

# Australia Group backs technical apartheid

by Kathleen Klenetsky

The Bush administration scored an important victory for its policy of controlling the flow of high-technology exports to the Third World, when the Australia Group endorsed stringent, U.S.-sponsored restrictions on the export to developing-sector nations of 50 common chemicals that allegedly can be used in the development of chemical or biological weapons.

An informal alliance of 20 industrialized nations that monitors chemical weapons proliferation, the Australia Group agreed to the Bush administration's plan at a meeting in Paris in mid-May.

The United States imposed the controls on its own exporters two months ago, but was determined to get the other major supplier countries to go along, to ensure that the restrictions could not be circumvented. For six months, Bush emissaries have been using various forms of persuasion—including threats of prosecution—to induce other industrialized countries to agree to honor the curbs.

Bush administration officials were ecstatic at the success of their persuasion tactics. "It's a major breakthrough. To have taken this action so rapidly is quite an accomplishment," crowed Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Elizabeth Ver-ville, one of the U.S. delegates to the Australia Group meeting.

## 'Enhanced proliferation control'

Some supporters of the policy just rubberstamped by the Australia Group have candidly called it "technological apartheid" against the developing sector. In simple language, this means the denial of food, medicine, and water to the Third World—and that is precisely what the Bush gang wants to achieve. The chemical controls are a key element of the "Enhanced Proliferation Control Initiative," which President Bush unveiled last November, amid the hysteria which administration propagandists had stirred up concerning Iraq's chemical weapons capability—which, of course, never actually materialized during the Gulf conflict.

The EPCI proposed harsh restrictions not only on the export of 50 common chemicals, but on other forms of technology—ranging from engineering and scientific computer software to heavy trucks—that might conceivably be used by a Third World country to develop chemical or bio-

logical weapons.

What this means in practice is that developing nations will be segregated from access to the technologies they need to survive. Seen from that standpoint, it is clear that the new policy is part and parcel of the broader Anglo-American strategy for forcing drastic reductions in population throughout the Third World, as detailed in the series of 1974-76 National Security Council documents which *EIR* recently brought to light (see *EIR*, May 3, 1991).

Although the Bush administration has sold the controls as a means of controlling the proliferation of chemical and biological weapons, the fact remains that nearly all of the 50 restricted chemicals are what are known as "dual-use" technologies, meaning that they have important uses in the civilian economy, even though they can also be used in military applications. Thus, the list of restricted chemicals includes ones that are commonly used for the production of fertilizer and pesticides; for sewage and water treatment; for tanning leather; and even for making beer.

The fact that nearly every one of the proscribed chemicals is essential to modern industrial and agricultural processes underscores the policy's true purpose, which is to strangle the flow of technology to the developing sector, strengthening the political control of the Anglo-American establishment. By cutting off these chemicals, under the pretext of preventing the production of chemical weapons, the Bush administration, and now the Australia Group, are effectively cutting off the fragile lifeline upon which the future of most Third World countries depends.

## Death and servitude

Without these chemicals, developing countries will find themselves unable to produce food—since they won't be able to manufacture their own pesticides or fertilizers—or to supply clean water to their people, a circumstance which will lead to the spread of terrible water-borne epidemics like cholera.

On top of this, they will be forced into a position of complete servitude to the whims of Washington. Since the U.S. policy imposes controls, and not a total ban, it is hypothetically possible that some developing countries might still be able to obtain the restricted chemicals, but at what price? Will they have to agree to draconian population control measures, for instance, or endorse future U.S. colonial adventures, like that against Iraq?

Having obtained the Australia Group's backing, the U.S. government is now proposing to cut off the last channel through which Third World countries might attempt to obtain the taboo chemicals: the more advanced Third World nations, which have their own indigenous chemical production capabilities. The United States is reportedly urging that such countries as India and South Korea be invited to join the Australia Group, as a tactic to get these countries to abide by the new chemical controls regime.