

Australia Dossier by Lydia Cherry

Left Labourites join the 'new order'

The "permanent war" between the Left and Prime Minister Hawke has suddenly become a fond embrace.

The Australian Labour Party's left wing, renowned for decades for being anti-American, isolationist, and pacifist, gave its support without a murmur in December to Prime Minister Bob Hawke's decision to go to war for the new Anglo-American world order. The *Weekend Australian* in the first week in December noted that a meeting of the parliamentary Left had resulted in a division of about 80% to 20% in favor of Hawke's stand, though no actual vote was taken. The newspaper described the shift as surprising, dramatic, and far-reaching, noting that during the 1970s and early 1980s, Hawke was seemingly at permanent war with the left wing of his own party.

A big surprise? Not really. Although there has also been a more down-to-earth, trade union-based tendency in the ALP—a tendency getting weaker in the current period—the left Labour Party came out of the British Fabian Socialist Society, formed by leading figures in the British aristocracy. A new global world order under U.N. auspices is just their cup of tea.

The *Weekend Australian* notes that the protests within the Labour Party were "not extensive, when judged by the magnitude of the reappraisal involved," as the Labour Left met during the first week of December to approve the implementation of U.N. Resolution 678, which authorized a war if necessary to reclaim Kuwait.

The only left Member of Parliament to speak in the debate in the house was backbencher Andrew Theophanous, who made clear that

beneath the surface ideology of isolationism and anti-Americanism, a different commitment was determinant:

"A new world order is emerging, as shown by the unprecedented Resolution 678 of the U.N. Security Council. When a situation arises in which the U.N. has gained a tremendous boost in its power, in its prestige, or its actual authority as a result of those resolutions, then people who describe themselves as leftist or socialist should not be concerned about it, but should welcome such developments, because of the increase in the powers of the U.N. . . . It is something which the ALP has been committed to for many years."

Prime Minister Hawke, like President Bush, in recent weeks has said that his country's aim in the Persian Gulf is the creation of a "new world order." The two men's profiles also have similarities: Just as Bush at Yale was an initiate in the Skull and Bones Society, Hawke is reputed to be a 33rd-degree Freemason.

Although there is a clause in the Australian Constitution which forbids this, Hawke holds two citizenships, having been named an honorary citizen of Israel. Australian PLO representative Ali Kazak recently accused the prime minister of holding "unfriendly views toward the Arabs which may have played a part in his decision to commit Australia to this U.S.-led military adventure against the Arabs." Australian sources say that Kazak's charge—as covered in a slander piece against the PLO representative in Australia's *Jewish News*—happens to be true.

Within the ruling party, there is opposition to Hawke, which is perhaps most clearly represented by Victoria Labour Party MP George Crawford. Crawford reflects the view of many of the Labour Party's traditional supporters, particularly among small business people and blue-collar workers, who see Hawke as betraying Australia's national interests. Oldtime Labour leaders like Crawford have been described as the quickly fading "conscience" of the Labour Party. It was earlier Labour Party governments that were responsible for the development of huge infrastructure projects like the Snowy Mountain hydroelectric scheme—projects rather more in the national interest, than expeditions in the Persian Gulf.

These oldtimers are also not happy with the Hawke Labour Party's "new friends," whereas multimillionaires like Alan Bond, international media magnate Rupert Murdoch, and Sir Peter Abeles, owner of one of the world's largest freight-forwarding companies, have profited greatly under Hawke's government.

Hawke's brand of social democracy draws its inspiration from Margaret Thatcher and the London School of Economics. He has been responsible for skyrocketing interest rates, together with record bankruptcies of small businesses; the destruction of agriculture; and what Australian sources described as the "government-led murder of Australia's manufacturing industry." Hawke has also been responsible for the destruction of the country's military capability.

No, it is not particularly surprising that Hawke would opt for war and embrace Bush's new world order. As was concluded by the *Weekend Australian*: "Australia's role in the Gulf is that of a middle power, attempting to stake its claim for itself in the new order."