The Resources Boom

The New Conservatism

Stalinism or Independence?
IN THIS ISSUE

Jack Blake writes about an important period in the Communist Party’s history, and we print a resolution passed by the CPA National Committee following consideration of the issues raised by Jack Blake.

In Economic Notes, Gavan Butler looks at the new conservatism, expressed by figures such as Milton Friedman, who recently visited Australia.

Dave Davies examines the issue of anti-Semitism and the anti-Zionist campaign in the Soviet Union.

K. L. Kinsman discusses the origins of the present confrontation between the superpowers (beginning last year over Afghanistan), tracing the conflict between the Soviet Union and the West from the 1917 Russian Revolution till the early post-WW II years.

Tom Appleton writes about the McCarthy years in the US, based on a book by Lillian Hellman.

In two Comments, we look at Australia’s “resources boom” and at current events in Poland.

A number of reviews complete this issue.

An apology to readers

Australian Left Review apologises to its readers for the nine-month gap since we last appeared. Technical and personnel problems have made it impossible to produce an issue in this time. We believe that we have now overcome these problems and that ALR will once again appear regularly.

Comment ............................................................... 1
  Poland
Comment ............................................................... 2
  Resources boom
Stalinism or Independence? .......................... 8
  Jack Blake
Economic Notes ................................................ 18
  Gavan Butler
Anti-semitism and the Soviet anti-Zionist campaign ........ 24
  Dave Davies
Origins of the present super-power confrontation ......... 31
  K.L. Kinsman
"Scoundrel Time" (Lillian Hellman) .................. 37
  Tom Appleton
Reviews ......................................................... 42


Subscriptions: $6.00 for six issues. Surface or airmail postage to be added to overseas subs.

Australian Left Review
Box A247, Sydney South PO, Sydney 2000.

Printed and published by Red Pen Publications Pty. Ltd.,
4 Dixon Street, Sydney 2000.
Comment: Poland

With the Polish situation more settled than it has been for some months, the world awaits the outcome of the crucial Congress of the Polish United Workers Party (Poland’s Communist Party), due in mid-July. This congress will determine whether the months-old movement towards a socialist democracy will speed up, with the party’s approval, or whether the party will try to reverse the process, or at least “hold the line” at the current position.

All the signs are that most of the party’s rank and file want the process of socialist renewal to speed up and broaden its aims.

If the congress endorses a program of renewal and reforms, the clash between the Solidarity trade union and the party will diminish considerably, and there will be every possibility for a productive party/union alliance to creatively tackle Poland’s deep economic, social and political problems.

Already the possibilities of such a partnership are very real. The party leadership has recently conceded major demands, including that of farmers for a Rural Solidarity, and the Solidarity leadership is recognising the need for realistic economic measures, even possible increases in food prices.

The Soviet leadership has not welcomed the process taking place in Poland. In fact, they have made plain their wish to see it “reversed”. The propaganda barrage from Moscow, Prague and East Berlin has recalled only too vividly the campaign against the Czechoslovak party before the 1968 invasion.

It would be nice to be able to rule out a Czech-style intervention in Poland’s affairs. Certainly the threat of one has receded in the past few weeks. However, given the obvious unhappiness of the Soviet leaders and others in Eastern Europe, the “track record” suggests caution in ruling it out altogether.

But the situation is somewhat different today from what it was in 1968. There is far greater active working class participation in Poland’s reforms. If the Soviet Union intervened in Poland, it would have to count on determined and prolonged resistance by the Polish workers and people — and possibly the army.

And while Czechoslovakia in 1968 was a very big mouthful to swallow, taking several years to fully digest, Poland in 1981 would be virtually indigestible. The Soviet Union would be taking over Poland’s huge foreign debts and other big economic problems — a massive burden on top of its own problems of economic development and foreign-aid commitments elsewhere.

However, in the minds of at least some Soviet leaders, there must be powerful reasons for intervening against the “Polish disease”. To all-too-many Soviet leaders, the Polish events raise a spectre of change throughout Eastern Europe, including in the USSR, in directions which they do not like. Rightly or wrongly, such people see their own positions, and the social values they hold dear, deeply threatened.

Which course will finally be adopted remains to be seen. It is to be hoped that sanity, and socialist principles, will prevail and that at least some elements in the Soviet leadership will learn from, rather than fear, the Polish events. Should that happen, the positive influence of Poland on the worldwide prospects for socialism, and on international affairs generally, will be great.

Intervention, on the other hand, would do tremendous damage to the world socialist movement, perhaps even worse than the 1968 Czech intervention, and would open up a very bleak period in the world situation.

Poland, therefore, has an importance far beyond its own borders. Indeed, the Polish experiment may well be one of crucial importance to the future of humankind.

Comment: Resources Boom

In December 1980, the Department of Industry and Commerce identified major mining and manufacturing investment projects worth over thirty-three billion dollars at the committed or final feasibility stage.

Accompanying tables reveal the dominance of Western Australia, Queensland and New South Wales as centres for proposed investments and the importance of energy resources. Natural gas, coal and aluminium — sometimes described as 'congealed electricity' — figure prominently. (see Tables 1 and 2).

Although the size and timing of the thirty-three billion dollar investment is overstated, the shock waves of Rundle should not obscure the fact that there is a large scale investment in Australia's natural resource sector.

Whether called a 'boom' or more aptly a 'binge' this development will impinge on many aspects of society. It is connected to future employment possibilities, decline of the social wage, erosion of national sovereignty, the increase in interest rates, degradation of the environment, growth of wage differentials, conflict between resource rich and resource poor states, uprooting of people and relocation in remote underserviced areas, depletion of energy stocks and acceleration of the nuclear power option, taxation, strengthening of the United States/Australian alliance through the supply of military related resources, aboriginal land rights, technological dependence and migration policy. If nuclear cataclysm does not destroy our civilisation, then resources policy is the single most significant issue before Australians in the next decade.

The major mining and manufacturing projects must be viewed in the context of the broader restructuring of the Australian economy. They are part of the extensive reorganisation and re-orientation of Australia's productive base.

In the period 1973-80 manufacturing employment declined by 155,700 across Australia. The table shows large falls in New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia as the Australian economy suffered a major structural shakeout and a new global organisation of production emerged. The continuing implications for Australia's reduced manufacturing base are profound as 'free trade zones', the curtailment of integrated manufacturing and the development of complementation schemes, as in the car industry, undermine the diverse manufacturing sector established after World War II. (see Table 3).

The proposed resource projects are predominantly capital and energy intensive, export oriented, foreign controlled, extremely profitable and highly concentrated in the market. They are a further component of the efforts of United States, Japanese and West European capital to establish a new set of corporate relations in the Pacific Basin into which Australia will be locked.

This process involves becoming enmeshed in subordinate relations with foreign corporations and overseas markets. It means a sell-out of Australia's national resources through a combination of restricted public and local equity participation, combining with limited company tax collections by government, under-pricing of energy inputs such as electricity and gas and publicly subsidised
infrastructure.

It is associated with vulnerability as Australia becomes dependent on large exports of commodities whose prices are subject to considerable fluctuation. We do not need to invoke Chile to recall how large international corporations with massive investments can destabilise the economy and politics.

Associated with this process of dependent integration has been the increasing tying in of the larger sectors of local capital with foreign corporations and financial institutions. It is no longer possible to identify a powerful, independent and cohesive national bourgeoisie, although conflicts over Industry Assistance Commission recommendations reveal continuing pressures from sections of manufacturing employers in the south-eastern states.

In seeking to better express aspirations for Australian independence the labour movement does not greatly risk becoming subservient to local capital. Radical nationalism, encompassing both national independence and enriched democratic rights are key elements in a popular response to the progressive erosion of our national sovereignty and capacity to actively shape society to meet social needs.

