then driven off to unknown destinations. In most cases, Palestinians are not even allowed to bury their dead. In Ramallah, nearly 30 decomposing bodies were buried in a hospital parking lot in order to make

U.S./Australia Hands Off Iraq! Down With Zionist and Arab Bourgeois Rulers! For a Socialist Federation of the Near East!

room for more in the morgue. Scores of wounded have been left to die because ambulances were not allowed through or their drivers were shot.

The West Bank is now a massive rubble of twisted metal and destroyed lives. It will take years, if not decades, to rebuild what the Israelis have destroyed: homes, businesses, shops, libraries, hospitals, paved roads, electrical plants, sewage mains, water pipes—the entire infrastructure of the West Bank. The looming health disaster may well claim many more lives.

As the Palestinian people were subjected to an unprecedented onslaught, imperialist spokesmen engaged in hypocritical hand-wringing and the Arab regimes recited their usual litany of empty United Nations resolutions. But in cities throughout the Near East, and elsewhere, hundreds of thousands marched in outrage, desperate for some way to put an end to the savage Israeli assault.

What is urgently necessary is the mobilisation of the working class, in the Near East and internationally, in defence of the Palestinian people against Zionist state terror. From black and Arab workers in Detroit to the proletariat of France, with its key North African component, to

the port workers of Egypt, to the heavily immigrant manufacturing and public transport workers of Australia, working people throughout the world must take up the cause of the Palestinian people as their own through demonstrations, protest strikes and other class-struggle actions.

In Morocco, upwards of a million people marched through the streets of Rabat making a zero sign with their fingers to express their contempt for the Arab regimes that do nothing to stop this new catastrophe against the Palestinians—but the Arab bourgeoisies have always been enemies of the Palestinian national struggle. Arafat and an array of pseudo-socialist groups in West Europe, the U.S. and Australia appeal to the UN or the European Union (EU) or even the Zionist state’s U.S. patrons for an “international protection force”—but it was just such a

force that paved the way for the 1982 Sabra/Shatila massacre. EU powers Britain and France once had forces in the Near East—as colonial overlords of the Arab masses. It was under the auspices of a UN intervention force that the U.S., Britain, Australia and others perpetrated the 1991 slaughter of tens of thousands of Iraqi people. In the intervening years, one and a half million people, mainly children and the elderly, have died as a result of the embargo imposed under UN sanctions.

Particularly now, calls for imperialist military intervention serve to legitimise and facilitate Washington’s plans for a new war against Iraq. Underlying the war plans against Iraq is the drive to strengthen U.S. imperialism’s control over Persian Gulf oil fields in order to reinforce American strategic interests against its European and Japanese rivals. Ecstatic that their elite SAS killers are getting in on the U.S.-led war against the people of Afghanistan, the Australian imperialists are keen to be part of any new Gulf War slaughter. Today the

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Welcome Spartacist Ireland

We send internationalist greetings to the comrades of the Spartacist Group Ireland on the occasion of the first issue of their press. We reprint below the introductory article from the newspaper dated Spring/Summer 2002. Forward to the reforging of the Fourth International!

We are proud to announce the publication of the first issue of *Spartacist Ireland*, newspaper of the Spartacist Group Ireland (SGI)—formerly the Dublin Spartacist Group—Irish section of the International Communist League (Fourth Internationalist). As stated in our international “Declaration of Principles and Some Elements of Program” (*Spartacist* No. 54, Spring 1998), the ICL “is a proletarian, revolutionary and internationalist tendency which is committed to the task of building Leninist parties as national sections of a democratic-centralist international whose purpose is to lead the working class to victory through socialist revolutions throughout the world.”

The establishment of this journal is a modest but real step in the consolidation and construction of an Irish section of the ICL. As V.I. Lenin explained in *Where to Begin* (May 1901), the intervention of the revolutionary party is necessary to make the working class conscious of its historic task to overthrow capitalism. Lenin underscored the importance of a newspaper in building such a party:

“The role of a newspaper, however, is not limited solely to the dissemination of ideas, to political education, and to the enlistment of political allies. A newspaper is not only a collective propagandist and a collective agitator, it is also a collective organiser. In the last respect it may be likened to the scaffolding round a building under construction, which marks the contours of the structure and facilitates communication between the builders, enabling them to distribute the work and to view the common results achieved by their organised labour.”

—Collected Works, Vol. 5

The banner of the ICL was first planted in Ireland in Autumn 1990 with the founding of the Dublin Spartacist Youth Group (DSYG). Key to the founding of the DSYG was the intervention of the ICL into the nascent political revolution which unfolded in the East German deformed workers state in 1989-90. We fought for unconditional military defence of the DDR and for a red Germany of workers councils, for revolutionary reunification through proletarian political revolution in the East and socialist revolution in the West to overthrow the bourgeoisie. The restoration of capitalism led to massive immiseration of the working class, attacks on the rights of women and the rise of racist attacks and communalist wars throughout Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union.

Today we uphold the Trotskyist programme of unconditional military defence of the remaining deformed workers states: China, North Korea, Cuba and Vietnam. We stand for proletarian politi-



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cal revolution to oust the Stalinist bureaucracies whose policies of conciliating imperialism threaten the gains of the social revolutions in these countries—the collectivised economy, central planning and monopoly of foreign trade.

In addition to the devastating consequences in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, the counterrevolution emboldened the imperialists to undertake new imperialist interventions from Serbia to Afghanistan and beyond. Although Ireland is a very small, weak capitalist country, nevertheless its position at the western Atlantic approaches to Britain and continental Europe gives it strategic military significance. Despite the nationalist myth of Irish “neutrality,” pushed not least by the fake left, Ireland has never been neutral. The Irish bourgeoisie has deployed troops as part of UN imperialist “peacekeeping” missions from Lebanon to the Balkans and East Timor and regularly makes Shannon airport available for refuelling by U.S. military aircraft including in the recent war against Afghanistan. During that war we raised the demand for class struggle at home and called on the working class to defend Afghanistan. *Irish/UN troops out of the Near East, Balkans and East Timor!*

Against Labourite chauvinism and Green nationalism, the SGI is committed

to raising the banner of proletarian internationalism, not least in the context of Northern Ireland. As stated in the ICL’s 1977 “Theses on Ireland” (reprinted in *Ireland: Workers to Power!* [1991]) the key components of a revolutionary working-class perspective include: For the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of the British Army! Full democratic rights for the oppressed Catholic minority in Northern Ireland! Not Orange against Green, but class against class! No

forcible reunification! For an Irish workers republic in a voluntary federation of workers republics in the British Isles! This leaves open the question of where the Protestants will fall and highlights the relationship of the proletarian revolutions throughout the British Isles and the virtual impossibility of a resolution of the Irish question on a working-class basis outside this framework.

James Connolly, the internationalist socialist workers leader, aptly characterised women in Ireland as the “slaves of the slaves.” We are including in our newspaper a regular section dealing with the fight against women’s oppression under the *Women and Revolution (W&R)* masthead. This is continuing in the tradition of the Bolsheviks who published the paper *Rabotnitsa (The Woman Worker)* and our own journal *W&R* which was published by the Spartacist League/U.S. from 1971 to 1998. The ICL continues to publish articles under *W&R* mastheads in our international theoretical journal *Spartacist* and in the press of various ICL sections.

The fight for women’s liberation is strategic for socialist revolution in Ireland, where social policy, education and healthcare basically remain in the grip of the Catholic church hierarchy. Conditions for women in Northern Ireland are little better: Protestant fundamentalists routinely join the Catholic church in opposing the extension of Britain’s 1967 abortion law. The revolutionary party must champion struggles against every form of social oppression to become a “tribune of the people”: combating not only the oppression of women but also that of gays, Travellers and immigrants.

We fight to forge a Bolshevik party to lead the working class in its historic mission to liberate all the oppressed and establish a planned economy based on socialised property forms. We, along with our comrades in the Spartacist League/Britain, fight for workers revolution on both sides of the border and both sides of the Irish Sea. *For a reforged Fourth International that Trotsky would recognise as his own!* ■

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Australasian

SPARTACIST



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In Response to Spartacist Protest: Army Recruiters Abandon RMIT Campus Stall

Down With Australian Imperialism!

On 13 May, hundreds of youth around the country hit the streets to protest against the Howard government's federal budget which pumped billions into strengthening the military and targeting refugees while slashing public education. However, protest organisers, centred on the Laborite National Union of Students, channeled the anger of youth back into the dead end of support for the racist pro-war Labor Party—seen most clearly in Sydney with the distribution of signs such as "Don't Vote Liberal." In contrast, comrades of the Spartacus Youth Club (SYC) and Spartacist League stood in sharp opposition to both the Liberal and ALP war on workers and the oppressed,

and Cuba! For International Socialist Revolution!"

Some campus workers, rank and file members of the Liquor, Hospitality & Miscellaneous Workers Union, encouraged our action. Later, student bureaucrats and their specially hired security guards complained that we had infringed on the army's "freedom of choice" and that they had felt "harassed" and "pressured" by our protest and had to pack up and leave. Good!

The Democratic Socialist Party (DSP) pointedly did not join our protest, despite having people cringing behind their stall as we marched past. Of course, the DSP called for "Australian army in" to East Timor, so why would they protest it recruiting? Members of Workers Power (WP) and Socialist Alternative (SA) initially joined our protest, which we acknowledged. But we pointed out that in 1999, while claiming "Peacekeepers are

Spartacist-led protest against military recruiters on RMIT campus, Melbourne.



ASp photo

the leftists. They violently arrested a woman for "swearing" (!), twisting her arm, and later strip-searched her. When the others went to her assistance, they too were summarily arrested. Three students face charges of indecent language, resisting arrest and assault. While the "troops in" DSP reported on the arrests in an article, they managed to omit any mention that the army was also a target of the protesters (*Green Left Weekly*, 6 March)! Despite our political differences, we defend the victimised students against the capitalist state. **Drop All Charges Now! Cops/Military Recruiters Off Campus! Campus Security Guards: Hands Off Leftists!**

These attacks against leftists are not an aberration. The job of cops is to violently suppress workers and leftists! Such capitalist state repression, along with racist attacks on immigrants, especially of Near Eastern background, has sharply intensified in the post-11 September climate. The "war on terrorism" is lifting the usual cover of capitalist "democracy," revealing the 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.

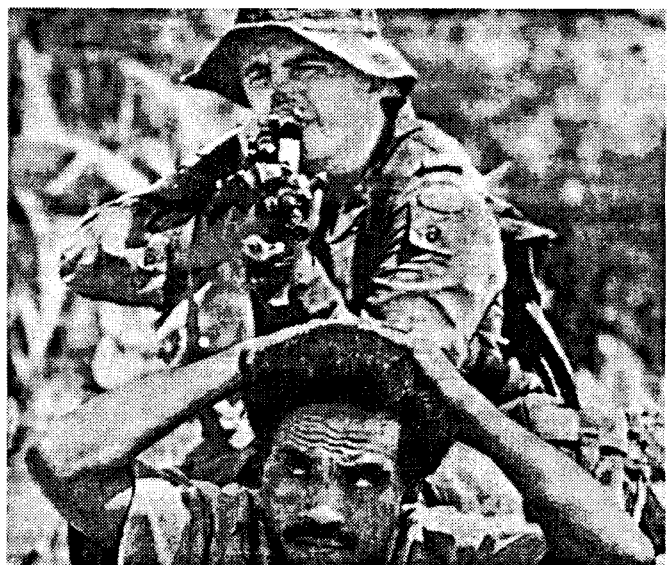
That our small communist protest at RMIT could cause the army to close down their stall indicates that the bourgeoisie is nervous that there are youth who are not too loyal to their state apparatus. Recent revelations of lies pushed by the government and cover-ups by the military over claims of refugees throwing their children overboard have bred widespread revulsion amongst youth and somewhat discredited the armed forces.

The military has sought an increase in recruits to maintain and further the imperialist aspirations of Australian capitalism. The Australian bourgeoisie worries that its military is too small, and they constantly try to beef it up. Recruiting on campuses is part of that. While today they are recruiting volunteers, in the future working-class youth face being conscripted as cannon fodder for the imperialist bourgeoisie's wars, and to kill their class brothers and sisters in other countries. Not one person, not one cent for the Australian imperialist military!

The military is not a sports club signing up people to go on barbecues or harbour cruises, but trains killers to ensure that the super-exploitation of workers of the region continues to pour profits into the pockets of the Australian rulers. The racist, bloody, imperialist army is occupying East Timor and Bougainville, the navy patrols around Australian neocolonies like Fiji, Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands and kidnaps desperate refugees on the high seas. It also fulfills the Australian capitalists' commitment to broader imperialist adventures, helping enforce the starvation blockade which has already killed over a million Iraqis and with Australian SAS assassins involved in occupying Afghanistan, helping prop up the woman-hating imperialist-installed regime there and killing Afghans.

