



RabbleRouser

#19

Committee for a Revolutionary Communist Party in Australia

February 1998

BEAT BACK THE IMPERIALISTS ANTI-WORKER OFFENSIVE

HANDS OFF IRAQ!

The battle on Melbourne's waterfront is not just an attack on wharfies by big-time capitalists linked to the National Farmers Federation (NFF). Nor is it just another anti-worker measure from the Liberal government and the moneyed interests it represents.

It is a one part of a much larger push to make Australian imperialism leaner and meaner in its drive into South East Asia and elsewhere. It is a deliberate scheme by the Australian imperialists — government and business alike — to cut the industrial muscle of the Maritime Union of Australia, so it can create a casual non-unionised lowly-paid labour force on the waterfront.

In early January the NFF's puppet company "Producers and Consumers Stevedoring" (PCS) signed a two-year lease, with options to renew, over part of Melbourne's Webb dock from Patricks, one of the two main stevedoring companies in Australia. PCS began offering two-year contracts to more than 200 workers and has been recruiting especially in the bush where ignorant anti-wharfie prejudice is high.

As the rural weekly *The Land* admitted on its front page of 5th February, "... the NFF last week jumped in boots and all to take on the power of the Maritime Union of Australia. It is taking advantage of new workplace relations legislation, passed last year, which severely restricts the capacity of unions to engage in strikes and boycotts and imposes crippling fines for breaches of the law."

Central to the tactics of PCS and the government is reliance upon anti-worker laws which ban solidarity strikes -- "secondary boycotts" -- by other workers.

The Land's reference to the Liberal Government backed NFF's "boots and all" assault on the Maritime Union is indeed ironic. Older readers will well remember that it was Labor's revered Ben Chifley who earned the tag "boots and all" for sending in troops to defeat workers fifty odd years ago.

The NFF's refusal to say where the financial backing for its stevedoring venture is coming from, has fuelled speculation that the "Australian Farmers' Fighting Fund" which was set up to finance the NFF's earlier anti-worker provocation at the Mudginberri abattoir in the Northern Territory, was involved.

The imperialists' media have made much of the so-called "laziness" of wharfies. The same sort of slander has been used for years in the bush to garner rural hatred for blue collar workers in the big cities. The truth though is that the lack of competitiveness of the Australian stevedoring industry is the result of old and inefficient equipment.

Years of struggle have won waterside

workers the right to a relatively safe workplace. Notwithstanding the fact that their pay and conditions puts them at least in the category of better-off workers — wharfies, seamen and painters and dockers have invariably taken progressive anti-imperialist positions on the burning issues of the day. No doubt this too is a reason the Australian imperialists would like to see the screws of wage-slavery tightened on the waterfront.

A victory for the imperialists at Webb dock will likely pave the way for further attacks on workers throughout Australia. The Melbourne maritime workers' struggle is a just cause and it will no doubt come to enjoy abundant support.

The imperialists' media is full of the bosses' boasts that they have made their plans for this attack well in advance and with all sorts of preparations for any unfavourable twists and turns that may arise. So too must the people make their plans to beat back the anti-worker offensive and deal a powerful blow to Australian imperialism

Going into this battle with heads down will not advance the workers' cause. As long as capitalism exists the working class will live as wage slaves — even though some may be well-paid and pampered. The proletariat has nothing to lose but its chains. The better-off workers can be won to the view that only by throwing their lot in with the proletariat can they too be liberated.

SUPPORT THE PEOPLE'S WAR IN PERU! MAKE REVOLUTION IN AUSTRALIA!

Nearly 18 years ago, the Communist Party of Peru (PCP by its Spanish initials) launched the People's War which has placed the revolution in Peru at the very forefront of the world proletarian revolution.

The PCP has won the support of millions in Peru, and the world, and notwithstanding serious setbacks, has brought the reactionary Peruvian regime to the brink of collapse.

Presidente Gonzalo, the imprisoned leader of the PCP, has said that the best way to support the People's War in Peru is to make revolution in our own countries— that is why the CRCPA is struggling to build again the Communist Party of Australia on the basis of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism.