If one side of the development coin is international integration, the other is domestic fragmentation and division.

The unevenness of national economic development within and between states is creating strains on federal/state relations and on relations between resource rich and resource poor states. Speaking of the pressures on national economic planning, Katharine West, an author and commentator on the conservative parties, said on an ABC Background Briefing programme last year:-

‘...the areas that the States want increased powers in are crucial areas, areas of vital importance to sound national economic management, areas like export controls, exchange and interest rates, equity requirements about the balance between foreign and local investment in resource industries, areas like domestic protection versus foreign imports. These are of fundamental importance to the overall question of national economic stability....’

It might be added that not only may the states like such powers; transnational corporations would not object to the states acquiring them.

The disparities between resource rich states and the relatively resource poor states is resulting in a gradual shift of population, wealth and power towards Queensland and Western Australia. Associated with this are the claims by premiers Bjelke-Petersen and Court of their states ownership of mineral resources.

Despite the federal government's constitutional powers over exports and the operation of foreign companies in Australia, we have witnessed a partial surrender by the federal authority to state parochialism. In 1978 even the National Country Party leader Anthony was compelled in his capacity as Minister for Trade and Resources to back down on attempts to extend federal involvement in contract negotiation between foreign buyers and Australian producers. State governments are increasingly claiming ownership of mineral resources and the right to control the conditions and scale of exploitation and the revenue realised from their sale.

At the same time that the federal government is withdrawing from traditional areas of responsibility, state governments are quite unequal in their capacity to match the loss of funds by increasing their own contributions.

The problems for Victoria, South Australia and Tasmania loom large. These resource poor states face under 'new federalism' increased financial responsibilities from a declining revenue base. Social wage expenditure in health, education and transport is declining in real terms. In order to try and offset these disadvantages, poorer states are most susceptible to pressures from the corporate sector for infrastructure subsidies and energy supplies at below bargain basement prices to win investment for the limited resource projects they can oversee.

Financing of infrastructure programmes has led the states to borrow from both domestic and overseas markets. The competition for funds on the domestic capital market is directly affecting home buyers and smaller businesses by increasing interest rates and restricting funds. The
Victorian and New South Wales governments are committing such unprecedented sums for electricity generation and the longer term repayment of capital and interest, that other areas of public spending threaten to be drastically curbed.

Employment will suffer as the states seek to dispense with ‘non-essential’ public services. Efforts to change the formula for commonwealth grants to the states are already evident now that previously advantaged, developing states have access to a larger independent income base through royalty payments and state charges.

Resource rich states are also vocal supporters of dismantling the national protective barriers in order to promote freer access to the world market for mineral and energy exports. Such a reduction in effective protection would strongly impact New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia. (See table on tariff protection). Inevitable pressures for rapid expansion of imports arising from the income generated from uncoordinated resource development will harm traditional manufacturing states and Australia’s overall productive and employment base.

The ‘resources boom’ promises few jobs - especially for women. According to the Department of Labor Advisory Ctte (DOLAC), comprising state and commonwealth government departments, the demand for skilled labour directly generated by major resource projects would increase at an annual rate of 7000 during 1980-83. This increase would be distributed across three key trade groups - 4,000 metal workers, 2,000 from the electrical trades and 1,000 building workers.

Other estimates of the direct labour requirements generated by on-site construction and production and off-site labour required to supply materials, equipment and fabricated products, and the provision of infrastructure, vary between the Dept of Employment and Youth Affairs’ estimates of 60,000 by 1985 and the more modest estimate of 37,000 extra new jobs by 1984 made by the Melbourne Institute of Applied Economic and Social Research.

It is manifestly clear that the direct employment effects of the boom will be small and that as the balance shifts from construction to production the direct employment boost will probably decline to a permanent workforce of between 12-20,000 people, some of whom will live in isolated areas. As the table demonstrates starkly, the mining sector does not employ many people. (see Table 5).

We face then a pattern of development in which international corporate control increases as the economy gears up for large scale resource processing for export. Most of the surplus generated by these projects will be privately appropriated, the bulk of it overseas, while the investment costs are increasingly being socialised through taxation concessions, infrastructure and export incentives. As a result public expenditure to satisfy social needs will be reduced further. Some will benefit from this process as super profits are recorded. Requirements for skilled labour will blow out wage differentials. If they wished, resource rich states could outlay funds for social needs. Yet the overall process is one of international integration and national disintegration and divisiveness.

Within the federal bureaucracy there are arguments as to the manner of best managing the boom. Treasury would like to slow the projected rate of development to reduce the feared spread of higher wages paid to skilled labour. In addition Treasury is concerned at the degree of public sector subsidisation of resource development and has urged that developers be compelled to pay for some industrial infrastructure costs borne by the state and for social expenses created by investment projects in remote areas. Perhaps conscious of the political fall-out that will grow as massive profits are made, Treasury supports a resource rent tax, which would also have the effect of enhancing government revenue at a time when the oil levy declined.

There is considerable discussion about the size of the balance of payments surplus likely to be generated by resource development and the subsequent pressures for still further penetration of the Australian market by imports. While generally agreed that a sizable surplus can be expected by the mid eighties, some sections of the
bureaucracy add the cautionary warning that corporate manipulation, through such practices as transfer pricing which is rife in vertically integrated industries such as the bauxite/alumina/aluminium group, will lessen the surplus available for potential redistribution. The increased levels of foreign ownership are associated with a large rise on the ‘invisibles’ account as transporters, insurers, and lenders are located abroad and repatriation of profits and borrowing by foreign-owned companies increases.

Within the Australian Labor Party much of the public running has been made by the resources shadow minister Paul Keating. For Keating the task of government policy will be to redistribute the surplus generated by the expanded export volumes in order to improve living standards and create jobs. Some of the specific planks of this position include the demand for a resource rent tax to cream the surplus, maximising Australian ownership in joint ventures with foreign capital and realistic user pay rates for energy inputs and infrastructure. These proposals have a potentially wide appeal and can be presented in a demagogic manner as an attempt to take on the big corporations. In practice they are essentially intended to manage the boom in a socially more acceptable way. As yet the Labor Party spokesmen have low-keyed any commitment to a viable and diverse manufacturing base capable of sustaining employment and enhancing Australia’s national sovereignty. Restructuring on corporate criteria is largely unchallenged.

For the labour movement an alternative development strategy is needed. This may embrace some specific policies advocated by Keating but its scope cannot be confined to distributional questions. Concern for the type, pace, extent, control, degree of processing, employment effects and social and environmental factors associated with resource development requires intervention in the supply side of the economy. An alternative development policy cannot be based on rejecting resource exploitation as such or appealing to a myopic vision of Australia locked out from the world hiding behind high protective barriers.

Four key aspects of an alternative policy are the needs to enhance our national sovereignty, expand public ownership and control of the economy, maximise the social benefits while minimising the costs of resource development and progressively enrich democratic rights and control. These can be consistent with a strong mining sector and a vigorous range of exporting industries so long as they are alongside a diverse range of manufacturing industries. It implies a strong bargaining stance by Australia and a use of our natural advantages to generate new manufacturing industries in such socially useful areas as shipbuilding and repair, and public transport rolling stock.

Winning support for this will not be easy. Australians have been bombarded with the claim that resources development requires massive foreign capital and know-how. On the other hand the degree of foreign penetration of the economy and the repatriation of vast profits troubles many. There is considerable unease at the way in which external forces are reshaping our society.

The resources boom contains contradictory elements. Some who fight vigorously for a bigger slice of the resources cake are imbued with the development ethos and disregard the social costs. Others who appreciate the social costs are blind to the fears by workers of the loss of their jobs. Cohesion will be elusive. However, whatever the difficulties the labour movement must seek a mass response to resource development and its ramifications.