As the U.S. imperialists and their allies' armies rain death on Afghanistan and strangle Iraq with embargo, now they announce openly their intention to target China and North Korea, bureaucratically deformed workers states where capitalism has been overthrown. For all their "No to War" sloganeering, the DSP, ISO, SA, WP and Love and Rage all refuse to defend China and North Korea against the "democratic" Australian imperialists and their ALP frontmen who aim to restore capitalism in those deformed workers states through a combination of military pressure and economic encroachment. The Trotskyist SYC and Spartacist League stand for the unconditional military defence of China, North Korea, Vietnam and Cuba against imperialist attack and internal counter-revolution. From that basis we fight for workers political revolution to oust the nationalist Stalinist bureaucracies and replace them with workers and peasants councils, led by a genuine revolutionary, internationalist party.

The SYC seeks to win youth to the side of the working class, rallying them to a **revolutionary** perspective in an effort to overthrow capitalism, which is based on exploitation and oppression. The SYCs are organisations of revolutionary education and action. Fittingly, we ended our RMIT protest with the chant "Break from the pro-imperialist ALP—workers need a revolutionary party!" Join us! ■



Reuters

Australian soldier terrorises East Timorese civilian in September 1999 as part of UN "peacekeeping" force. Much of fake left endorsed call for imperialist intervention.

distributing the leaflet reprinted below which was headlined "Down With Australian Imperialism!"

This leaflet was originally issued by the SYC to build for a 20 March speakout at the University of Sydney to protest a recent cop attack on leftists demonstrating against right-wingers and military recruitment stalls on campus. As well as demanding "Down With Capitalist State Repression Against the Left—Drop the Charges Against Sydney Uni Protesters Now!" the speakout also called for "Cops/Military Recruiters Off Campus!" Charges against the Sydney University protesters have been dropped. Earlier in the month, a Spartacist-initiated protest at RMIT in Melbourne caused military recruiters to leave the campus.

On 6 March, the Marxist Spartacist League/SYC led a protest demanding "Army recruiters off the campus!" in response to the Australian army having a recruitment stall at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT) on the "Big Festival Day." As our fiery red protest marched through campus, chants of "Army recruiters—imperialist looters—off the campus now!" and "Australian troops out of East Timor now!" rang out. Our placards included: "U.S./UN/Australia Get Out of Afghanistan, Persian Gulf and Central Asia Now!" and "Defend China, North Korea, Vietnam

not the answer," these fake-left groups, along with the International Socialist Organisation (ISO), joined chauvinist demonstrations calling for Australian troops into East Timor, helping to feed the climate of increased bourgeois militarism. In contrast, we protested **against** the Australian/UN imperialist occupation of East Timor. The main enemy is the capitalist class at home. Soon after our polemic, as security guards ordered SYN FM radio (who had turned music off for our protest) to turn their music back on to drown out our protest, WP and SA withered away.

The Laborite National Union of Students had posters up on the campus against increased defence spending reading: "Join the army...gain self esteem...meet interesting people...then kill them." The RMIT student bureaucrats fervently claimed to agree with our opposition to militarism, then in the next breath they complained bitterly about the fact that we audaciously and loudly protested for army recruiters off campus!

Outrageously, a week earlier, cops attacked and arrested four leftists—supporters of the ISO, SA and Love and Rage—at the University of Sydney's orientation week for protesting against Liberal Club and army recruitment stalls. After a provocation by Liberal Club students, city cops, who were on campus to "train" their security guard mates, suddenly appeared and viciously attacked

SYC/Spartacist League Classes

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Permanent Revolution and the Near East
Imperialism, Socialism and the Liberation of Oppressed Nations

Near East...

(continued from page 1)

Australian navy nominally leads the starvation blockade of Iraq and the Australian military is also part of a "peacekeeping" expedition in the Sinai, on the Israel-Lebanon-Syria border.

Australian imperialism's expeditions in the Near East and Central Asia are aimed not least in blooding its troops and sharpening its claws to further its predatory designs in the South Pacific. A victory for America and its Australian junior partner in Iraq—or anywhere else—will embolden these bloody ruling classes to wreak more death and destruction around the world and will mean further misery for working people and the oppressed at home. The international working class has a vital interest in the military defence of Iraq against imperialist attack, without giving any political support to the anti-working-class, bourgeois-nationalist Saddam Hussein regime. **Defend the Palestinians! All Israeli troops and settlers out of the Occupied Territories now! All U.S./UN/EU/Australian forces out of the Persian Gulf, Near East and Central Asia! Down with the starvation blockade—U.S./Australia hands off Iraq!**

Protests Sweep Arab East, West Europe

From Cairo to the Jordanian capital of Amman to Ankara, Turkey, pro-Palestinian demonstrators have clashed with riot police. In Egypt, protests spread beyond the capital to Alexandria in the north and Sohag in the south; thousands upon thousands have defied a nationwide ban on demonstrations, facing down cops firing tear gas and water cannon. Even the small, oil-rich Emirate of Bahrain—where the U.S. Fifth Fleet is based—saw an upsurge of mass protest, with demonstrators demanding the closure of the U.S. naval base after one protester was killed while trying to approach the American embassy.

The Arab rulers could well seek to deflect this popular unrest by stepping up anti-Zionist and even anti-American demagogy, as they have done so often in the past. The solidarity of the Arab masses with the oppressed Palestinian people must be directed toward *proletarian revolution* against their *own* Arab rulers who, whether bourgeois nationalists or Islamic traditionalists, are fundamentally the political agents of Western imperialism. If this does not happen, the intense hostility toward Israel and its American protector will only continue to strengthen the forces of Islamic fundamentalism, which posture as the "radical" opposition to the mainly pro-Western Arab regimes.

Huge protests have also erupted throughout West Europe, and to a lesser extent in the U.S. and Australia. In Paris on 6 April some 40,000 people took to the streets, shouting "Bush, Sharon—Assassins!" Though overwhelmingly Maghrebin (North African), the demonstration also included black African, Turkish, Kurdish and French protesters, among them the Union of French Jews for Peace. The Maghrebin population is besieged by unemployment, "terrorist"-baiting in the press and stepped-up cop repression. Yet among the thousands who marched in Paris were entire families, including children and grandparents, who overcame their fear and defied the segregation that keeps them restricted to the working-class suburbs (*banlieus*).

The French government seized on a series of reprehensible firebombings of Jewish schools and synagogues to justify their police-state measures against Maghrebin youth. It is not at all clear who is responsible for these heinous attacks, especially given the sizable fascist movement in France. What is clear is that the fascists benefit when justified hatred for the racist capitalist rulers of Israel is turned into vile anti-Semitism, the "socialism of fools." Commendably, as at previous pro-Palestinian protests, Arab community organisers on 6 April made

public statements condemning the anti-Semitic attacks. In contrast, a huge pro-Israel march the next day was an orgy of anti-Arab chauvinism, with mobs howling for Arafat's blood. Armed thugs from the Jewish Defence League and Betar, which identified with Mussolini's fascists in the 1930s, savagely beat any Arab or African that they could lay their hands on.

In Sydney on 6 April, mounted cops of racist NSW Labor premier Bob Carr attacked a section of a 15,000-strong rally against the Zionist terror. The pro-PLO leadership of the Palestinian protests and the reformist Democratic Socialist Party (DSP), who have been prominent at them, call on the right-wing John Howard federal government to condemn Sharon or to oppose Israeli aggression. But some young Palestinian speakers at the rallies could not bring themselves to appeal to the racist White Australia rulers who imprison Near Eastern and Asian asylum seekers in concentration camps and who join their U.S. big brother ally in alibiing the Zionist butchers. Spartacist placards at the protests, such as "Remember Sabra and Shatila: Don't Trust the UN!" and "UN/Australia, All Imperialist Troops Out of East Timor Now!", opposed illusions that the UN or the Australian imperialists can be pressured to do good for the Palestinians or the oppressed anywhere.

Appeals to the Australian imperialists to condemn or pressure Israel are based

tion, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union, passed a resolution condemning Israel's aggression. But instead of mobilising their powerful unions in concrete actions in defence of the embattled Palestinian masses, the ICEM have called for a "UN peacekeeping force." Meanwhile the union bureaucracy's ALP parliamentary mates egg on the U.S. to intervene more energetically in the Near East.

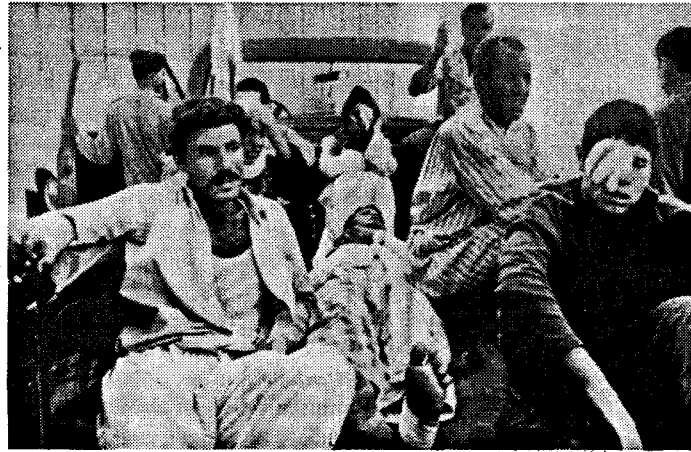
In Australia, the pro-imperialist DSP, which welcomed the 1998 intervention of the Australian military in Irian Jaya/West Papua (*Green Left Weekly*, 13 May 1998) and cheered the Australian/UN neocolonial occupation of East Timor in 1999, also call for UN intervention in the Near East. Early in the Al-Aqsa Intifada, the DSP baldly declared: "UN force needed to end Israel's terror campaign" (*Green Left Weekly*, 29 November 2000). Since then they have been favourably quoting calls for an "international peacekeeping force" by Palestinian nationalists.

The centrist Workers Power (WP) group calls for "a bi-national secular workers' republic in Palestine" and "the unity of the Jewish and Arab working class" (leaflet, "Stop the Slaughter!" [sic] 19 April). But for WP, the purpose of working-class struggle is to pressure the imperialists to act as liberators: "Mass revolt, the overthrow of hated Gulf monarch and a weakening of Mubarak's grip in Egypt these would be the things

the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982, the WWP organised a protest that called for "effective U.S. action to achieve Israeli withdrawal." A few months later, American and other imperialist "peacekeeping" forces went into Lebanon and took "effective action," disarming the Palestinian fighters and paving the way for the Israeli-organised massacre of some 2,000 refugees in the Sabra and Shatila camps.

Today, *Workers World* (11 April) enthuses that in the wake of the first Intifada, in the early 1990s "Washington and Tel Aviv were forced to recognize the Palestine Liberation Organization after 20 years of struggle," calling this a "victory they had won on the battlefield." The outcome of what the WWP hails as a "victory" was the U.S.-brokered Oslo "peace" accord between Israel and the PLO in 1993. We forthrightly denounced this accord as a "grotesque bargain over the subjugated Palestinian people" that "would place the PLO's seal on the national oppression of the long-suffering Palestinian Arab masses" ("Israel-PLO Deal for Palestinian Ghetto," *WV* No. 583, 10 September 1993).

Underlying this betrayal of the Palestinian masses was a world-historic defeat for the international proletariat, the destruction of the USSR through capitalist counterrevolution in 1991-92. Without the diplomatic and financial support previously provided by Moscow, the



UPI

Above: Survivors of 1970 Black September massacre of Palestinians by Jordan's King Hussein. Cops attack April pro-Palestinian demonstration in Beirut. Arab bourgeois regimes are enemies of Palestinian national rights.



AP

on the lie that the murderous Australian capitalist state is somehow less of a terrorist regime. Such calls only serve to promote the racist ruling class as potential saviours of the Palestinian people and grease the skids for imperialist military intervention. Indeed on 22 April, defence minister Robert Hill stated that "if countries such as us could be helpful, whether it's in aid, in diplomacy, in peacekeepers or whatever—then that's what we would want to do."

The idea of Australian imperialism aiding the Palestinians is particularly sick given its history of racist terror in the Near East and North Africa. Serving as lackeys of first the British and then the U.S., the Australian military fought there in both World Wars, while brutally enforcing the colonial subjugation of the local peoples. In December 1918, the ANZAC Mounted Division perpetrated a heinous massacre in Palestine, after a New Zealander was killed by a thief near the Arab village of Surafend. The people of Libya remember the Australian military as the most racist, rapacious thugs of all the imperialist armies that marched across that country during World War II.

Fake Lefts Plead for Imperialist Intervention

Importantly, the pro-Palestinian demonstrations here have included some small union contingents. Reflecting widespread horror amongst working people at Sharon's terror, the Asia-Pacific leaders of the 20-million strong International Federation of Chemical, Energy, Mine and General Workers Union (ICEM), whose president, John Maitland, is leader of Australia's Construc-

tion, that would get the EU and US to actually ACT (sanctions, withdrawal of money and arms) to stop Israel's bloody slaughter." Promoting illusions that the imperialists could be pressured to "ACT" in defence of oppressed peoples is utopian but it does act to strengthen the "human rights" cover the imperialists will use to justify future military adventures.