The US imperialists are threatening another war of mass-destruction against Iraq and the Aussie imperialists are lining up to join in the second gang-race of Iraq in a decade.

For nearly a decade the US-led imperialists prevented the Iraqi people from obtaining essential food and medicine which has resulted in large scale disease and malnutrition. Over half a million children in Iraq have been killed.

The US and other imperialists armed Iraq with chemical and other weapons of mass destruction for its war against Iran. With tacit US approval Iraq used these same weapons against the Kurds. Now the US is demanding the right to "inspect" everywhere and anywhere in Iraq search of weapons of mass destruction, including in the headquarters of the Republican Guard and Saddam Hussein's living quarters. Iraq charges that these inspectors are really spies.

Nothing justifies imperialist war on Iraq.

U.S. officials say the proposed attack won't be the "pin prick" bombings that the U.S. has carried out against Iraq since the Gulf War. They talk of a sustained aerial bombing that would be the heaviest military assault since the Gulf War—when six weeks of intense bombing killed some 200,000 people and left Iraq in a state of utter devastation.

In the face of opposition from the Russian and French imperialists, the US and Britain have said they are willing to "go it alone" and bomb Iraq without official United Nations approval. Germany and now Australia have said they will support the fore-shadowed US mass destruction and murder on Iraq and its people.

No one with a sense of justice can stand by in the face of such bloody war crimes.

Hands Off Iraq!

Learn from the Bolsheviks

Who hasn't heard such statements from Australian "socialists" as:

"The economic struggle is the most widely applicable means of drawing the masses into active political struggle,

"The Social-Democrats [Communists] are now confronted with the task of lending the economic struggle itself, as far as possible, a political character."

Who hasn't heard of the supposed importance of carrying out:

"political agitation on an economic basis"

or the need for,

"close organic connection with the workers' struggle."

Who has not heard the criticism of revolutionaries who refuse to accept this reasoning, such as:

"*Iskra* displays a tendency to minimise the significance of the forward march of the drab everyday struggle in comparison with the propaganda of brilliant and complete ideas"

or, simply a denunciation of, "dogmatism and doctrinarism."

All of these quotes from Lenin's opponents refuted by him in *What Is To Be Done?* reveal starkly that many of the "burning questions of the movement" in turn-of-the 20th century Russia still smoulder today.

Lenin saw in his opponents, the 'Economists'—as they were called—the nucleus of opportunism in the working class movement, of class collaboration. Like their modern day phoney socialist counterparts, the Economists of Lenin's time relied on the spontaneous movement of the workers protesting against bad economic conditions to build up a big mass movement of the workers.

Lenin pointed out that to rely in this way on spontaneity is 'tailism'—that is, it is to tail behind events, instead of giving leadership.

Coupled with bowing to the economic struggle for better wages and conditions is "workerism". Workerism is a one-sided and mechanical attachment to the labour/capital contradiction within a given country. It is appealing to the workers on the basis of a spirit of revenge against the bosses. Workerism is worship of what are actually politically backward and non-proletarian characteristics of the workers; contempt for non-proletarian sections of the revolutionary masses (such as revolutionary students); and, contempt for the political struggle of the oppressed masses such as the struggle of the indigenous peoples against national oppression.

The Economists maintained that the consciousness

developed by the masses in the course of their spontaneous struggles—and the Economists particularly emphasised the economic struggle for better wages and working conditions (hence their label)—would be sufficient to create a movement of the workers capable of attaining socialism. Lenin correctly insisted on the opposite.

The struggle for improved wages and conditions (and reforms generally) is not aiming to abolish the whole system of wage-slavery and private property. It merely aims to take aspects of distress out of the subjection of the masses by the bourgeoisie.

The Communist Party's tasks, Lenin wrote, must be "...to combat spontaneity, to divert the working class movement from this spontaneous trade-unionist striving to come under the wing of the bourgeoisie, and to bring it under the wing of revolutionary Social-Democracy [i.e., communism — CRCPA]."

Why? Because the spontaneous struggle can only reproduce the very same capitalist/imperialist system against which the workers are struggling.

And that's not good enough.

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Write: CRCPA, GPO Box 474D, Melbourne VIC 3001