— M.T., May 1981.
### Table 1

**Total Investment in Mining & Manufacturing Projects by State**

**December 1980 — Sm.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Mining</th>
<th>Manufacturing</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percentage of Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New South Wales</td>
<td>3890</td>
<td>3340</td>
<td>7230</td>
<td>21.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victoria</td>
<td>1530</td>
<td>1240</td>
<td>2770</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Queensland</td>
<td>5990</td>
<td>2800</td>
<td>8790</td>
<td>26.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Australia</td>
<td>8450</td>
<td>2040</td>
<td>10490</td>
<td>31.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Australia</td>
<td>2330</td>
<td>310</td>
<td>2640</td>
<td>7.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tasmania</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>590</td>
<td>660</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N. Territory</td>
<td>790</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>800</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>23050</td>
<td>10330</td>
<td>33380</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Dept of Industry & Commerce — Survey of Major Manufacturing & Mining Investment Projects, December 1980.

### Table 2.

Aggregate estimated remaining costs of projects listed by developers as at 'committed' or 'final feasibility' stages, mining and manufacturing by commodity groups, December 1980.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Commodity Group</th>
<th>Value (SM)</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oil and Gas</td>
<td>8,970</td>
<td>26.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coal</td>
<td>9,310</td>
<td>27.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Base metals (including Aluminium Alumina, Bauxite)</td>
<td>7,590</td>
<td>22.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iron Ore</td>
<td>2,450</td>
<td>7.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemicals, Petroleum and Coal Products</td>
<td>1,160</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uranium</td>
<td>1,220</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper and Paper products</td>
<td>530</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>2,150</td>
<td>6.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>33,380</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Department of Industry and Commerce
### Table 3

Employment change by state & industry sector 1973 — 1980 (’000’s)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INDUSTRY SECTOR</th>
<th>NSW</th>
<th>VIC</th>
<th>QLD</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>WA</th>
<th>TAS</th>
<th>AUST</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Forestry, fishing, hunting</td>
<td>-0.1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-0.3</td>
<td>-0.2</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mining</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>-0.5</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>-0.2</td>
<td>8.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>-64.4</td>
<td>-59.7</td>
<td>-6.4</td>
<td>-21.8</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>-3.4</td>
<td>-155.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electricity, gas, water</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>-0.3</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>9.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>-19.5</td>
<td>-7.5</td>
<td>-9.3</td>
<td>-3.8</td>
<td>-4.3</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>-47.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wholesale &amp; retail trade</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td>12.0</td>
<td>-1.0</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>39.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport &amp; storage</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>-0.3</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>-0.6</td>
<td>15.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>-0.2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance, business services, etc</td>
<td>19.3</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>45.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public admin., defence</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>48.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community services</td>
<td>62.9</td>
<td>65.2</td>
<td>35.1</td>
<td>25.6</td>
<td>27.7</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>231.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entertainment, recreation, etc</td>
<td>12.9</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>28.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>42.0</td>
<td>43.5</td>
<td>59.9</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>48.5</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>231.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 4.

Effective Protection rates for Manufacturing Industry by State.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Victoria</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Australia</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New South Wales</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Queensland</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Australia</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tasmania</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: IAC

### Table 5

Australia’s structural change

Changes in the percentage distribution of employment across industry sectors in Australia, 1911 to 1978

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INDUSTRY</th>
<th>1911</th>
<th>1931</th>
<th>1951</th>
<th>1971</th>
<th>1978</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mining</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>24.2</td>
<td>21.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>66.6</td>
<td>71.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1949 to 1956

STALINISM OR INDEPENDENCE?

by Jack Blake

Jack Blake, at the Communists and the Labour Movement Conference in Melbourne last year, presented a paper analysing the events surrounding the so-called "Consolidation Statement" of the CPA in 1954. Following the conference, the National Committee of the CPA appointed a sub-committee to examine the issues raised by Jack Blake's paper. This sub-committee reported to the last National Committee meeting, held on April 4-5. The NC adopted the sub-committee's report unanimously.

We publish below the full text of Jack Blake's paper and, following it, the resolution adopted by the NC.

Early in 1949 the central leadership of the CPA outlined a Communist Party electoral strategy of fielding a team of candidates large enough to present the Communist Party as the only real alternative to the Chifley Labor government. The disastrous CPA policy on the coal strike flowed from that strategy.

In an interview with the press the general secretary Sharkey stated that in the hypothetical event of the Soviet Army entering Australia in pursuit of an aggressor, Australian workers would welcome the Red Army. He was sentenced to three years' jail for sedition.
In December the Labor government was defeated. The Liberal-Country Party coalition headed by Menzies won a majority, formed the government, and immediately launched a fierce campaign against the Communist Party and the trade unions.

In the middle of 1950 the Korean war broke out. North Korean troops overran most of South Korea. American armed forces under the United Nations flag advanced to the Chinese border, violated Chinese air space, and threatened to use atomic bombs. The Chinese army crossed the Yalu River and swept the American forces back across the 38th parallel.

Before the end of 1950 and into the first quarter of 1951 the Communist Party was an illegal organisation. The Communist Party Dissolution Bill had passed through all stages in the federal parliament and had become the law of the land.

Stalinism

I know there is a large body of work on the nature of stalinism but for the purpose of this paper I have in mind two aspects:

1. The degree to which the CPA (like all other communist parties) operated along the lines of Stalin’s CPSU: Bureaucratically centralised, dogmatic, authoritarian, and intolerant of views not in accord with the official line.

2. The extent to which the party followed or supported various policies or acts of the CPSU.

There was a connection between these two but they were not the same, and the one did not necessarily include the other. The first aspect, the nature of the party and how it operated, was always the most important.

In this period all CPA leaders were stalinists. The CPA was a stalinist party as were most other communist parties.

One view about this matter in our context is that the root of the problem lay in the failure of the CPA to concern itself with Australian problems. This view is hard to sustain. The CPA has always been concerned about such basic economic problems as wages, prices, working hours and conditions.

In wider areas, the CPA elaborated policies on capitalist monopolies, the national debt, banking, currency reform, direct and indirect taxation, water conservation, afforestation, education, housing, and public health. In the immediate post-war period detailed municipal programs were worked out. The 1944-45 program on Aborigines, of which Tom Wright was one of the main architects, was ahead of anything else at the time.

I don’t think that this is where the problem lies, but rather in our concept of the nature of the revolution in prospect in Australia, in the orientation which stemmed from that, and the stalinist nature of the party associated with both concept and orientation.

The resolution of early 1954 titled Consolidation removed Henry and Blake from the CC secretariat on charges of attempting to impose a Left sectarian policy on the party, factionalism, and conducting a struggle for power within the party. This resolution is still the official view, and it is therefore useful as a frame of reference to examine some issues, policies, and the role of different personalities.

As I am one of the central figures involved there is a danger of bias and special pleading. I draw this possibility to your attention.

During 1949 both Sharkey and Dixon were critical of the party’s peace activity. Sharkey said there was still no peace movement in NSW. At the end of 1949 Blake was placed in charge of this sphere of work; he translated a Russian version of a speech by Palmiro Togliatti and published it in the Communist Review, February 1950.

In the article, Togliatti urged the workers to place the defence of peace in the centre of their activity, the broad peace movement embracing all democratic strata of people should become a real political force in each country. The development of this broad
popular movement would simplify for the people the creation of governments which would put an end to war preparations, develop peaceful economic construction and raise living standards.