Marxists fight to mobilise labour in concrete acts of class-struggle solidarity with the besieged Palestinian masses, including political protest strikes and labour action to prevent the shipment of military goods to the Israeli rulers. But such a perspective can only be realised by mobilising workers in the imperialist centres against their *own* rulers, not by fostering illusions in the potential benevolence of the imperialist states. As Leon Trotsky wrote in the 1930s, when many leftists were demanding sanctions by the League of Nations (predecessor of the UN) against the Italian invaders of Ethiopia, "Workers' action can begin only by absolute opposition to the national bourgeoisie and its international combinations. Support of the League and support of workers' actions are fire and water; they cannot be united" ("Once Again the ILP," November 1935).

The Bankruptcy of PLO Nationalism

Groups such as the Stalinoid Workers World Party (WWP), which is prominent in organising pro-Palestinian demonstrations in the U.S., act as cheerleaders for Third World nationalist movements. One will not find a critical word about Arafat or his appeals for imperialist intervention in *Workers World*. Moreover, following

PLO (like other Third World nationalist movements and regimes) quickly came to terms with U.S. imperialism.

The 1993 "peace" accord served only to deepen the oppression of the Palestinian people. The entire Gaza Strip was surrounded by an electrified fence, literally turning it into a glorified concentration camp enclosing over one million Palestinians. The Israeli capitalist rulers drastically curtailed access to low-wage jobs in Israel, which had been the source of income for most Gaza residents. The number of Israeli settlers—the heavily armed, ultra-chauvinist auxiliaries to the military occupation forces—has *doubled* since 1993. A series of internal checkpoints and fortified "Jewish only" highways has carved up the Palestinian population into a multitude of isolated ghettos.

The WWP particularly glorifies the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) as "the largest Palestinian Marxist organization" (*Workers World*, 10 January). Despite its occasional verbal opposition to Arafat's conciliationism, the PFLP is simply a petty-bourgeois nationalist formation fundamentally akin to Arafat's Fatah. Like Arafat, PFLP leader Ahmad Saadat looks to the UN, as he said in an interview in *Al-Hadad* last year, to "force Israel to implement United Nations resolutions." At Palestinian protests in Berlin, PFLP supporters have denounced our comrades for calling for class struggle on the grounds that that would divide the Palestinian people. In the early 1970s, the PFLP was notorious for airline hijackings and indiscriminate terror attacks against Israeli civilians.

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"War on Terror" Targets Leftists, Muslims

U.S. Troops Out of the Philippines!

We reprint below an article from Workers Vanguard (No. 779, 19 April), newspaper of the Spartacist League/U.S.

WORKERS VANGUARD

Having already dispatched more than 600 U.S. troops, together with combat aircraft, to the Philippines since January, on April 8 the Pentagon announced that it would send 300 additional troops to that U.S. neocolony. The U.S. intervention force, sent to open a "second front" as part of Washington's "global war on terror," is the largest single American troop deployment outside Afghanistan since September 11. It is also the first ongoing American military presence in the Philippines since the U.S. abandoned its Clark and Subic Bay bases there a decade ago.

Under the cover of a "training" exercise named after the annual *Balikatan* ("shouldering the load") U.S.-Philippine military maneuvers, the American troops are on a tour of duty of at least six months, primarily in the southern islands of Mindanao, Basilan and Jolo. This is a region torn by struggles by the oppressed Muslim population and peasant insurgents. A 160-strong contingent of American Special Forces "trainers" has been attached to units of the Philippine Army that are pursuing the Muslim secessionist Abu Sayyaf group, which has been responsible for a number of kidnappings and is currently holding an American Christian missionary couple and a Filipino nurse captive in the jungles of Basilan. In fact, the hunt for the unsavory Abu Sayyaf group is a pretext for intensified military repression against insurgent Muslims on these islands.

The arrival of the U.S. military received the blessings of the influential Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines and was hailed by the Makati Business Club bourgeoisie, which together figured prominently in the "People

Power" coup that installed Gloria Macapagal Arroyo as president a year ago. Arroyo's choice of international advisers includes former New York City mayor Rudolph Giuliani and former Australian prime minister Paul Keating. Her government distinguished itself as one of the more rabid supporters of Washington's war against Afghanistan, providing access to Philippine airspace and military facilities for U.S. warplanes en route to aircraft carriers and bases in the Indian Ocean. An indication of the upbeat mood among the Philippine rulers is the buoyancy of stock prices following news of the American deployment.

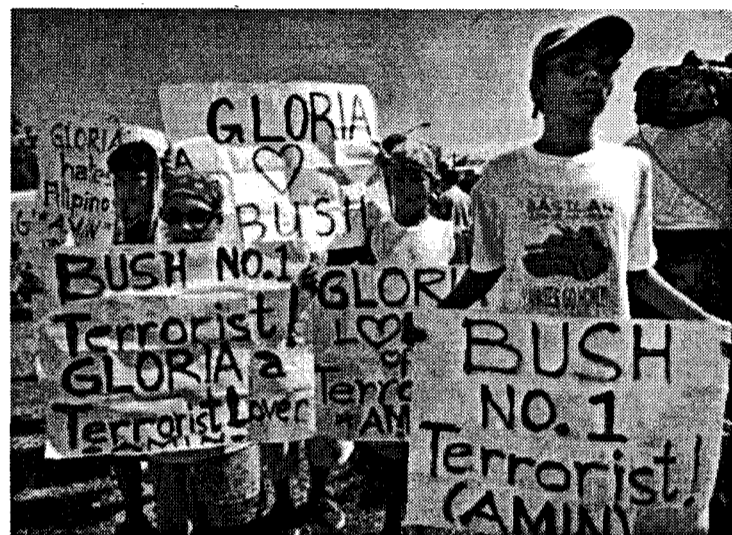
The Philippine oligarchs are hoping that the presence of imperialist troops will help quash social unrest in this country, which is beset by a long-running peasant insurgency, Muslim secessionist rebellion and worsening economic conditions. The American military is reinforcing the Philippine bourgeoisie's repressive capability by arming and training elite killer units called Light Reaction Companies. The U.S. is also supplying stockpiles of small arms, mortars, night vision and communications equipment, helicopters, transport planes and a naval patrol craft. In return, the Philippines signed the Mutual Logistics Support Agreement (MLSA). Although its terms are supposedly being renegotiated after it was exposed in the press, the MLSA allows the United States imperialists access to military facilities beyond the period prescribed by the 1998 Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA).

Washington's current military adventure in the Philippines is part of a broader shift of forces to the Pacific Rim region, aimed in particular at aiding the drive to overturn the 1949 Chinese Revolution and restore capitalism. The Taiwan bourgeoisie's offer to provide the dilapidated Philippine Air Force with two F5E jet fighter squadrons in return for Taiwan's right to access Philippine air space and bases during training maneuvers is a

February 26 protest, one of many in the Philippines against U.S. troop deployment in name of "war on terror."



Reuters



AP

provocation aimed against the Chinese bureaucratically deformed workers state.

The latest U.S. moves can also be seen in part as enforcing its interests against its traditional imperialist rival in Asia, Japan, which depends on nearby sea lanes for its oil supply. Not least, the deployment in Mindanao puts the United States in a strategic location to crush social unrest in the region, especially in Indonesia, which has remained highly unstable since student-initiated protests ousted the bloody Suharto regime in 1998. *Smash the VFA and MLSA! No to U.S. bases! For unconditional military defense of the Chinese deformed workers state against imperialism and capitalist counterrevolution!*

Down With Military Occupation of Mindanao!

Exploiting the fear and genuine outrage resulting from the September 11 bombing of the World Trade Center, the Philippine bourgeoisie has used allegations of ties between Abu Sayyaf and Osama bin Laden's al Qaeda network to turn the screws of repression on Muslims, dissidents and leftists. The number of attacks against leftists increased sharply in the two months after the American troops arrived. The Bayan Muna (Nation First) party, which is politically identified with Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) founder Jose Maria Sison, said that six of its party workers have been "disappeared" by the army in Luzon. On March 1, paramilitary gunmen assassinated Pedro Trabajador, the 70-year-old local leader of the National Federation of Sugar Workers in Negros. At the same time, the government resumed its vilification campaign in the bourgeois press against the CPP-led New People's Army (NPA), calling the NPA guerrillas worse than Abu Sayyaf in order to set them up for liquidation by U.S.-backed killer units.

The capitalist rulers are trying to sell the lie that the imperialist military presence will bring progress to the masses of Mindanao. This resource-rich region, which is a prize for further imperialist

exploitation, is noted for the highest incidence of poverty and illiteracy in the Philippines. Meanwhile, the longstanding terror campaign against oppressed Muslims continues unabated. Scores were recently rounded up on mere suspicion of being Abu Sayyaf sympathizers, and hundreds were driven from rural villages by artillery and aerial bombardment. On January 15, at least 17 people were killed and dozens wounded when a rally in Jolo ended in a clash with Philippine Marines. The protesters were demanding the release of imprisoned Moro National Liberation Front leader Nur Misuari, who had been ousted as governor of the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao and faces charges of rebellion.

Bloody repression in Mindanao and the displacement of its Moro (Muslim) population dates back to the early years of the American colonial occupation of the Philippines, which began with U.S. imperialism's seizure of the islands in the 1898 Spanish-American War. In 1906, troops under General Leonard Wood, commander of the U.S. occupation force, carried out the methodical slaughter of some 900 Moro men, women and children who were trapped in the crater of an extinct volcano. Mark Twain denounced this imperialist butchery in a scathing essay titled "Grief and Mourning for the Night." The expropriation and marginalization of the Muslim population intensified in the post-colonial era, escalating particularly under the dictatorial regime of Ferdinand Marcos. We say: *Down with right-wing and anti-Muslim state terror! Down with the military occupation of Mindanao! U.S. and Philippine troops out now!*

Filipino Left Pushes Nationalism, Class Collaboration

The presence of United States troops has not gone unchallenged. Marches and rallies continue to erupt in several cities, with protesters calling Arroyo a lapdog of the imperialists. On several occasions, protesters have scuffled with cops. With

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AFP

Philippine president Arroyo, installed in "People Power" coup last year, carries out vicious repression of leftists, Muslim minority.

France: Fake Left Backs Chirac

The following is reprinted from Workers Vanguard (No. 781, 17 May), newspaper of the Spartacist League/U.S.

MAY 13—Conservative French president Jacques Chirac celebrated his re-election last Sunday by declaring that his first order of business would be stepped up “security,” a code word for racist cop terror against minorities. The election offered voters a pernicious “choice” between the racist Chirac and the outright fascist Jean-Marie Le Pen, leader of the National Front (FN). It was like being asked to choose between smallpox and cholera! Yet virtually the entire left rallied behind Chirac as a supposed champion of “Republican values,” forming a reactionary national front that extended from the Gaullist right to the “far left.”

Far from being a bulwark against the extreme right, this broad spectrum of support for Chirac—and his 82 percent of the vote—will only lead to even more severe state repression against workers and all the oppressed. Chirac’s “thank you” for the support he got from the “left” was to immediately intensify the Vigipirate campaign of cop terror, dramatically expanding subway “identity checks” of blacks and North Africans (Maghrebins) and moving to reinforce police squads by 40 percent in the Paris subway system. He is also shutting down the Sangatte camp for asylum-seekers near the English Channel. During the campaign, Le Pen vowed to load the Sangatte immigrants on a special train—evoking the Nazi deportations of Jews to the death camps during World War II—and ship them to Blair’s Britain. Now Chirac is moving to get rid of them and ship them anywhere. This is what the “left” voted for in its hysterical campaign to stop Le Pen!

The election was preceded by almost daily mass demonstrations throughout the country in which hundreds of thousands of mainly young protesters expressed their outrage that a fascist had made it to the second round of the presidential ballot. Practically the entire left, from the Socialist Party (PS) and Communist Party (PCF) to the fake-Trotskyist Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire (LCR), pitched in to help channel that explosion of anger into getting out the vote for the rightist Chirac. It was the popular-front government—led by the PS and including the PCF and the bourgeois Greens—that prepared the way for Le Pen’s electoral gains. From the mass expulsion of immigrants to Vigipirate, the popular front’s racist attacks helped make Le Pen’s venomous rantings “respectable.”

The first round of the elections represented a stinging repudiation of the popular-front government. Socialist prime minister Lionel Jospin promptly announced his resignation. Now, with parliamentary elections scheduled for next month, the “choice” being offered voters is whether it will be the right or the “left” that carries out more racist attacks and anti-working-class austerity. The electoral campaign is already centered on the same racist themes of “crime” and “security” that dominated the presidential elections.

Meanwhile, the opportunist LCR is riding high, as the bourgeois press touts them as responsible far leftists who rallied support to vote Chirac and save the Republic. Voting Chirac was the LCR’s hoped-for entry card into the “United Left,” the new name of the PS-led class-collaborationist coalition for the parliamentary elections. The LCR was reportedly granted a seat in the back-room horse trading aimed at cobbling together this new coalition—a process that LCR leader Alain Krivine calls “the reconstruction on the left” (*Libération*, 4 May).



