
For Political Strikes Against the Gulf War! Defeat U.S. and Australian Imperialism! Defend Iraq!

The following statement is an edited version of a speech delivered by a Spartacist League spokesman at a 17 January, 1991 Melbourne rally against the Gulf War hours after the imperialist assault on Iraq began.

As we demonstrate here, the United States government, backed up by the Hawke Labor government, is raining death down on Baghdad. The mass murder of the Iraqi people has begun.

The imperialists have been planning this holocaust against the Arab peoples of the Middle East for months. The war criminals in the White House and the Pentagon are enthusiastically joined by the war criminals in Canberra. They were aided and abetted by those who wailed for sanctions to strangle Iraq. The embargo was merely the prelude to a shooting war.

There must be a cry of outrage and action by the Australian and international working class to stop this mass murder. Forget about writing to your member of parliament to pressure this government of war. What we need is not just demonstrations in the streets but *power*.

It is the sons and daughters of working people who will die in the desert along with hundreds of thousands of Iraqis. The working people make this country run. We have the power to bring it to a grinding halt. Use that power now!

The Labor Party is the party of capitalist war, depression and racism. This has been true historically and could not be more true today—Labor government union-busting, recession and now war. The working class needs to break from Labor in order to unleash its enormous power. We need to build a revolutionary workers party.

We need working class strikes against this criminal war. Waterside workers and seamen must refuse to handle munitions shipments and war material. Shut down U.S. war bases in Australia! In France dock workers have refused to ship French troops. Striking Turkish coal miners are demanding down with the war, down with the warmongering government.

What this war is about is U.S. imperialism wanting to be the cops of the world and loyal lackey Australian imperialism its deputy sheriff. We remember the rape of tiny black Grenada and the thousands murdered in Panama, both of which were endorsed by Hawke. We remember the millions murdered in Korea, the two million murdered in Vietnam by U.S. and Australian imperialism. But the Vietnamese people prevailed and made a revolution. Some say "No more Vietnams." We say Vietnam was a victory! And it needs to be defended against the designs of imperialism under the guise of the counterrevolutionary Evans' plan for Cambodia.

Our enemy is right here at home. It must be defeated through class struggle. It should be understood that appeasement of imperialism only serves to embolden it. The treacherous betrayals of Gorbachev have not only given imperialism a free hand in the Persian Gulf but have put the homeland of the October Revolution in grave danger.

U.S. and Australian imperialism must be defeated in their bloody grab for oil and world domination. It is our duty to stand with the Iraqi people in defending themselves against the imperialist warmongers. We stand with the Palestinian people who face genocide at the hands of the racist Zionist butchers who rule Israel.

The working people of the Middle East, the Kurds and other minorities must rise up to bring down all the sheiks, all the despots, including Saddam Hussein, and not just the despots who are on the outs with Bush/Hawke today. Our comrades of the Spartacist League/U.S. are fighting in the United States for workers revolution just as we fight here to sweep away racist, murderous Australian imperialism.

The Spartacist League says: Defeat U.S. and Australian imperialism! Defend Iraq!

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