Blake then sought to convince the party organisations to place the struggle for peace in the centre of their activity. At a CC meeting in July 1950, he criticised Henry and the CC members from Victoria and Queensland for hindering a united Communist Party approach to this basic line of policy. He urged action to secure signatures to the petition against atomic weapons as a way of getting party members to carry out political work on a wide scale; the party should merge with the broad mass movement as its most vigorous fighting core.

Towards the end of 1950 Audrey Blake proposed the organisation of a mass delegation with a dance group as its cultural core, to attend the Berlin Youth Festival in the following year. Henry, the CC secretariat member responsible for youth activity, gave full support to the proposal. In Victoria, Hill was strongly opposed and that was the beginning of a long campaign by Hill against Audrey Blake. But the Youth Festival campaign took on a mass character and was a success. The dance group fulfilled the role of mass organiser and 134 Australian delegates went to the Berlin Youth Festival.

Early in 1951 Hill drew Henry into his campaign against Audrey Blake. Henry delivered a two hours long attack against her at a specially convened Political Committee meeting, based on material supplied to him by Hill. The meeting placed the entire matter in the hands of the Control Commission. After a long and detailed investigation, the only charge the Commission found to be substantiated was that Audrey Blake was inclined to be impetuous. Already, on the day after he had delivered his blast against Audrey Blake, Henry realised he had been conned by Hill.

By mid-1950, because of the Korean war and Menzies’ drive to outlaw the party, the atmosphere in the party was that of a besieged fortress. Blake sought to turn the vision of party members outwards, toward the broad movement for peace which, at the same time, would provide the best conditions for defeating Menzies’ attacks on democratic liberties, and for the struggle for the economic interests of the working people. He described the Labor Party as a bourgeois agency in the labor movement, at the same time insisting that a people’s movement for peace could not be built without the active participation of thousands of Labor Party members and supporters.

The Communist Party’s broad popular campaign for a ‘NO’ vote in the 1951 referendum has, at times, been contrasted to Blake’s sectarian methods. This ignores the fact that it was Blake who had the party responsibility for the nationwide referendum campaign; he helped the initiators of the popular cultural forms used in the campaign — street theatre, songs, parodies, cartoon strips, etc. His work in this field, as published in the Communist Review, was later attacked as an introduction of stalinism into literature and art.

The 1954 resolution contains only one paragraph referring to Henry, and that reference is only in general terms. The detailed charges are against Blake; Henry is associated by the linkage “Blake and Henry”. The views of these two on economism early in 1951 (actually I have been unable to discover any views expressed by Henry on economism) are given as an example of the sectarianism of Blake and Henry. In fact, the discussion on economism was directed against the sectarian influence which the economist trend had on the policies of the CPA.

The suggestion that the campaign against economism was the exclusive province of Blake and Henry (against the majority of the party leadership) is not supported by the evidence. The general secretary of the party, Sharkey, supported this campaign. At the 16th Congress in 1951, Sharkey said:

The campaign waged against economism and sectarianism will prove valuable in helping the party to recover lost ground and go far beyond past achievements ... the aspect ... of Lenin’s criticism of economism ... most important for us is that which showed there were other and at least equally important starting points for the struggle of the proletariat than purely economic; in present conditions, the various aspects of the fight for peace, the Five Power Pact, peace in Korea, against the rearming of Japan and conscription of the youth.
STALINISM OR INDEPENDENCE?

On the same subject the president of the party, Dixon, said in August 1951:

Economism is right opportunism, it is a deviation towards the Labor Party ... the fight against economism is the fight against reformist ideology and methods which limit and narrow the trade union struggle, hinder the fight for unity within the working class movement.6

Speaking on the success of the campaign for a 'NO' vote in the 1951 referendum, Dixon said:

In these ways the traditional economism and narrowness of the trade union movement, a scourge which continues to afflict even the trade unions under progressive leadership received a heavy blow.7

There was nothing in what Blake said about economism to suggest that unions should neglect economic issues. That struggles about wages, working hours, conditions, prices and other economic demands of the workers were of fundamental importance was stressed.

Another cited example of Blake's sectarian record was his suggestion, in answer to a question at a party cadres meeting, that the party should consider giving second preference votes to candidates who were peace supporters, rather than to Labor Party candidates. This proposal, it was said, was connected with his erroneous ideas on the two-party system.

In August 1952, in a carefully considered report on tactics for parliamentary elections due in the following year, Dixon said:

.... in the course of the elections we shall strive to strengthen the people's movement. Hence, the Communist Party will support non-party people's candidates who come forward with a genuine policy of peace and in defence of the needs of the people. In the elections, as at all times, our aim is to build a firm united front with the Labor Party workers. We will, therefore, continue to give our second preferences to ALP candidates.8

As to erroneous views about the two-party system, it was Sharkey, in the article "The Labor Party Crisis", which is said to be non-sectarian and definitive on the ALP, who said:

The ALP....is not a workers' party...(it) is a two-class party based also on the middle class, on the 'Australian manufacturer' whose interests it fostered against overseas capital ... (it is) the second party of capitalism, part of the two-party system of controlling the masses, an essential part of the capitalist set up ....9 (my emphasis — J.B.)

The two-party system, the swing of the Lib-Lab pendulum, has always been a problem for Australian communists discussing parliamentary elections.

Do these references to the recorded position of various CPA leaders leave us with no more complications than to decide who was the chief wrongdoer? That is the simple path, but it does not help us resolve the problem about what was happening and why.

The record is clear enough and sufficiently well documented to make possible an evaluation of the processes at work in the period.

Blake's work throughout 1950 was directed to taking the CPA onto a new course, giving it a new orientation. In the process he operated within the established stalinist framework. He made no sudden leap from a stalinist to a non-stalinist position: most of his policy proposals which broke away from stalinism were put forward in stalinist terms. His suggestion that the committees or councils of the broad popular movement might assume some of the characteristics of Soviets was part of this process of groping for new ways in old terms.

In the field of educational work within the party, members were encouraged to think for themselves. One of the texts used was Stalin's History of the CPSU, yet in the lively discussions which took place the focus was on Australian problems, and those discussions spilled over into the branches.

The author of a recent book referring to the period is generally critical and hostile, but he remarks on the spirit of excitement which developed in the party in those years.10
In his speech to the 16th Congress, Blake was celebrating this development of inner party democracy:

*This was also shown by the number of lively discussions which developed on strategic questions, the nature of the peace movement, economism and sectarianism. At times these controversies were rather hair-raising but we must not let that horrify us ... Expressions of horror at mistakes made by comrades in theoretical discussion would only strangle such discussions and the ideological growth which results from such discussions when related to action.*

By early 1951 this changed orientation and direction had taken hold within the party. Communists had acquired experience in conducting political work among wider sections of the people and their fighting spirit was much higher than it had been only a year before. More than 200,000 signatures had been secured against the atomic bomb, and these had to be won in a mass educational struggle because of the fierce cold war.

Basically it was this new orientation and direction that was codified in the new CPA program drafted in the first half of 1951 and adopted by the 16th Congress in August 1951.

The program declared the struggle to maintain peace to be the most pressing task of the time and the Communist Party would therefore devote its main energies to it. It called for the development of a broad people's movement to struggle for peace, democracy and the vital interests of the working people.

This people's movement, through a combination of parliamentary and extra-parliamentary action would lead to the winning of people's power and a people's government. The first act of this people's government would be to replace the dangerous policy of war with a policy of peace; it would then take economic measures opening the way to the building of socialism.

This program left large and vital political areas in darkness. Many problems and contradictions between one part and another had not been thought through. How, for example, could 'Our parliaments be filled with true representatives of the people's movement' if communist candidates gave their preference votes to ALP candidates while at the same time saying that the Labor Party supported the war drive and was the second party of capitalism?