AP

**Break with Class Collaboration!
For a Multiethnic
Revolutionary Workers Party!**



Le Bolchévik

Paris, May Day: Hundreds of thousands protest electoral gains of fascist Le Pen. While fake left pushed support for rightist Chirac, LTF banner called for class struggle against capitalism, proclaiming, “Down With Unity with Chirac!”

Having helped make Chirac master of the house, as soon as the polls closed the LCR staged a rally at Place de la Bastille, joined by the PS, to begin organizing against Chirac! LCR presidential candidate Olivier Besancenot put on a militant face, declaring: “As in Italy, we need to prepare a general strike.” Such prattle is nothing but a cynical attempt to maneuver workers into electing a new popular-front coalition. Meanwhile, the anarchist CNT and the Anarchist Federation (FA) were also very much part of the “stop Le Pen” (read: vote Chirac) swamp—despite all their talk, this time in the small print, against elections. The FA carried a banner in the Paris May Day demonstration that was at best ambiguous and at worst social-chauvinist, which read: “French/Immigrants: Our Country Is Liberty and Equality!” “Our country”?!

The LCR likewise prettifies imperialist France as a bastion of liberty and equality, appealing for French military

intervention in the Near East and the Balkans. Besancenot refused even to defend soccer players from Corsica, long oppressed and persecuted by France, against a chauvinist tirade by Chirac because they jeered the French national anthem at a May 11 match. “I don’t know if one can jeer *La Marseillaise* in the French Stadium,” Besancenot told *Le Monde* (15 May), “but in any case one has the right to boo Jacques Chirac.”

As the immediate “vote Chirac” frenzy subsides, a lot of workers and minorities will rightly blame those who stampeded them into voting for Chirac. Lutte Ouvrière (LO), an ostensibly Trotskyist organization which resisted the pressure to call for a vote to this rightist—for which it was reviled, hissed and booed—could be well positioned to make gains.

In the lead-up to the first round, our comrades of the Ligue Trotskyiste de France issued a 10 March open letter to LO (WV No. 778, 5 April), which

recognized that its presidential campaign sought to draw a crude class line against the Jospin popular front. At the same time, we explained why LO did not warrant even the most critical electoral support:

“LO does not oppose the government because they are opposed to class collaboration: they empty their correct opposition of all its content by their tacit support to Vigipirate and their explicit support to the reactionary mobilizations of cops in November.... LO’s refusal to fight against Vigipirate represents a loyalty oath to the racist bourgeois order and to the anti-working-class austerity of the Jospin government. But if, in its campaign, LO came out clearly against Vigipirate and the cop terror, we would envision calling for voting for LO, without muting our criticisms of their program.”

Only after the election has LO “discovered” that the policies of the Jospin government—which LO helped put in office—were racist and paved the way for Le Pen.

LO’s main emphasis going into the second round was to appeal to workers who had voted for Le Pen on the first round not to do so again. But in capitulating to the Jospin government’s Vigipirate/“security” campaign, LO aided the popular front in driving backward workers into the arms of reaction. This election was a clear demonstration of how, in the absence of a credible left opposition to popular-front austerity and racist attacks, more backward sections of the working class can be attracted to “radical” right-wing demagogues. That underlines why the fight against racist oppression is so central to anti-capitalist struggle. Yet LO’s timeworn practice is to capitulate to the existing level of consciousness of the working class rather than struggle against racist, sexist and anti-gay bigotry.

The centrist Internationalist Group (IG), a small clot of defectors from the revolutionary Trotskyism of the International Communist League, struck an ultra-militant posture over the French elections, thundering (in bold print) in a 26 April leaflet that it was “*necessary to mobilize the power of the working class to boycott the electoral circus of the bourgeoisie*” through “*demonstrations and workers strikes*” on the day of the vote. Interestingly, the “boycott” line was also promoted by the cyberspace political bandits of David North’s World Socialist Web Site (29 April), who are past masters at cynical posturing to camouflage their opportunist appetites. The IG is no less cynical. For the working class to *boycott* bourgeois elections presupposes a level of class consciousness one would expect in a pre-revolutionary situation posing the question of state power. But the IG’s call came as over one and a half million people, including large numbers of workers, were demonstrating in the streets in support of the bourgeois “Republic”—and the rightist Chirac!

The IG’s macho phrasemongering is simply a smokescreen for its fundamentally opportunist politics, posturing as the militant in-the-streets wing of the anti-fascist electoral “unity” pushed by the French left in the tow of the popular front. While admitting in passing (in a 4 May statement) that “Le Pen is not about to take power,” the IG’s articles on the French elections are full of the same “fascism is around the corner” rhetoric that the PS, PCF, LCR et al. used to justify “unity” behind Chirac. In its 4 May statement, the IG draws an analogy with the 1932 election of Hindenburg as German chancellor, who handed over power to Hitler a year later. But by the early 1930s, Hitler had 100,000 stormtroopers on the street terrorizing Jews and attacking trade-union and leftist meetings.

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AUSTRALASIAN SPARTACIST

French Trotskyists Say: PS-PCF Popular Front Paved the Way for Le Pen's Fascists

We publish below a 23 April statement translated from *Le Bolchévik* No. 159 (Spring 2002), newspaper of the *Ligue Trotskyste de France*.

LE BOLCHEVIK

We must draw the lessons from the April 21 elections. It's the politics of Chirac, Jospin, Robert Hue and even the so-called "far left" which paved the way for the fascists by making the campaign for "security," in other words racist repression above all against youth of North African origin, the central theme of the presidential election. Today *Lutte Ouvrière* and the *Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire* seek to cover themselves by blaming the government's racist politics for this outcome. But where were they? LO hailed the reactionary cop demonstrations of last November and refuses to oppose *Vigipirate*, which in France after September 11 has represented the reality of the "war against terrorism" that targets all immigrants, and behind them the workers movement and all the oppressed. As for the LCR, how can a party that prettifies French imperialism, going so far as to call for it to intervene militarily everywhere—from the Balkans in 1999 to Palestine today—combat fascism, which represents French nationalism in its most extreme form?

In this grave situation, the PS [Socialist Party], the PCF [Communist Party], the Greens, the unions (CGT and CFTD) have raised the call to "block Le Pen" and are calling for voting for Chirac! This is like a doctor who wants to fight the plague with cholera. As for the LCR and LO, we may expect that they will preach the "unity of the left to fight the ultraright" as they put into the saddle for the legislative elections a new popular front (a coalition of workers parties with bourgeois parties for the purpose of running the capitalist state) around the PS, which has been running the racist, capitalist French state for the last five years. Already in 1997 LO called for voting for the PS and PCF in the legislative elections everywhere that Le Pen was on the second round, contributing to Jospin's victory. For us Trotskyists, opposition to class collaboration and the popular front is an essential principle. When the interests of the working class are subordinated to those of the bourgeoisie (and they always are in such coalitions), reaction always wins. Our slogans in these elections are more important than ever for organizing the working class to defend itself and defend all the oppressed: *Down with Vigipirate! Down with the security campaign! Full citizenship rights for all immigrants! Stop the deportations! France, UN: Hands off the Near East!*

These elections mark a big upheaval in

the French political landscape. Their context is the austerity implemented by the popular-front government: massive layoffs, factory closings, privatizations, attacks on pensions, etc. Since the capitalist counterrevolution in the USSR, the European bourgeoisies have installed governments to dismantle piece by piece the "welfare state," a series of social services and workers' gains won by bitter struggles. In recent years, governments led by social democrats have been charged with this work in most countries of Europe, thereby preparing the job for the far right which is taking power now, with Haider's party in the Austrian government and Berlusconi/Fini/Bossi in

cally; LO and the LCR still share the same perspective. On the other hand, part of the PCF's working-class and popular electoral base has turned to the fascists as the only "radical" alternative to the rottenness of Jospin/Chirac. This election shows that the justified hatred which has built up in the working class for this government of austerity can be exploited by fascist demagogues. This is why the fight against racist oppression is so central to anti-capitalist struggle, as we stressed in our open letter to LO.

Thousands of high school students and others immediately took to the streets throughout France to protest against the fascist Le Pen. Now Le Pen is passing



Joanna B. Pinneo

North Africans and other minorities in France are segregated into impoverished ghettos and face racist terror campaign by cops.



Italy, for example. And the British Labour Party's Blair has teamed up with Berlusconi against the workers in struggle.

The working class does not lack the militancy to oppose these attacks, as we saw in December 1995 and more recently with the Marseilles longshoremen (a historically very ethnically integrated layer of the working class) or with the recent general strike in Italy. But the sellout leadership of the reformist parties and unions always diverts these struggles toward parliamentary combinations. For the first time since 1969, the left is not represented in the second round. So much the better that the PCF is paying so dearly for its collaboration with Chirac/Jospin. The PCF was an enormous obstacle on the road of the class struggle: this party, which saved the French bourgeoisie's hide in 1936, 1944-47 and May 1968, is only the shadow of its former self. But the PCF's politics of class collaboration has not been defeated politi-

himself off as a "normal candidate." But make no mistake, he is a real fascist who is for deporting immigrants from France and who organizes bands of thugs to attack youth of immigrant origin. He was a torturer during the Algerian War. While in recent months there was hardly anything in the press about the fascists, that's because the cops themselves directly are carrying out the roundups and racist repression. We've been hearing a lot about the "anti-Semitism of the Maghrebins" recently, because that's a pretext for the repression in the ghettos. But it's not the Maghrebins who voted for Le Pen, who declared that the Holocaust of the Jews was just a "detail" and who still identifies himself with the Vichy regime.

Le Pen and the fascists don't represent "bad ideas" that one can debate. Fascism is a program to wipe out the organized workers movement, send women back to the home and massacre "immigrants,"

Jews, minorities and homosexuals. The fascists are the extreme expression of the interests of the bourgeoisie and are their reserve army against the proletariat. That's why the fight against fascism has to be linked to the struggle against the system of capitalist exploitation. Le Pen isn't on the verge of taking power in this country, but his election score will be translated into an augmentation of racist crimes in the streets. *Smash the fascists before they smash us! For worker/immigrant self-defense groups based on the factories!*

In 1995 the National Front launched its electoral campaign by assassinating Ibrahim Ali and "celebrated" its showing by killing Brahim Bouraam on May Day. Le Pen's call for an FN mobilization on May Day [this year], the international day of the working class, is a sinister provocation. What's necessary is mass mobilizations to repulse this danger. As Trotsky wrote ("Germany, the Key to the International Situation," 26 November 1931):

"On the scales of electoral statistics, a thousand fascist votes weigh as much as a thousand communist votes. But on the scales of the revolutionary struggle, a thousand workers in one big factory represent a force a hundred times greater."

But instead of mobilizing the working class to sweep the fascists off the streets on May Day, the fake left uses the anger of the youth and of all the opponents of the fascists to refurbish not only the social democrats but even Chirac! The "CGT police union" just called for "all republican policemen to participate in all demonstrations organized by the forces of progress." In fact, the cop "unions" would be the organic support for a fascist regime. We say: *Cops out of the unions!*

The anger at the election results is cynically manipulated by the LCR of Krivine/Besancenot. [LO's] Laguiller announced the evening after the elections that they aren't going to vote for Chirac on the second round, but in their editorial yesterday they are already much more evasive, refusing to clearly state who to vote for: "Everyone must make their own choice." As for the LCR, they go in for empty talk about a "third round" with social struggle in the streets "against fascism and the bosses" (leaflet of the LCR's youth group). With the French army of the Algerian War as an "international protection force" in Palestine? With "union rights and the right to strike for the police" (*Rouge*, 13 December 2001)? Their capitulation to bourgeois triumphalism and the ideological anti-communist campaign was expressed in the campaign of Besancenot who prated about "democracy" and denounced the organizer of the socialist revolution of October 1917, Leon Trotsky, by saying about him (*Le Monde*, 11 April): "It's not certain he would have been much better than Stalin." Stalin was the gravedigger of the Russian Revolution!

The disaster of parliamentarism could also benefit the anarchists. Quite a few youth with good impulses reject parliamentary cretinism. But more than ever in the climate of the "death of communism" after the capitalist counterrevolution in the USSR, they are hostile to the very idea that struggles need leadership, and they reject the leading revolutionary role of the working class. As Trotsky said, in reactionary periods there are "monstrous ideological relapses" and "senile thought seems to have become infantile." The numerous spontaneous demonstrations are not sufficient to wipe out the gangrene of racism and fascism, and the capitalists' and social-democrats' attacks on the working class. It's necessary to have the perspective of a workers revolution to sweep away the whole capitalist system. The working class, which produces the wealth of society, draws its power from its role in production; it must lead the struggles of all the oppressed against this rotten capitalist system. But for that the working class needs a new leadership, which we are determined to build. ■

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Near East...