How could the broad organised people's movement effect the parliamentary side of its activity, select its candidates for parliament and have them elected? How could the councils, committees, or other leading bodies of this broad people's movement be so all-embracing as to win parliamentary power and wield extra-parliamentary power? Or should each of these leading bodies of the people's movement confine itself to a limited field of interest while some overarching authority (maybe the CPA) would give these diverse movements a common political direction towards a 'People's Government of Peace'?

These were some of the blank spots in the programmatic statement of the CPA which various leaders, in the process of their practical activity, were compelled to think about. The views expressed at different times by Sharkey, Dixon, Henry, Blake and others reflected the way each saw the areas in the totality calling for the greatest emphasis. Neither singly nor collectively were these leaders able to think these problems through. Indeed, has this changed very much to this day?

In the latter part of 1951 Audrey Blake was the initiator and the main driving force of the Youth Carnival for Peace and Friendship held in Sydney, March 1952. In that campaign she had the full support and backing of Henry on behalf of the CC of the CPA.

Menzies, following his defeat in the referendum, sought other means to suppress the democratic rights of the trade unions and the progressive democratic movement. The full weight of government propaganda and of the secret police were turned against the Youth Carnival. As halls, sports grounds and other venues were booked, the secret police immediately followed up with intimidation of local councils and owners, forcing them to cancel bookings.

A mass democratic movement in support of the Youth Carnival developed. That movement won a great victory over the powerful repressive forces arrayed against
The victory of the Youth Carnival was a celebration of democracy for peace. A letter to Audrey Blake reads in part:

On behalf of the members of the Sydney District Committee, Sydney organisers, Section Committee members and others from our Sydney District, we wish to convey our heartfelt congratulations on your magnificent report to the 8th National Congress of the EYL ....

... We can assure you that your inspiration ... during the great campaign for the Carnival has helped us considerably to understand not only what is necessary, but also the ways and means of organising the young people in the struggle.

H. Hatfield (Secretary) L. Donald (Chairman).

In September 1953 a major event was the national Peace Convention attended by 1,000 delegates in Sydney.

Within the CPA in the campaign in support of the Convention, Blake sought to have the efforts of communists directed into the area beyond the circle of communist influence; to people, movements and organisations who did not agree with the Communist Party but who were concerned about war and peace. Communists should listen to these people, respect their views, negotiate with them, encourage them to act on the basis of their own beliefs and their level of concern for preventing war and preserving peace.

While making their own views known, our members should make no attempt to impose their views on others. There should be no "numbers game", no attempt to fix people into organisation, people themselves should decide when and what organisation was needed, there should be no attempts to push through resolutions on simple majority votes. Seen to be very active, not only should communists not indulge in any kind of manipulation, it should be clearly seen that communists were not manipulating.

This required of the communists a further breaking out of the closed circle of like minds, a broadening of vision and the development of abilities to conduct rational discourse. The process met with an enthusiastic response among our members in NSW and other states. In Victoria, Hill prevented the concept in its totality from reaching the members of the party.

Two examples show the difference:

1. The new kind of practice called for patience and time. In NSW and other states, there was a steady build-up of delegate registrations. From Victoria there was a sudden rush of delegates only in the last ten days of the campaign.

2. In a Commission at the Convention, Victorian delegates tried to force through a resolution demanding the immediate admission of China to the United Nations (demonstrating that those delegates were unaware of the practice in other states). Communist delegates from NSW and other states prevailed upon the Victorians not to press their resolution.

On this question, the Findings of the Convention said:

A solution to the problems in the Pacific area required the settling of the problem of Chinese representation at the United Nations. We recognise that there is a substantial section of the public opinion in favour of the recognition of People's China. Unanimity on this question could not be attained in the relevant Commission of this Convention. But the spirit of the discussion carried the implication that in the interests of world peace this question must be faced with a view to finding a negotiated settlement of the present dispute.

In the Communist Party, Blake's charge that Hill had prevented the Victorian communists from taking the path followed in the rest of Australia, was rejected, and this led through to the Consolidation event.

Some ten years later, when he no longer felt any need for constraint, Hill made his position clear on the twin questions of the party and the peace movement:

No one should be admitted to our party until he has been thoroughly scrutinised for it is certain that the secret police are far more concerned about us than about the revisionists .... our basic organisations must be self-contained — we do not want any one person except perhaps the topmost leadership knowing all the party members or knowing the party members outside his sphere.

Peace movement:

The peace bodies headed by revisionists — no less revisionists because some of them wear a clerical collar — are paralysing the peace forces and confusing the people.
Confirmation of the estimate of the Peace Convention given in this paper can be found in a booklet *The Road to Peace* by the Reverend Eric Owen who interviewed Menzies during the Convention campaign. Owen was shown material seized from Blake's office by security police in a raid early in the campaign; and he maintained a vigilant watch for communist manipulation through all stages. In his booklet he says:

> On the questions of basic policy .... they (the communists) neither sought, nor had any determining influence. The Findings alone are clear proof of the fact that from the point of view of democratic procedure and principle in this convention the behaviour of any communists who might have been associated with it was impeccable.

Well then, what are they up to? What is their aim? Frankly I am compelled to accept the conclusion that they wanted us to succeed in our attempt to discover areas of agreement among people of widely differing political and religious convictions. They wanted the Convention to be a success.\(^1\)

So the evidence does not support the charges made in the *Consolidation* resolution insofar as they refer to responsibilities or acts of Blake and Henry exclusively. Hill's opening attack against Blake at the six day *Consolidation* session charged Blake with right opportunism and hiding the face of the party. But there were obvious difficulties in reconciling a finding along those lines with the Party Program. The question is why Sharkey proceeded (Hill opened, but it was Sharkey who pushed it through to the end).\(^17\)

Two things point to the possible reason:

First, at the 16th Congress the only criticism made by Sharkey which clearly referred to Blake concerned the use in party education of the *Elementary Course in Philosophy* by Politzer.\(^18\) Second, in the immediate aftermath of *Consolidation* the only sphere of work from which Blake was removed was party education. The critical, creative discussion which he promoted in this field was replaced by the Chinese method of deep ideological introspection and self-criticism which encouraged docility and an acceptance of dogmatic or received ideas.

This suggests that Sharkey felt that these processes threatened the nature of the party and he acted accordingly. He believed Blake could still play his part in developing the broad peace movement. In August 1954, in a speech to cultural activists, Sharkey recommended the peace movement of the time as a model of the broad non-sectarian lines to be emulated.\(^19\) However, inner-party democracy and the broad popular democratic movement were inseparable twins; the party was not equipped to help the one to grow without the other.

In April 1956 a meeting of fifty people from trade unions, cultural and scientific groups, business and professional men and women, clergy and Quakers, decided to hold an Australian Assembly for peace in Sydney in September of that year.

Urging the CPA to support this peace initiative, Blake said that for all Australians with the cause of peace at heart, the key question of the day was the participation of the Labor Party in the work of the Assembly and in the peace movement. "The important thing," he said, "in our relations with the Labor Party is for us to really move out to meet each other, to seek out and find the points of agreement, and the basis for mutual understanding .... We need to place at the very basis of the relations between our two parties that which draws us together."\(^20\)

The Assembly for Peace did have the largest participation of the Labor Party up to that time. But there was minimal support from the CPA leadership for that campaign. Just afterwards, a Queensland member of the Central Committee, Max Julius, said: "Being sent to work in any field of activity that Blake is associated with is like being sent to the salt mines in Siberia."

Following the 20th Congress of the CPSU the stand which Blake took was directed against the stalinism in the Australian party. In addition to his self-critical statements on the matter of Lysenko and on the Soviet Jewish doctors published in *Tribune*, he declared:

> I believe it our duty to examine every aspect of our work in the light of the lead given by the CPSU. Above all, I think we need in a critical and self-critical manner to examine our methods of work and leadership to eliminate dogmatic methods and practices, letting ourselves be governed by likes or dislikes of personalities, using positions in an overbearing and
bureaucratic manner, instead of reasoned argument to secure conviction. Struggle against such manifestations of the cult of the individual can only have the greatest tonic effect on the health of the party and develop the creative talents and initiative of all our members.21

Blake took the opportunity to inform the secretariat that he repudiated the Consolidation resolution of 1954. He also declared his opposition to the line of the leadership on the questions of stalinism and on the events in Hungary. Having made his views known, but recognising he was in a minority of one on the CC, he voluntarily undertook to reserve his opinions on these matters. Speaking at the CC meeting Blake did not refer to the report of Sharkey or that of Hill with which he disagreed.22

He spoke about the peace movement. During the final session of the meeting Sam Aarons said from the rostrum that every speaker at the meeting had endorsed the report of Sharkey, with one important exception — J.D. Blake. Blake was compelled to return to the rostrum and give a short explanation of his views on stalinism and on Hungary.

For the purpose of his concluding address Sharkey had the microphone moved to a position directly in front of Blake's table, now deserted by everyone else who had been sitting around it. Sharkey's closing address was a violent attack on Blake whom he said had politically deteriorated, and whom he described as the chief disruptor in the party and the leader of all the other disruptors and revisionists.

Realising that reserved or not, he was not to be allowed to have any opinion of his own, Blake resigned from the CC and from all positions of responsibility he still held in the party. (Audrey Blake had already resigned from all leading positions.)

So, at that time, far from following the example of the CPSU, the independent course of the CPA was stalinist. At a time of thaw in the Soviet Union, the CPA was taken into a stalinist deep-freeze. The retrogression which began with Consolidation was now in full flood. Discussion was suppressed, independent creative thinkers were hounded and expelled. Many more were "invited" to leave the party, others departed without invitation. After the expulsion of Helen Palmer the party maintained for a time surveillance of her home to check her visitors. That was what was described as a "great discussion in the party".23

Later, Sharkey said: "We lost a handful of people who went out of the party because they succumbed to revisionist ideology".24 Actually, in the previous year just over 26 per cent or more than a quarter of the members were pushed out or left the party in the manner described.

By 1958 the party had close ties with the Chinese Communist Party, primarily because that party was opposed to de-stalinising. Only in 1961 did Sharkey, under CPSU pressure to choose, decide to align the CPA on the CPSU side. This was not due to any change of heart about stalinism, but because it was doubtful whether a majority of the then remaining CPA members would have supported a move to the China side in opposition to the Soviet Union.

Following its condemnation of the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968 the CPA suffered further divisions. The slogan was still "Build the Party". But the membership continued steadily to decline.

This has not been an easy story to tell, but if it provides some insights into the profound effect the inner-party struggle can have on the party and on our relations with the mass movement, it will have been worth while.

FOOTNOTES
2 Tribune, March 10, 1954.
3 The CC resolution offered a strange explanation of the 'factionalism' of Blake and Henry. It said there was no factional organisation, but some party members supported Blake and some Henry. This implies that these leaders should have made sure their views gained no support from members if they wished to avoid the charge of factionalism.

The draft of the Consolidation resolution submitted to the Political Committee for final approval did not include the clause removing Blake and Henry from the secretariat. Blake's statement did not include any admission of factionalism; for that reason it was declared unacceptable. Sharkey then moved the additional clause providing for the removal of Blake and Henry from the secretariat.
Confirmation of the estimate of the Peace Convention given in this paper can be found in a booklet *The Road to Peace* by the Reverend Eric Owen who interviewed Menzies during the Convention campaign. Owen was shown material seized from Blake’s office by security police in a raid early in the campaign; and he maintained a vigilant watch for communist manipulation through all stages. In his booklet he says:

> On the questions of basic policy .... they (the communists) neither sought, nor had any determining influence. The Findings alone are clear proof of the fact that from the point of view of democratic procedure and principle in this convention the behaviour of any communists who might have been associated with it was impeccable.

Well then, what are they up to? What is their aim? Frankly I am compelled to accept the conclusion that they wanted us to succeed in our attempt to discover areas of agreement among people of widely differing political and religious convictions. They wanted the Convention to be a success.16

So the evidence does not support the charges made in the Consolidation resolution insofar as they refer to responsibilities or acts of Blake and Henry exclusively. Hill’s opening attack against Blake at the six day Consolidation session charged Blake with right opportunism and hiding the face of the party. But there were obvious difficulties in reconciling a finding along those lines with the Party Program. The question is why Sharkey proceeded (Hill opened, but it was Sharkey who pushed it through to the end).17

Two things point to the possible reason:

First, at the 16th Congress the only criticism made by Sharkey which clearly referred to Blake concerned the use in party education of the Elementary Course in Philosophy by Politzer.18 Second, in the immediate aftermath of Consolidation the only sphere of work from which Blake was removed was party education. The critical, creative discussion which he promoted in this field was replaced by the Chinese method of deep ideological introspection and self-criticism which encouraged docility and an acceptance of dogmatic or received ideas.

This suggests that Sharkey felt that these processes threatened the nature of the party and he acted accordingly. He believed Blake could still play his part in developing the broad peace movement. In August 1954, in a speech to cultural activists, Sharkey recommended the peace movement of the time as a model of the broad non-sectarian lines to be emulated.19 However, inner-party democracy and the broad popular democratic movement were inseparable twins; the party was not equipped to help the one to grow without the other.

In April 1956 a meeting of fifty people from trade unions, cultural and scientific groups, business and professional men and women, clergy and Quakers, decided to hold an Australian Assembly for peace in Sydney in September of that year.

Urging the CPA to support this peace initiative, Blake said that for all Australians with the cause of peace at heart, the key question of the day was the participation of the Labor Party in the work of the Assembly and in the peace movement. "The important thing," he said, "in our relations with the Labor Party is for us to really move out to meet each other, to seek out and find the points of agreement, and the basis for mutual understanding .... We need to place at the very basis of the relations between our two parties that which draws us together."20

The Assembly for Peace did have the largest participation of the Labor Party up to that time. But there was minimal support from the CPA leadership for that campaign. Just afterwards, a Queensland member of the Central Committee, Max Julius, said: "Being sent to work in any field of activity that Blake is associated with is like being sent to the salt mines in Siberia."

Following the 20th Congress of the CPSU the stand which Blake took was directed against the stalinism in the Australian party. In addition to his self-critical statements on the matter of Lysenko and on the Soviet Jewish doctors published in Tribune, he declared:

> I believe it our duty to examine every aspect of our work in the light of the lead given by the CPSU. Above all, I think we need in a critical and self-critical manner to examine our methods of work and leadership to eliminate dogmatic methods and practices, letting ourselves be governed by likes or dislikes of personalities, using positions in an overbearing and
bureaucratic manner, instead of reasoned argument to secure conviction. Struggle against such manifestations of the cult of the individual can only have the greatest tonic effect on the health of the party and develop the creative talents and initiative of all our members.21

Blake took the opportunity to inform the secretariat that he repudiated the Consolidation resolution of 1954. He also declared his opposition to the line of the leadership on the questions of stalinism and on the events in Hungary. Having made his views known, but recognising he was in a minority of one on the CC, he voluntarily undertook to reserve his opinions on these matters. Speaking at the CC meeting Blake did not refer to the report of Sharkey or that of Hill with which he disagreed.22

He spoke about the peace movement. During the final session of the meeting Sam Aarons said from the rostrum that every speaker at the meeting had endorsed the report of Sharkey, with one important exception — J.D. Blake. Blake was compelled to return to the rostrum and give a short explanation of his views on stalinism and on Hungary.