(continued from page 4)

While scorning any notion of proletarian class unity between Arab and Hebrew-speaking workers, the "Marxist" PFLP readily unites with Islamic fundamentalists like Hamas. The anti-Semitic reactionaries of Hamas and Islamic Jihad are a deadly threat to Palestinian leftists and especially to women who refuse to submit to the dictates of *sharia* (Islamic law). In fact, many Palestinians see imperialist intervention as a way of maintaining Arafat's rule in the Palestinian Authority as a lesser evil to Hamas. But it is precisely the utter bankruptcy of PLO nationalism that has driven so many among the historically cosmopolitan Palestinian people into the arms of the Islamic fundamentalists.

WWP's vicarious nationalism goes so far as to enthuse indiscriminately over Palestinian suicide attacks: "The determined campaign of suicide resistance bombings shows the determination to end the occupation has taken such deep root among the people, young and old, women, children and men, that after 35 years there is no way to eradicate the struggle" (*Workers World*, 11 April). In fact, these are acts of desperation in the face of an overwhelmingly superior military force. Moreover, WWP draws no distinction between attacks on Israeli troops and settlers, who are part of the oppressive military occupation regime, and innocent civilians in Israel. Criminal suicide attacks on civilian populations are typical of nationalist struggles, just or otherwise.

As we noted in a 30 March Spartacist League/U.S. statement titled "Defend the Palestinian People! All Israeli Troops, Settlers Out of the Occupied Territories!" (WV No. 778, 5 April):

"Now, not just Islamic fanatics but secular Palestinians, including women, see no other option than to immolate themselves and random others in suicide bombings. But such attacks only serve to seal any fissures in Israeli society, such as the recent protests among Israeli army reservists and their supporters against the occupation, and drive the Hebrew-speaking population into the arms of the Zionist nationalist madmen."

Popular support for the butcher Sharon among the Hebrew-speaking population climbed significantly in the wake of the recent series of suicide bombings, with an overwhelming majority supporting the current onslaught. Indeed, Sharon has always sought to provoke Palestinian terror attacks in order to have a pretext for his far more deadly campaign of terror against the Palestinians.

The "Mini-State": A Palestinian Ghetto

Behind the reformist left's appeals for imperialist intervention and support to Palestinian nationalism lies the utter incapacity to conceive of any solution to the Palestinian question outside the framework of the bourgeois nation-state system. They reject the prospect of Arab/Hebrew workers revolution to sweep away both the Israeli and Arab bourgeoisies as utopian. In fact, that is the only road to national emancipation for the Palestinian people. It is patently clear that the Palestinians cannot prevail in a military conflict with the Zionist state. Yet there can be no genuine expression of Palestinian self-determination without the destruction of that state, which is

inherently oppressive to the Palestinian people. Every "solution" to the Palestinian national question under capitalism either perpetuates the oppression of the Palestinian Arab people or envisions a reversal of the terms of oppression, denying the legitimate national rights of the Hebrew-speaking people.

In 1974, the PLO leadership declared its support for the creation of a Palestinian "mini-state" in the West Bank and Gaza. Palestinian left-nationalist leaders like George Habash of the PFLP opposed the mini-state solution, but could offer no alternative other than continued wars between the Arab regimes and Israel. This was premised on the perspective that the Arab regimes could be pressured to fight for Palestinian rights. The reality, however, is that the Arab bourgeois regimes are no less hostile to Palestinian national aspirations than the Zionist rulers.

Protesters in Arab cities have demanded, "Where are the Arab armies?" But when Arab armies went to war with Israel in 1948, it was not to "liberate" Palestine but to carve it up among themselves. And the Zionist leaders were well aware of this fact. In November 1947,

deformed expression of self-determination. At best, it would resemble what former prime minister Ehud Barak offered Arafat at Camp David two years ago: the Gaza Strip and four isolated cantons in the West Bank, crisscrossed by "strategic highways" and surrounded by fortified settlements. This "mini-state" would be nothing more than a bantustan where neighboring states could dump their unwanted Palestinian populations—2.5 million in Jordan, 1.5 million in Israel and one million in Lebanon and Syria.

A "Democratic, Secular" Palestine?

While most left organisations today reject the mini-state solution, the DSP, International Socialist Organisation (ISO) and Socialist Alternative (SA) cling to the call for a "secular, democratic Palestine" proposed for many years by the PLO. For example, *Socialist Alternative* (April 2002) declares: "The only hope for a real solution to the violence is a secular, democratic state in Palestine, where Jews and Arabs have equal rights."

To begin with, such a state would exclude the millions of Palestinians today living in Jordan, which is a majority-

"spokescouncil" meeting in defence of the Palestinians seeking to bring their struggle to the Woomera protesters, themselves besieged by capitalist state forces. The SA chair shunted the motion to the end of the agenda. The ISO, while claiming to agree with the motion, ensured it would not be voted. These groups buried this act of internationalism so as to curry favour with liberals who argued that it would be "inappropriate" for the "pro-refugee movement."

For Arab/Hebrew Workers Revolution!

At the heart of the Palestinian question is the impossibility of achieving national justice for geographically interpenetrated peoples within a capitalist framework. Both Palestinian Arabs and Hebrew-speaking Israelis live in and lay claim to a small sliver of land in the Near East. Under capitalism, the exercise of national self-determination by either of the populations will necessarily be at the expense of the other. The national emancipation of the Palestinians—including the right of all refugees and their descendants to return to their homeland—necessarily entails workers revolutions to sweep away the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the bloody Ba'athist bonapartists in Syria, to bring down the capitalist rulers of Lebanon and to shatter the Zionist state, establishing a socialist federation of the Near East.

In the 1970s and early '80s, we raised the call for a bi-national workers state encompassing both the Palestinian Arab and Hebrew-speaking peoples, but we have not since raised that tactical perspective. We cannot project the particular national configuration which would best express the democratic aspirations of both peoples under conditions of proletarian power in the region. This might well take the form of a bi-national workers state or two or more workers states.

It is only the working class of Israel that has the capacity to destroy the Zionist citadel from within. Unless the Hebrew-speaking workers are broken from Zionism and won to defence of the Palestinian people, there is no future for the Hebrew-speaking people in the Near East. If the Israeli bourgeoisie is not swept away through socialist revolution, sooner or later the bloody course of Zionist expansionism will lead the Israeli rulers to launch their arsenal of nuclear weapons and turn the whole region into a devastated wasteland.

Israeli society is not a seamless reactionary mass. Even in the face of the current anti-Arab hysteria, some 60,000 people turned out in mid-May for a demonstration in Tel Aviv to demand withdrawal from the Occupied Territories. Sephardic Jews, though largely under the sway of right-wing and religious parties, suffer widespread discrimination and poverty; the Palestinian Arabs who are nominally "citizens" are consigned to segregated, impoverished areas and low-paid, unskilled jobs. More fundamentally, the class interests of the Hebrew-speaking workers impel them to struggle against their capitalist exploiters, as witnessed by a number of strikes just in recent months.

We have no illusions that it will be easy to shatter the chauvinism of the Hebrew-speaking working class. Probably only great historic events such as Israel's defeat and humiliation in war or a cataclysmic economic crisis could break the Israeli working class from its Zionist rulers and lay the basis for a mass revolutionary workers party. Alternately, the conquest of power by the proletariat in one of the major Near Eastern states—such as Egypt, Iraq or Iran—under a revolutionary internationalist, i.e., communist, leadership would dramatically change the consciousness of the Israeli working class.

The massive protests from North Africa to the Persian Gulf in solidarity with the Palestinians point to the fragility of the Arab bourgeois regimes. The nationalists and Islamists look to a "holy war" of the Arab peoples against Zionist

Sydney, 19 April:
Spartacists raise
proletarian
internationalist
program in defence of
Palestinians, oppose
UN/imperialist
intervention in
Near East.



Jewish Agency leader Golda Meir had secret negotiations with King Abdullah of Transjordan, who informed her of his plans to take over what was then eastern Palestine. Indeed, between 1948 and the 1967 Arab-Israeli War, the West Bank and Gaza were occupied by Jordan and Egypt respectively. And the Palestinians there remained politically dispossessed and subject to brutal repression.

Stunned by their defeat at the hands of Israel in 1967, the Arab regimes had their authority sufficiently shaken to allow more freedom of manoeuvre for Palestinian nationalist forces. But the Arab regimes could not long tolerate independent armed forces operating on their territories. With occasional prodding by the Zionists, the Arab rulers suppressed the Palestinian resistance. In the decade following the 1967 war, *nearly 50,000 Palestinians were slaughtered by Arab governments*, including some 10,000 militants killed by the Jordanian monarchy in the 1970 Black September massacre.

When the PLO came out for a "two-state" solution in 1974, we declared "West Bank Mini-State No Solution," while acknowledging it as "a very partial and deformed expression of the Palestinian Arabs' right to self-determination" (WV No. 57, 22 November 1974). Such a statelet under the stranglehold of Israel would have meant an impoverished existence for the Palestinians living there. But what has been on offer as an "independent" Palestine since the Oslo accords would not represent even the most

Palestinian country. More fundamentally, while a secular, democratic Palestine may appear to many Western leftists and liberals as a humane, rational solution, it preserves the essential core of the Arab nationalist position, which *denies* that the Hebrew-speaking people constitute a nation with the right to self-determination. Rather, they are to be treated simply as a religious minority.

Consonant with this outlook, reformist left groups sometimes describe Israel as a "settler-colonial state." Behind this position is the argument that since the Israeli Jews are the oppressors, they have forfeited their own national rights as against the oppressed Palestinians. The logic of this position is that if the Israeli working class is unwilling to live in a Palestinian-dominated state, then it has no right to live in the region at all.

This perspective rejects any possibility of winning the Hebrew-speaking workers to a program of *class unity* with their Arab brothers and sisters in a common fight around common class interests against all the exploiters and oppressors of the region. And without that, any talk of "revolution" or national justice is simply empty rhetoric that does nothing to advance the cause of the Palestinians.

The doctrine that an oppressor nation forfeits its right to self-determination has nothing in common with socialism and democracy; it is the ideology of genocidal irredentism. The Zionist state was created by crushing the national rights of the Palestinians. But securing national justice for the Palestinians does *not* mean reversing the terms of oppression and denying the democratic rights of the Hebrew-speaking people. Basic to the Leninist position on the national question—the only consistently democratic position—is that all nations have a right to self-determination.

The claims of the reformist left to champion the oppressed Palestinians is in fact subordinate to their opportunist manoeuvres. This was shown at the Woomera protests. At the height of Sharon's assault on Ramallah, our comrades put forward a motion at a

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Immigrants...

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in Melbourne where the Australian Manufacturing Workers Union (AMWU) and the CFMEU construction union held a thousands-strong stop-work and march against the union-busting Cole Royal Commission. The union rally approached the pro-refugee blockade (which was endorsed by the CFMEU and AMWU) of the Department of Immigration & Multicultural & Indigenous Affairs (DIMA) and some unionists took "Stop the War on Refugees" placards. But instead of joining the blockade as many had hoped, the union misleaders ostentatiously led the march right past DIMA, scuttling an opportunity to concretely combine defence of immigrants with opposition to union-busting attacks. Feeling betrayed by this outcome, some leftist youth are pondering: what stands in the way of working-class action in defence of minorities?

In a particularly grotesque way, the obstacles to unleashing union power were illustrated in a recent dispute between the Maritime Union of Australia (MUA) and the Canadian-owned shipping firm, CSL. CSL's wage-gouging, union-busting attempt to replace the *Yarra's* MUA crew with a low-wage Ukrainian crew met with a legitimate occupation by eleven MUA workers seeking to defend their jobs. But instead of launching a class-struggle fight for jobs based on a fighting unity with overseas crews, the MUA bureaucrats ran a vile campaign to keep out overseas seafarers from coastal shipping in Australia. MUA national secretary Paddy Crumlin railed against "cheap replacement foreign labour," while the union bureaucrats organised a reactionary blockade of CSL's *Pacific* in Port Melbourne, simply because it was manned by Ukrainians!

A class-struggle leadership would fight to throw back the bosses' union busting through *joint class-struggle action* with and on behalf of the Ukrainian workers on the *Pacific*, as well as the Filipino, Indonesian, Russian and other seafarers who are forced to toil in terrible working conditions on "Flag of Convenience" "coffin ships." It would demand full union rates, conditions and protection for *all* seamen working Australian ports and

shipping and fight to organise any unorganised workers into the union.

Instead the MUA bureaucrats seamlessly folded their long-standing chauvinist drive for "Australian Crews on Australian Ships" into the U.S. and Australian imperialists' "war on terror," giving it a magnified racist viciousness. Feeding into Howard's racist anti-immigrant frenzy, Crumlin fumed that foreign crews and foreign shipping will "threaten Australia's border security" and are about "circumventing Australia's immigration laws," raising the spectre of attacks by terrorists and even Osama bin Laden!

This shows how the ALP parliamentary and trade-union misleaders act as



Maritime union bureaucracy pushes protectionist poison, lines up workers behind racist Australian bosses against workers in other countries.

the prime purveyors of toxic bourgeois reaction—White Australia racism, male chauvinism, nationalism and loyalty to the capitalist state—within the workers movement. This is manifestly counterposed to any struggle to mobilise the working class in defence of minorities, women and peoples facing Australian imperialist terror abroad. But it is also the barrier to a working-class fight against the most direct union-busting attacks. Racism divides and undermines the struggles of the working class. Embracing the bourgeoisie's "war on terror" promotes Howard's proposed "anti-terror" laws, which, while targeting in the first instance immigrants, are aimed also at criminalising militant union struggles (see "Sinister 'Anti-Terror' Laws Target Workers, Minorities," *ASP* No. 178, Autumn).

In pushing protectionism—the defence of the Australian bosses' profits through tariffs, laws and other mechanisms against rival overseas capitalists—the MUA bureaucrats are standing on a key plank of Laborism. The nationalism and protectionism pushed by the Laborite misleaders is based on the myth that it is in the interests of Australian workers to protect Australian-owned industry and "national security." This fraud serves to tie the working class to the local capitalist exploiters and the state which enforces the bosses' interests. It divides workers here from their true allies: the workers of other countries. It was the trade-union bureaucrats' craven sub-

But Johnston & Co., wedded to the same pro-capitalist Laborite program of defending the "national interest" as the "right," paralyse the unions in the face of escalating attacks. The "internationalist" Johnston commended the MUA's vile campaign against overseas seafarers! And while Johnston helped ensure that union contingents avoided joining the pro-refugee blockade of DIMA in Melbourne, AMWU members were mobilised to walk off the job to join the chauvinist blockade of the Ukrainian-crewed *Pacific*! Meanwhile the AMWU continues its protectionist "make it here or jobs disappear" campaign. We say: Down with racist protectionism! Workers of the world unite! For a class-struggle fight for jobs for all!

To unchain the power of the unions requires an uncompromising political struggle to root out the deep-going nationalism and backwardness that currently poisons the workers movement. Militant workers must be won to the understanding that only by fighting in defence of minorities and all the oppressed can the working class forge the unity and consciousness necessary to turn back the bosses' mounting attacks. To wage such a fight for political class consciousness requires the construction of a revolutionary vanguard party like that built by Russian revolutionary leader V.I. Lenin.

Such a party will be forged through an implacable struggle against the current misleaders of the working class, the pro-capitalist ALP/ACTU tops. Basing themselves on a thin layer of privileged workers who scavenge crumbs from the super-profits derived from brutal Australian imperialist exploitation, the Laborite bureaucrats, whether "left" or "right," identify with and are fundamentally loyal to Australian imperialism. This was starkly illustrated in the September 1999 union actions and work bans against Indonesia which were explicitly designed to push for the racist Australian imperialist military to occupy East Timor. Almost three years later, and despite the formal declaration of "independence," East Timor is a neocolonial hellhole where the majority of the population live in deathly poverty. We say: Australian/UN/all imperialist troops and their lackeys out now!

Resolutely opposing Australian imperialist militarism abroad, from Afghanistan to East Timor, we fight to bring to the working class the understanding that the capitalist state cannot be made to serve the interests of the working class and oppressed. The satisfaction of the most basic needs—jobs, quality health care, childcare and education—requires the construction of a workers state to expropriate the capitalist exploiters, laying the basis for an egalitarian socialist society, free from racial and sexual discrimination.

Fake Left Reinforces Laborite Obstacles to Class Struggle

Reformist left organisations such as the International Socialist Organisation (ISO) and Socialist Alternative (SA) have taken to arguing for "organised working class" defence of refugees. To

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Israel. Marxists fight to bring the class question to the fore, to mobilise the proletariat of the Islamic countries of the Near East in struggle against their own bourgeoisies. That possibility was clearly demonstrated by the revolutionary upheavals in Iran and Iraq in the 1950s. However, these revolutionary opportunities were betrayed by the Stalinist-led Communist parties, subordinating the proletariat to an alliance with "progressive" bourgeois nationalists who, once in power, launched a bloodbath against the Communist-led workers.

More recently, there have been significant workers struggles throughout the region, from Algeria to Egypt and Iran. In Algeria, 14,000 oil workers went on strike on 9 April over wages and working conditions, shutting down the Skikda refinery, which processes 70 percent of the country's oil. Working-class struggles must be directed toward a fight for social and national emancipation against the imperialist oppressors and the domestic bourgeoisies that serve as their agents. Key to that task is the political independence of the working class, requiring intransigent struggle against all forms of nationalism and religious fundamentalism. What is necessary is the forging of Marxist vanguard parties based on the perspective and program of Trotsky's permanent revolution:

"With regard to countries with a belated bourgeois development, especially the colonial and semi-colonial countries, the theory of permanent revolution signifies that the complete and genuine solution of their tasks of achieving *democracy and national emancipation* is conceivable only through the dictatorship of the

proletariat as the leader of the subjugated nation, above all of its peasant masses....

"In a country where the proletariat has power in its hands as the result of the democratic revolution, the subsequent fate of the dictatorship and socialism depends in the last analysis not only and not so much upon the national productive forces as upon the development of the international socialist revolution."

—*The Permanent Revolution* (1929); reprinted in *The Permanent Revolution and Results and Prospects* (1969)

The fight for a socialist federation of the Near East is part of the struggle to sweep away the system of imperialism internationally. In turn, the struggle for proletarian power in the Near East, a region which supplies the oil on which the industrial economies of North America, West Europe and Japan are dependent, would clearly confront imperialist hostility. The liberation of the peoples of the Near East is therefore integrally bound up with the struggle for proletarian revolution in the imperialist West. Above all, this poses the need to build revolutionary workers parties in the imperialist countries. The Spartacist League seeks to forge such a party here, understanding that the significant number of Arabic, Turkish and Kurdish working-class militants will not only play a leading role in the fight against racist Australian capitalism but are a living bridge to the proletariat of the Near East. Reforge Trotsky's Fourth International, world party of socialist revolution!

Adapted from *Workers Vanguard* (No. 779, 19 April), newspaper of the Spartacist League/U.S.

servience to the capitalist state which saw them knife the 1998 MUA struggle. In order to grovel for a sell-out deal in the all-Australian bosses' courts they demobilised thousands of workers who had flocked to the picket lines. The result was the loss of hundreds of jobs, increased casualisation and massive speed-up.

Fight the Toxic Laborite Nationalism That Corrodes the Unions!

Unlike the leadership of the MUA, the "left" bureaucrats leading the heavily immigrant unions such as the AMWU are more wont to spout off against racism and even address refugee rallies. Reflecting anger among especially immigrant workers at the ALP's vicious racist campaign in the last federal election and broader working-class disgruntlement at the union-busting attacks carried out by state ALP governments, some of these bureaucrats have threatened to disaffiliate their unions from the ALP. The AMWU Victorian branch, led by Craig Johnston, has suspended payments to the ALP for six months.

Targeted for his sometimes militant union tactics, Johnston currently faces vicious charges by the Bracks Labor government following protest actions against Johnson Tiles and the notorious anti-union outfit Skilled Engineering in June last year. New charges have now been leveled against Johnston including the very serious charge of "threats to kill." We say: Drop all these union-busting charges now! It is in the interests of all working people to mobilise in defence of Johnston and the other AMWU members facing charges.

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Immigrants...

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determine the authenticity of their posture, let us examine where these groups stand with respect to the Laborite obstacles to such class-struggle action.

Firstly, consider how these groups motivate the call for proletarian action in defence of refugees. The ISO states: "The Australian workers movement has a proud record of action in solidarity with anti-racist struggles—from the fight for Indonesian independence, to the 'Moratoriums' against the Vietnam War, to action in support of East Timor" (*Socialist Worker*, 12 April). While SA declares, "the unions demonstrated their ability to take action during the East Timor campaign. Strikes and work bans in solidarity with the East Timorese resistance applied real pressure to the Indonesian government" (*Socialist Alternative*, March).

The union actions in defence of the Indonesian anti-colonial independence struggle in the 1940s (see "International Workers Solidarity: The Black Armada," *ASp* No. 178, Autumn) and actions *against* the Australian imperialist military during the Vietnam War were indeed powerful internationalist actions. But the union bans *against* Indonesia over East Timor were pro-imperialist actions aimed at speeding up the entry of Australian troops. Furthermore, these bans included stopping desperately needed

wheat supplies to Indonesia's impoverished workers and peasants. At the time the ISO, SA, Workers Power and the Socialist Party were caught up in the wave of chauvinism that swept the country, hailing the pro-imperialist bans and marching in rallies screaming for Australian and UN troops to occupy East Timor. Even as SA limply declared "peacekeepers are not the answer" and stated that "the leadership of the union movement saw the union bans as a way of pressuring our government to send in the peacekeepers," they called to "accelerate the campaign of industrial action that the union movement has initiated" (*Socialist Alternative*, September 1999).

By promoting the Laborite union tops' campaign, the ISO and SA whitewash the brutal, racist Australian capitalist state, which kills Aborigines in and out of custody and kidnaps asylum seekers on the high seas. In doing so they not only help provide the ideological cover for future Australian military adventures but actually strengthen the obstacles to successful class-struggle actions in defence of unions, refugees and all the oppressed, which must necessarily be in *opposition* to the racist capitalist state.

Now, as the Australian imperialists—backed up by their misogynist and racist troops—bludgeon the East Timorese into accepting the looting of their oil and gas reserves, the fake left are desperate to cover their tracks. At a 2 December "Stop the WAR" conference in Mel-

bourne, an SA cadre stated, under pressure from Spartacist interventions, that by supporting the UN over East Timor, most of "the left" had made it harder to mobilise opposition to the war in Afghanistan. Hoping that no one would remember that SA had hailed the "Peacekeepers IN!" rallies and the send-in-the-troops bans as "a magnificent stance by workers," the SAer declared that "the left had capitulated to imperialism."

The ISO and SA's hailing of the pro-imperialist Laborite actions over East Timor shows that these groups are loyal left tails of the "left" bureaucrats (such as those leading the AMWU and CFMEU), who were at the forefront of this national-chauvinist campaign. So while the ISO today fawns over the virulently protectionist Craig Johnston, SA states that "unity with the left wing, militant unions is so important for refugee activists" (*Socialist Alternative*, April).

We certainly fight to win anti-racist youth to the side of the working class. But in SA's call for "unity," the absence of any criticism of the pro-imperialist, nationalist program of the misleaders of the "left wing, militant unions" (such as the CFMEU's despicable campaign to turn in "illegal" workers on job sites to DIMA) shows that what they mean is "unity" with the "left" bureaucrats. In this, SA, like the ISO, acts to legitimise the protectionist poison these Laborite misleaders spew and the chauvinist campaigns they lead, all of which are an obstacle to any internationalist class-struggle perspective.

While writing in their April paper about rumours that the CFMEU and AMWU would join the pro-refugee M1 blockade in Melbourne, SA's talk of the need for working-class defence of refugees simply disappeared from their next issue after their darling "left" bureaucrats spiked this potentially powerful action. Fundamentally hostile to any political struggle against Laborism, SA cannot offer any ostensible proletarian perspective that will be credible to pro-refugee activists in the wake of M1, so now they promote classless—and ultimately impotent—"civil disobedience."

Stripped of occasional rhetoric about "revolution," the program of the ISO and SA is to elect a "lesser evil" social-democratic government to run the capitalist state, which they hope to lobby through mass pressure. On the eve of the last federal election, SA stated that "we have little choice but to grit our teeth and vote Labor" while claiming that "only real mass movements ever forced the ALP to take a decent stand" (*Socialist Alternative*, October 2001).

The ISO joined the fake lefts' Socialist Alliance that postured as an "alternative" to Labor at the last elections while actually calling to elect it. As Socialist Alliance made clear: "the best possible scenario for Australian politics after November 10" would be "a Labor government elected in spite of its war and refugee policy" (*Green Left Weekly*, 31 October 2001). In sharp counterposition, we proclaimed: "No Vote to the ALP, Party of Racism and War! No Vote to Socialist Alliance, Lackeys for Labor! For Class Struggle Against the Capitalist Rulers at Home!"

As we said at the time, the claim by these groups to be defenders of refugees is belied by their fundamental loyalty to the pro-capitalist, racist social democracy and through it to the capitalist rulers. Nowhere is this clearer than in the ISO and SA's refusal to defend those states where capitalism was overthrown. They howled along with former Liberal prime minister Malcolm Fraser, and later the ALP's Hawke, in support of the forces of capitalist counterrevolution which destroyed the Soviet degenerated workers state. So too today they line up with the imperialists who are hell-bent on destroying the Chinese and other bureaucratically deformed workers states.