For the purpose of his concluding address Sharkey had the microphone moved to a position directly in front of Blake’s table, now deserted by everyone else who had been sitting around it. Sharkey’s closing address was a violent attack on Blake whom he said had politically deteriorated, and whom he described as the chief disruptor in the party and the leader of all the other disruptors and revisionists.

Realising that reserved or not, he was not to be allowed to have any opinion of his own, Blake resigned from the CC and from all positions of responsibility he still held in the party. (Audrey Blake had already resigned from all leading positions.)

So, at that time, far from following the example of the CPSU, the independent course of the CPA was stalinist. At a time of thaw in the Soviet Union, the CPA was taken into a stalinist deep-freeze. The retrogression which began with Consolidation was now in full flood. Discussion was suppressed, independent creative thinkers were hounded and expelled. Many more were “invited” to leave the party, others departed without invitation. After the expulsion of Helen Palmer the party maintained for a time surveillance of her home to check her visitors. That was what was described as a “great discussion in the party”.23

Later, Sharkey said: “We lost a handful of people who went out of the party because they succumbed to revisionist ideology”.24 Actually, in the previous year just over 25 per cent or more than a quarter of the members were pushed out or left the party in the manner described.

By 1958 the party had close ties with the Chinese Communist Party, primarily because that party was opposed to de-stalinising. Only in 1961 did Sharkey, under CPSU pressure to choose, decide to align the CPA on the CPSU side. This was not due to any change of heart about stalinism, but because it was doubtful whether a majority of the then remaining CPA members would have supported a move to the China side in opposition to the Soviet Union.

Following its condemnation of the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968 the CPA suffered further divisions. The slogan was still “Build the Party”. But the membership continued steadily to decline.

This has not been an easy story to tell, but if it provides some insights into the profound effect the inner-party struggle can have on the party and on our relations with the mass movement, it will have been worth while.

FOOTNOTES
2 Tribune, March 10, 1954.
The CC resolution offered a strange explanation of the ‘factionalism’ of Blake and Henry. It said there was no factional organisation, but some party members supported Blake and some Henry. This implies that these leaders should have made sure their views gained no support from members if they wished to avoid the charge of factionalism.

The draft of the Consolidation resolution submitted to the Political Committee for final approval did not include the clause removing Blake and Henry from the secretariat. Blake’s statement did not include any admission of factionalism; for that reason it was declared unacceptable. Sharkey then moved the additional clause providing for the removal of Blake and Henry from the secretariat.
At the Conference, Communists and the Labour Movement, August 23 and 24, 1980, Jack Blake in a paper "1949 to 1956 — Stalinism or Independence" raised publicly his views about the history of the Party leading up to the so-called Consolidation Statement of 1954 and the period following it.

In this paper Comrade Blake examined the political background to the adoption of the statement "For Party Consolidation" by the Central Committee of the CPA in February 1954 and some of the issues that arose in 1949, 1950, and 1951, these being the years to which the Consolidation Statement principally referred.

This contribution publicly put before the Party the need for a re-examination of this matter.

The National Committee at its meeting in November 1980 appointed a commission consisting of comrades Eric Aarons, Elliott Johnston and Bernie Taft to investigate the issue and make recommendations about it to a subsequent National Committee meeting.

The commission examined a number of documents and interviewed as many surviving close participants of those events as it could.

Among the problems it faced was that of the four members of the Secretariat during the period 1950-54 only Comrade Jack Blake is still living (the other members were comrades Sharkey, Dixon and Henry). Of the members of the Political Committee of the C.C. which conducted a six day discussion which led to the Consolidation Statement, only comrades Laurie Aarons John Hughes, Ted Bacon, Ernie Campbell, Claude Jones and Ted Hill are still living. Of these the Commission interviewed Ted
Bacon, Claude Jones and Laurie Aarons, Ted Hill refused to be interviewed on this matter. The Commission also interviewed comrade Ralph Gibson and had available transcripts of the taped recollections of John Hughes.

The Commission also had a discussion with Jack and Audrey Blake.

It reached the following conclusions:

In the opinion of the Commission there is no doubt that during the year 1949-51 the Party made many sectarian errors and that its political line was affected mainly by Leftism. The Commission understands that the Party many years ago itself reached that conclusion.

Comrades Blake and Henry shared responsibility for these errors, but basically they were errors of the leadership as a whole. In the opinion of the Commission there are no adequate grounds for particularly singling out these two comrades in the way that was done in the Consolidation Statement.

Comrades Blake and Henry were singled out in what was a collective position, irrespective of the different attitudes which may have been adopted by individual secretariat, PC and CC members on particular questions.

Comrade Jack Blake, and in a somewhat different way comrade Audrey Blake, were in fact victims of an inner Party struggle which was taking place at the time.

The Commission did not consider it to be its task to analyse the nature and causes of that inner Party struggle but rather to correct an injustice which it believes was done to comrades Jack and Audrey Blake.

The Consolidation Statement was accompanied by written self-criticisms from Comrades Blake and Henry. Comrade Blake explained to the Commission the circumstances which led him to make that self criticism. In line with the atmosphere and expectations prevailing in the international communist movement and the CPA at that time, the comrades were subjected to extraordinary moral pressure to submit to and accept the majority view. In the course of the six day meeting of the Political Committee, other comrades raised criticism of Comrade Blake's work which seemed to him to substantiate his responsibility for sectarian errors. The collective pressure caused Comrade Blake to wrestle with himself to accept the substance of these criticisms.

The Commission believes that the pressures on comrades criticised to conform in this way were wrong and inimical to the pursuit of the truth about issues.

It is also apparent that in these discussions there was an absence of self criticism by other comrades concerning their part in the errors of 1949-1951, and this no doubt contributed to a failure on the part of all to see the errors of Comrades Blake and Henry in their proper perspective as part of a general Left trend. Nor were the efforts of Comrade Blake to broaden his approach to the mass movement and overcome sectarianism adequately recognised.

Comrade Blake informed the Commission that after the 20th Congress and the Hungarian events of 1956, he had told the Secretariat that he repudiated the Consolidation Statement.

In 1966 in a discussion with comrades Laurie Aarons and Richard Dixon, Comrade Blake again indicated that he rejected the Consolidation Statement and the self criticism which he made at that time.

The Political Committee in a discussion in January, 1967, posed the question: "should the Consolidation Statement and the events of those years be made a subject for open discussion by the Central Committee?"

It decided "that if the events of 1949-50 and the Consolidation Statement were re-opened and discussed it would bring out little that is new and helpful".

Comrade Henry who was still alive at the time and whose opinion was sought was opposed to the matter being re-opened.

Although the Commission holds that our past experience deserves the deepest study on an on-going basis, it believes that the Consolidation Statement is an inappropriate background and starting point for a re-examination of that period of Party history because of its concern with individuals and because it does not set out to analyse the errors of 1949-51 as a whole.

We believe however that it is proper that the National Committee should correct an injustice that was done by the Party to a former leader who has devoted his whole life to the struggles and aspirations of the working people of our country and who has made a significant and lasting contribution to the work of the Communist Party of Australia.
Most readers will have heard of something called "Friedmania", or the apparently manic concern of some in the ruling class to adopt the politico-economic position put by Milton Friedman. Most will also have heard it alleged that we are witnessing, in Australia and in other English-speaking countries at least, an emergence of the "new right" or a libertarian social and political philosophy. The concern of these Notes is not so much with the content of the Friedman/von Hayek position of laissez-faire or of the...
libertarianism more generally but to examine briefly the curious esteem in which they seem to be held within the ruling class in several countries. For it is curious that they are so esteemed: they contain no justification of the large concentrations of economic power that characterise monopoly capitalism; indeed they are antagonistic to such concentrations of power. How, then, to account for the appeal of Friedman and his ilk?