Reconquering China for neocolonial exploitation through the destruction of the 1949 anti-capitalist social revolution is the big prize for the various imperialist

powers. Despite profound bureaucratic deformations, the 1949 revolution destroyed the rule of the rapacious landlords and the wretched bourgeoisie and collectivised the means of production. The revolution enabled women to advance by magnitudes over their previous miserable status, symbolised by the barbaric practice of footbinding. The urgent fight for the unconditional military defence of China, North Korea, Vietnam and Cuba against imperialist attack and capitalist counterrevolution is a key, strategic task facing the workers of the world.

For Proletarian Internationalism!

While claiming to stand for working-class struggle in defence of refugees, the ISO endlessly waxes on about the need to build a "movement" through "bigger and broader mass actions that put the Liberals on the back foot." By this they mean allying with prominent, openly anti-working-class forces who see the government's policy on refugees as being bad for Australian business. Thus on 22 May the Melbourne Refugee Action Collective, in which the ISO are prominent, co-sponsored a public meeting at the Town Hall entitled "Refugee Rights Are Human Rights" which featured as a speaker the union-busting ex-PM Malcolm Fraser. It doesn't take Einstein to realise that building a political alliance *with* the bourgeoisie is counterposed to fighting to mobilise class struggle *against* the bourgeoisie.

Coalitions of working-class and bourgeois forces necessarily subordinate the interests of the proletariat to the needs of the bosses, their nation and their state. So the leaflet advertising the event with Fraser accepts the racist premise of Howard & Co. that refugees are a "threat": "Ending mandatory detention does not mean abandoning health and security checks. Reception centres or open hostels can serve this purpose." The ISO's counterrevolutionary alliance with Fraser against the workers states is now reborn against "undeserving" immigrants! We say: Smash the racist immigration laws! Close the concentration camps! No deportations! Full citizenship rights for all immigrants and refugees!

While the reformist left panders to and reinforces the false, i.e., capitalist, consciousness promoted by the Laborite bureaucrats and their bourgeois masters, in every struggle we fight to bring revolutionary and internationalist consciousness to militant workers and radical youth. The reformists condemn us as "ultra-left sectarians," sneering that "revolution isn't going to happen tomorrow." But to be able to successfully seize on an objectively revolutionary situation—such as during the wars and economic crises that capitalism inevitably engenders—the most advanced layers of the working class must already be infused with socialist consciousness and be led by a revolutionary party with sufficient roots and authority in the masses. This cannot happen spontaneously. A patient, ceaseless fight must be waged in the course of every social struggle to purge the workers movement of all manifestations of bourgeois ideology, the only road to cohering a multiracial revolutionary workers party.

Working against us today is the heightened racist reaction and patriotic jingoism that has been created by the imperialists' "war on terror." But a layer of courageous youth have been impelled into social struggle in opposition to the intensified bipartisan war on refugees and there is growing worker discontent with the ALP. We seek to exploit the fissures in the ALP and to intersect social discontent as openings in the necessary political struggle to break workers from White Australia Laborism and win them to a revolutionary program. Our defence of immigrant rights is a vital part of this fight. ■

France...

(continued from page 6)

Since the French proletariat does not currently pose an immediate threat to the bourgeois order, the capitalists are not about to resort to fascist dictatorship. While Le Pen's gains at the polls will certainly embolden his fascist thugs, the FN's success is an electoral phenomenon.

This same question came up two years ago when Jörg Haider's openly racist Freedom Party (FPÖ) entered a coalition with the right-wing People's Party (ÖVP) in Austria. Social democrats across Europe, screaming that Austria was on the verge of a fascist takeover, mobilized to pressure the ÖVP to kick out Haider and reinstate its longstanding coalition with the Austrian Socialist Party (SPÖ). While noting that Haider's political outlook is indeed fascist, we wrote at the time: "In a situation in which there are no fascist mobilizations in the streets and the main question is the participation of the FPÖ in the government, the slogans 'Stop Haider,' 'Strike Now' can only be a call for extraparliamentary action for a new parliamentary coalition, that is, a 'more militant' call to replace the FPÖ with the SPÖ" (*WV* No. 730, 25 February 2000).

Then, too, the IG posed as the militant voice of anti-fascist unity. Denounc-

ing us for "lulling the masses," the IG devoted 20 pages of its *Internationalist* (June 2000) to "proving" that Haider's FPÖ is fascist. So does the IG think Austria is fascist today? Have the unions been crushed, political parties driven underground, concentration camps set up? The complete annihilation of the organized workers movement—that is what fascism means, not the election of an ultra-rightist within a bourgeois-democratic framework.

In weaving its pseudo-revolutionary fantasies, the IG seeks to deny the very real obstacles that stand in the way of forging a revolutionary party. Thus it simply equates LO and the LCR, falsely claiming that both are "organizing extra-parliamentary support for the 'Republican front' for Chirac" (26 April) and "openly or tacitly, encouraged a vote for Chirac in the second round" (4 May). In an earlier posting on its Web site (14 April), the IG lyingly denounced our open letter for supposedly granting "conditional critical support" to LO, and instead simply dismissed LO because it has "applauded bonapartist and racist police demonstrations." We seek to win militants who are drawn to LO on the basis of its stated opposition to the popular front by *exposing* how that is contradicted by its tacit support to Vigipirate. Where the IG aims only to be the "militant" tail of whatever's in motion, we engage in clear and honest programmatic struggle because our aim is to build a conscious proletarian vanguard party on the basis of the Trotskyist program.

For the French bourgeoisie, Le Pen's score in the elections—and the popular rallying around the tricolor orchestrated by the reformist parties—was a godsend. Faced with a significant level of labor struggle in response to unemployment and attacks on social benefits, the ruling classes of Europe seek to portray themselves as the democratic representatives of the whole people. The more they can submerge class consciousness under a barrage of "national unity," the easier it will be for them to launch imperialist military adventures abroad and attacks on the working class and minorities at home. Against the reformist misleaders who chain the workers to the capitalist order, we Trotskyists fight for the class independence the proletariat needs to resist the attacks of the bourgeoisie. And we will not let the working class forget the miserable leftists who rallied to the defense of the imperialist "French republic." ■

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Philippines...

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restiveness over layoffs, the high cost of food and utilities and other austerity measures dictated by the World Bank and International Monetary Fund blood-suckers, the Philippine bourgeoisie has all the reason to fear the outburst of protest. Terrified that these could ignite a plebeian explosion similar to the bloody May Day unrest last year, Arroyo has publicly baited opponents of the *Balikatan* war games as "terrorist lovers." She even banned AKBAYAN and BISIG, two fake-left outfits that supported her rise to power, from the government-sponsored rally commemorating the 16th anniversary of the first "People Power" revolt, which led to the downfall of Marcos in 1986.

Arroyo's determination to strengthen military ties with U.S. imperialism was known well before she came to power. Yet the alphabet soup of organizations that make up the Philippine left—from Sison's CPP to its breakaway groups, including the Socialist Party of Labor (SPP)—hailed "People Power Two" as a "victory for the people" (see *WV* No. 763, 31 August 2001). Bayan Muna even campaigned for Arroyo's senatorial ticket during last year's ballot.

Now such groups are channeling protests against the American military into a tug-of-war for the red, white and blue mantle of Filipino nationalism instead of a class-struggle challenge to the Philippine bourgeoisie and its imperialist backers. This is evident in the position taken by the Sisonite-influenced Junk VFA Movement. In a 19 January Junk VFA Movement press release, its spokesman, a retired Philippine Navy officer, decries the U.S. military deployment as "an insult to the fighting capability and competence of the Filipino soldier"—the same troops that are hunting down leftists and Muslims! A subsequent press release dated 26

January raised the call for withdrawal of all U.S. forces and demanded instead that "non-commissioned officers be allowed to conduct unimpeded combat operations against the Abu Sayyaf in Basilan." It is also significant that no Philippine left group raised the call to oppose the 500-strong Philippine contingent that is taking part in the imperialist occupation of East Timor.

By taunting Arroyo as "anti-Filipino" and engaging in cheap anti-Yankee potshots, the Sisonites and others are merely pitching for an "anti-imperialist united front" with those members of the bourgeoisie who are uncomfortable with Arroyo's hawkish posture and the government's closeness to Washington. Teofisto Guingona, Arroyo's vice president and secretary for foreign affairs, has been bickering with her and her generals over the U.S. military involvement in Mindanao and the signing of the MLSA. Sison, in his role as "chief political consultant" of the National Democratic Front—which is engaged in on-and-off peace negotiations with the government—has made a clear overture to Guingona. From his exile in the Netherlands, Sison predicted Arroyo's "peaceful removal" from power within a year on the basis of a broad united front—provided the vice president is willing to succeed her.

Sison's followers have launched the OUT NOW! Coalition with mainstream Protestant and Philippine Independent churches, while their rivals have grouped themselves in the Gathering for Peace. The latter melange includes SANLAKAS—which is aligned with the politics of Felimon Lagman, the Philippine Workers Party (PWP) leader assassinated last year—as well as the SPP, AKBAYAN, various social democrats and the rump Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas-1930. The common thread that runs through these fake lefts is their bent for class collaboration on the basis of Filipino nationalism.

The Lagmanites and SPP (who have announced plans to merge) and others

seek to "unify different pluralist forces in the country" and to "forge the broadest unity," including with bourgeois Liberal Party politicians Jovito Salonga and Wigberto Tañada, Catholic religious organizations and the anti-abortion bigots of Pro-Life Philippines. The SPP et al. joined with Pro-Life Philippines in co-signing a Gathering for Peace declaration that opposed the U.S. military presence and worried about "driving away in the process thousands of potential tourists and investors."

In this 80 percent Catholic country, the woman question is a central and explosive issue. The 1987 constitution includes one of the most severe anti-abortion laws in the world, and a bill to legalize divorce last year provoked howls from the Catholic hierarchy and Arroyo. Religious backwardness—whether Catholic, Muslim or any other—serves to bolster the family, the key institution for the oppression of women in class society. Marxists call for free abortion on demand and strict separation of church and state, opposing every manifestation of discrimination against women, homosexuals and ethnic, national and religious minorities. But to even begin to emancipate women from domestic slavery and all-sided oppression, the system of capitalist exploitation must be swept away through socialist revolution.

This perspective is counterposed to the Menshevik-Stalinist dogma of "two-stage revolution" put forward by the SPP, as was made clear at a conference in Sydney in late March sponsored by the SPP's Australian co-thinkers, the Democratic Socialist Party. A Spartacist League/Australia comrade challenged SPP leader Sonny Melencio over the SPP's support for the Gathering for Peace declaration—with its concern over imperialist investment—and argued instead for a program of workers revolution to expropriate the capitalists. In response, Melencio avowed a two-stage program and talked of the need for tactical alliances. But what the

SPP leader describes as a tactic is in fact a *program* that subordinates the proletariat to a mythical "progressive" or "anti-imperialist" wing of the bourgeoisie in the fight for "democratic" capitalism, leading to a second "stage" not of "socialism" but of the slaughter of workers and leftists.

By chaining the working class and the oppressed masses to one or another wing of the Philippine bourgeoisie, these fake leftists will not and cannot lead the masses to break free from imperialist enslavement. And history has proven this, one lesson being Indonesia in 1965, where the capitalist rulers massacred a million Communists, workers and ethnic Chinese. As Leon Trotsky outlined in the theory of permanent revolution, the bourgeoisies in countries of belated capitalist development are more fearful of the super-exploited masses than they are of the imperialists, on whom they depend to secure their class rule. Democracy, freedom from the imperialist yoke and emancipation of the oppressed can only be realized through a socialist revolution that overthrows bourgeois rule and is based on a perspective of proletarian revolution internationally, particularly in the imperialist centers. The key to victory lies in the forging of an internationalist Leninist-Trotskyist party against all variants of nationalism and class collaboration.

Workers and oppressed in the Philippines should look to the multiracial American proletariat for a powerful ally. The United States and Philippine bourgeoisies have enjoyed a neocolonial "special relationship" spanning decades. The special relationship that the Philippine and American workers must have is one of internationalist working-class solidarity. Led by a revolutionary workers party, the American working class will fulfill its task of aiding the enslaved masses of the semicolonies by carrying out a proletarian revolution in the bastion of world imperialism. ■

Woomera...

(continued from page 12)

introducing new "anti-terror" laws, the most sinister of which would ban political groups "likely to endanger the 'security or integrity' of other countries." Anyone assisting a proscribed group could be jailed for life. These laws are so sweeping they could be used against strikes, picket lines or opponents of Australian imperialism's wars abroad or racist repression at home. The new laws are to grease the skids for the capitalists to treat strikers, leftists and anti-war protesters just as they treat refugees: thrown into camps and prisons to rot forever, with no recourse. Whether the government can get away with these moves depends on the level of social and class struggles.

The government's racist brutality towards refugees has sharply polarised the country. Even before the Woomera protest thousands had indicated they would shelter asylum seekers. Sharp rifts have emerged in the ALP whose leaders have backed every racist law against refugees. In response to anger among especially immigrant workers, many union leaders have spoken out against mandatory detention, setting up Labor for Refugees to pressure the ALP to adopt a more "compassionate" policy.

While these union tops say fine words about the need to defend refugees, they are fundamentally loyal to capitalism and the ALP. Their aim is to refurbish the Labor Party's image. They don't even call to close down the camps! The misleaders of the Liquor, Hospitality & Miscellaneous Workers Union, with its large immigrant membership, *organise* the ACM screws who torment asylum seekers in the camps. These sadistic thugs, like cops, security guards and prison guards—who the union bureaucracy also embrace as "fellow unionists"—are part of the capitalist class's arsenal of state repression and can have no place in the unions. Trade unions cannot defend workers and immigrants if they have in their ranks those whose job is to bust strikes and terrorise immigrants and Aboriginal peoples.

In order to paralyse workers' ability to struggle, the bosses try to split up every workplace and neighbourhood into "Australian" vs. "immigrant," white vs. black or brown, men vs. women. Manipulating fear of unemployment, the union misleaders transmit this poison to the working class. In a vile racist campaign, the CFMEU tops have brought DIMA cops on to construction sites and turned in so-called "illegal" workers for deportation. CFMEU NSW state secretary Andrew Ferguson echoed the state's "immigrant = terrorist" amalgam, complaining that "a sensitive development" such as the

Sydney Lucas Heights nuclear reactor "could be constructed by illegal immigrants" (CFMEU media release, 18 April). NSW Labor Council secretary John Robertson talks piously about the plight of refugees. But he backs the CFMEU's campaign, complaining that the Liberals' anti-immigrant zeal isn't zealous enough: "This Government went to the last election saying it would determine who was going to come into Australia but, in practise, that isn't happening" (*Workers Online*, 19 April)!

Dovetailing with this, the union bureaucrats push nationalist protectionism, pitting workers here against those in other countries, begging the capitalists to "save Australian jobs," which means unemployment elsewhere. The bosses always scapegoat immigrants for the unemployment inherent to capitalism. But instead of combating this—fighting for jobs for all at union wages and conditions—the union misleaders line up workers behind their exploiters on the basis of a mythical common "national interest."

Mobilising the social power of workers to defend immigrants and defeat the state witchhunt against the Woomera protesters means puncturing the capitalists' "national unity" jingoism and breaking down the poisonous racial and ethnic divisions they use to weaken the working class and maintain their rule. This understanding was key to the 9 February Oakland, California rally, "No to the USA-Patriot Act and Maritime Security Act!"

Down With the Anti-Immigrant Witchhunt!" Initiated by the Partisan Defense Committee and the Labor Black League for Social Defense this united-front action marked the first time in the U.S. that organised labour was mobilised in defence of immigrants targeted by the "war on terror." This mobilisation had real resonance here as immigrant and Australian-born workers are looking for a position from which to fight the bosses' attacks.

The working class has real social power—it lies in their numbers, organisation and in the awareness of the fact that it is their labour in the industries, ports and mines, which creates vast profits for the bosses. We fight to use every possible legal avenue for detainees and victimised activists facing the vast resources of the capitalist state, but we have no illusions in the "justice" system of the class enemy. Instead, basing ourselves on the principles of non-sectarian, class-struggle defence, we fight to mobilise working-class power to throw these vicious charges against the Woomera activists and desperate refugees back in the face of the ruling class.

Immigrant workers are often in the forefront of class battles and have fought bitterly against the sell-outs of the Laborite union misleaders. Strategic to workers struggles here, they form a living bridge to class struggles from Asia to the Near East. We believe workers need their own revolutionary party, not a "Labor" party that supports capitalist rule. If working-class power were unleashed, fighting for asylum for refugees and full citizenship rights for all immigrants, this would be a real blow against the bipartisan anti-immigrant offensive and the bosses' anti-union attacks. Mobilise now to demand: *Drop the charges against the Woomera protesters and detainees! No deportations! Close the concentration camps! Full citizenship rights for all immigrants!* ■

A Spartacist Pamphlet \$2

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

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Australian Section of the International Communist League
(Fourth Internationalist)

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VII. The State and Revolution
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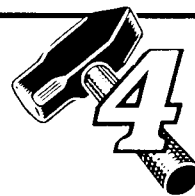
The Spartacist League and the Left 15

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Donate to the Legal Defence of Woomera Protesters and Detainees!

A fund has been organised by some of their supporters. Make cheques payable/mail to Woomera Defence Fund, c/o Refugee Action Collective, PO Box 578, Carlton South Vic 3053.



Mobilise Working-Class Struggle Against Racism, Union Busting!

Down With Liberal/ALP Racist War on Immigrants!

The four-day protest at the desolate Woomera concentration camp, when 50 refugees managed to escape, was a spectacular blow against the Howard government's racist war on refugees. This audacious event reverberated all around the country and anti-racist youth,

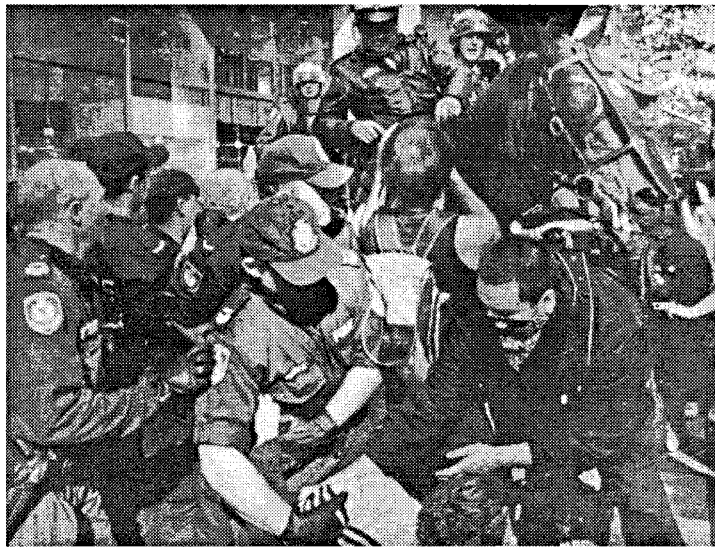
Break With Laborism! Build a Revolutionary Workers Party!

buoyed by the experience, returned to the cities to participate in May Day actions in defence of asylum seekers.

In Sydney, hundreds of protesters blockaded the offices of Australasian Correctional Management, the outfit that runs the detention centre hellholes. Stung by the blockade's success, ALP premier Bob Carr's mounted cops attacked, repeatedly ploughing into the "M1" demonstrators, knocking people to the ground, causing multiple injuries and in some cases hospitalisation. More than 50 protesters were arrested, at least one of whom has been charged. We say: Drop the charges now! The police brutality was an eye-opener to many of the youthful demonstrators, providing a graphic lesson in how the armed fist of the state exists to

**Sydney, 1 May:
ALP premier Carr's cops brutally attack anti-racists blockading ACM which runs the refugee concentration camps.**

Andrew Meares



uphold the rule of the capitalist class over the working class and oppressed.

The government's response to the growing outcry in defence of refugees has been to escalate its attacks on workers, minorities and all the oppressed, in the name of the imperialists' racist "war on terror." Under the guise of "security,"

the "Fortress Australia" federal budget featured billions to build more detention centres, buy more patrol boats to hunt down refugees on the high seas and expand the military, while punitively slashing at the miserly funding available for the elderly, sick and disabled. Anti-racist youth, having experienced the vio-

lence and might of the capitalist state at Woomera and M1 are searching for a force that can prevail against it. Many activists gladly took our leaflet "For Union Action to Demand: Drop the Charges Against Woomera Protesters and Detainees! Full Citizenship Rights for All Immigrants and Refugees!" (see below) from our supporters who joined the pro-refugee blockades.

Some anti-racist youth are now sensing the need to mobilise the social power of the working class and a few ostensibly socialist groups have called for workers' action in defence of refugees. In this they are also reacting to declarations of support for refugees by some trade-union bureaucrats, some of whom have even joined pro-refugee groups. Indeed, it is urgently necessary for the unions to mobilise in action to defend refugees and immigrants and protest the outrageous cop assault on the M1 activists. But instead, John Robertson, secretary of the NSW Labor Council and a honcho in Labor for Refugees (which supposedly opposes mandatory detention!) condemned the blockade of ACM.

There was a glimpse of the potential power of the working class on May Day *continued on page 9*

For Union Action to Demand:

Drop the Charges Against Woomera Protesters and Detainees!

Full Citizenship Rights for All Immigrants and Refugees!

Reprinted below is the Spartacist League's 27 April leaflet distributed widely at 1 May pro-refugee blockades and marches in Sydney and Melbourne and subsequent events in both cities.

On 29 March many in Australia and internationally cheered as 50 asylum seekers escaped the Woomera concentration camp into the arms of nearly 1,000 anti-government protesters. In the next hours cops put a dragnet around the protesters' camp and surrounding area as they went on a manhunt for the escaped refugees and protesters, searching tents and cars. Even now several asylum seekers are still free.

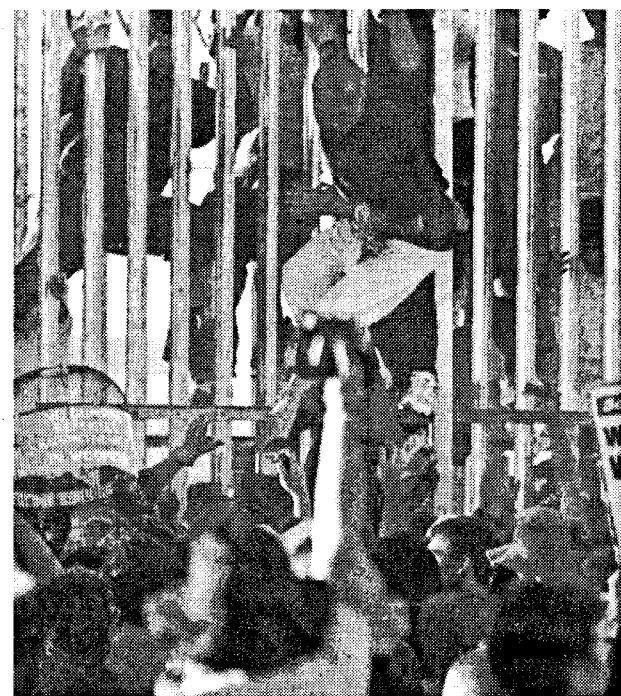
Liberal prime minister John Howard and his sadistic immigration minister Philip Ruddock aim to throw the book at protesters and detainees for defying the racist, capitalist state. In this they are aided by the Labor Party whose leader Simon Crean condemned the protesters while upholding mandatory detention, a policy Labor initiated. Some 30 detainees charged with "escaping detention" face up to five years in jail and almost certain deportation; 19 protesters charged with "harbouring escapees" could face four years jail. Another 12 have been charged with trespassing.

Activists who came to Woomera were subjected to vicious state violence and harassment. Riot police on horseback rode into the 29 March rally, bloodying many. Cops repeatedly marched through the protesters' camp at night, stomping their boots near protesters' heads, while provocateurs were sent to intimidate activ-

ists. The pro-refugee militants showed exemplary courage and struck a stunning blow against the government's barbaric treatment of refugees. They are no more criminals than are workers defending a picket line against scabs and cops. Trade unionists and all anti-racist fighters must demand: Drop the charges against all the Woomera protesters and detainees!

On 2 April eight federal and immigration cops raided the anarchist Barricade Books in Melbourne hunting for the escaped refugees. This outrageous act of state repression against the left underscores that it is in the interest of working people to defend those charged at Woomera and beat back this frame-up attack! Unions donated money and equipment to the Woomera protest and the ACTU sent greetings on 30 March, declaring "We want to be identified with all those who reject mandatory detention." That's good, but the ACTU hasn't called to drop the charges nor mobilised unionists in action in their defence, and that is what is needed.

Some CFMEU and AMWU members striking on May Day in Melbourne against the union-busting Royal Commission into the building industry might join a pro-refugee blockade of the Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs (DIMA). This would indeed give a taste of the kind of working-class power that must be mobilised, combining defence of immigrants with opposition to union-busting attacks. The inextricable link between immigrant rights and worker rights was starkly shown in the revelation that the Defence Signals Direc-



Chris Carter

March 29: Refugees break out of Woomera Detention Centre as supporters rally outside.

torate had been listening to phone calls between the besieged crew of the *Tampa*, which had rescued 460 asylum seekers, and the Maritime Union last August. The charges against the Woomera activists, like the jacked-up racist hysteria against refugees, are part of the domestic face of the imperialists' "war on terror." This seemingly endless war has seen Afghanistan reduced to rubble, targeted Iraq for destruction and given the green light to the Israeli Zionist state to slaughter the Palestinians. We demand the U.S., Australia, the UN and NATO get out of Afghanistan, Central Asia and the Persian Gulf now—hands off Iraq!

The Australian rulers are also waging a frontal assault on the unions and democratic rights. Howard & Co. aim to ram through a "third wave" of union-busting laws imposing secret strike ballots and making it easier to fire people. Smearing strikers and union activists as corrupt and even "terrorist," the capitalist rulers are *continued on page 11*