**Friedman's Position**

Broadly, Friedman's position is that the state (or government) is too much involved in too many aspects of most communities. The state severely constrains each person's freedom to choose. According to Friedman, each person should have perfect freedom to choose (in regard to occupation, spending or saving, setting up an enterprise, etc.) according to his or her own interests (and not exclusively materialist interests). This sort of freedom to choose (or "economic freedom", in Friedman's words) "...is an essential requisite for political freedom. By enabling people to co-operate with one another without coercion or central direction, it reduces the area over which political power is exercised. In addition, by dispersing power, the free market provides an offset to whatever concentration of political power may arise". In the view of the Friedmans, the abolition of most of the state's intervention in modern capitalist economies would restore the people's freedom to choose, and the freedom of the market.

Friedman's position is "supported" by reasoning that is flawed, by assertions that frequently lack any justification and by "examples" from a brazenly re-written history of the past two hundred years. One of the most basic flaws in Friedman's reasoning is that it is government (or institutions, such as unions, endorsed if not supported by governments) which is most important in restricting a person's freedom to choose self-interestedly. This flaw is not particularly evident in Friedman's discussion of a worker's freedom to sell his or her labour power. Nowhere in *Free to Choose* is there any concession to the restrictions imposed on a person's choice by the experiences and expectations of parents and grandparents or by the person's present cultural milieu. Nowhere is there any concession to the fact that vast numbers of workers are paid so poorly in comparison with the extent of day-to-day expenditures demanded or people living within a capitalist economy that it is impossible to choose not to work full time let alone to be able to save. Nowhere is it conceded that there are restrictions on the establishment of enterprises which have nothing to do with regulation by the state. Nowhere, in other words, is there more than a whiff of a society divided into social classes or, in particular, an acknowledgement that most workers are not free to choose not to be workers. And even if there were genuine freedom of contract in labour markets, that could not be accounted as being of great importance in comparison with the worker's increasing inability to control his or her labour within the process of production.

In *Free to Choose*, the Friedmans cite "examples" of the prosperity that has ruled where government has been small. Taking the size of state expenditure as a measure of the role of the state, the Friedmans note that small government during the nineteenth century in the United States was associated with rapid growth in per capita income. The millions of immigrants prospered "because they were left to their own resources...The streets of New York were not paved with gold, but hard work, thrift and enterprise brought rewards that were not even imaginable in the Old World". There was a "flowering of charitable activity" at the same time, of course, but apparently such activity was a pleasant way of passing the time, rather than something that was necessary to offset the ravages of largely unconstrained capitalism. In Hong Kong at the present time, government is small; in fact, Hong Kong, according to the Friedmans, is "the modern example of free markets and limited government". Residents are free, one learns, to buy from whom they choose and to invest however they choose; and those who own the apartment buildings are free to cram in sufficient people at sufficiently high rents to be able to amortise their investments in one year. (Not that this last is cited by the Friedmans).

Perhaps the most important of the statements which Milton Friedman is wont to make without support concerns the concentration of ownership and control of the means of production. In *Free to Choose*, the Friedmans dispose of the problem (!) of a
concentration of ownership and control in a mere three paragraphs. The problem, in their view, is simply that of the control of prices. “But”, one learns, “let the automobile producers of the world compete with General Motors, Ford and Chrysler for the custom of the American buyer and the spectre of monopoly pricing disappears”. Apparently the tariff - and no one particular form of government support of private capital - is the only reason for monopolies. It is really remarkable that the Friedmans can quite so cavalierly ignore all that even their colleagues in the mainstream of economics have said about the inherent tendencies towards concentration in capitalist economies. The Friedmans failure to be particularly concerned about monopolisation makes theirs a distinctly incomplete libertarianism.

Libertarianism Proper

Properly, libertarianism must repudiate the concentration of economic power in private hands. And in Australia at the Cross-roads, a libertarian tract written by several notable Australians and published recently, one finds such a repudiation. One of the nine elements of the authors' libertarian scenario is “resolute application of anti-monopoly and restrictive trade practices legislation”. So, properly, libertarianism cannot provide a justification of modern monopoly capitalism in which the tendency of capital itself is to concentrate and centralise the control of raw materials, markets and technologies.

It seems to me that the seeming zeal with which large corporations and the daily press have adopted Milton Friedman and his position is to be explained on the one hand, by the concern of corporations themselves to prune the size of government and, on the other hand, by the happy choice of the Friedmans to remain virtually silent on the question of concentration of economic power in private hands. However, it remains to examine why it is that large corporations should want to see the size of government pruned and whether they want to see the activities of the state reduced across the board.

Capital and Smaller Government

It has been forcefully argued by Marx and by modern marxists that many of the activities of the state are to be understood as its attempts to manage the interests of capital as a whole. As even a non-marxist - an eminent American - put it recently “...capitalism needs some power (that is, the state) that can stabilise the conditions needed for innovation and competition.”

Left to themselves, large corporations are capable of competing with each other so savagely as to damage the whole fabric of a capitalist economy. Even one very large corporation is capable of undermining the financial system of a relatively small economy and of disturbing the interdependencies between different branches of industry. A large corporation which has achieved a monopoly of some important raw material can, if left unrestrained, critically increase costs of production in many areas of an economy. For individual corporations it is rational to keep wages as low as possible; yet wages must increase as productivity increases if the commodities that are produced are to be sold. There is, in fact, a host of conditions which the state attempts to assure, conditions for the accumulation of capital in general in the face of conflicts between sectors of the economy, between industries and between corporations. And beyond attempting to assure the accumulation of capital in general, the state has an important role in helping to legitimize a system of production which yields social imbalances such as failing to provide full employment while rewarding a few people very handsomely indeed. If the state is so important, though, in modern capitalist economies, why the evident concern of capital with its size?

Reacting to “The Fiscal Crisis”

It seems to me that this concern can be explained by two factors. Those factors are (i) what has come to be known as “the fiscal crisis of the state”, and (ii) a sense that the necessary functions of the state can be performed with a smaller public bureaucracy and hence with less revenue than is currently involved.

A fiscal crisis is said to develop in so far as the expenditure in which the state is expected to engage tends to outstrip the revenue which it can raise. Expenditures include those which are necessary for social
control, by means of the threat or actuality of police coercion or by means of legitimisation through the provision of welfare services, for example, and expenditures which are more directly necessary for capital accumulation such as those involved in the training of the workforce and the construction of infrastructure. Revenue may come from borrowings, from the profits of state-owned enterprises or from taxation.

Especially in circumstances of high inflation and slow economic growth, it is difficult for the state to raise more revenue. To properly support that statement would require considerable space; but it is possible to describe briefly a couple of the problems. The first concerns rates of taxation in general. There is a popular belief that rates of taxation can only go so high without dissuading private businesses from investing; and it is commonly claimed that rates of taxation at present are dissuasively high. The second problem concerns increased public borrowing from domestic sources and is sometimes known as the “crowding-out effect” of public borrowing. It is claimed that increases in public borrowing may limit the scope of private corporations to borrow funds or, alternatively, that the pressure of public borrowing may force interest rates to levels which make the cost to private corporations of borrowed funds higher than can be covered by the likely returns on their prospective investments.

Yet to cut certain expenditures is to threaten the rate of accumulation in other ways. Abandonment of public investment in ports or in adding to the capacity for electricity generation or whatever may well lead to the abandonment of private projects. To strain facilities for secondary schooling or for technical training may lead to shortages of workers with particular skills just as corporations wish to begin production for which these skills are necessary. For the state to fail to underwrite a large new development in the private sector may mean the abandonment, as well, of many investments in associated areas of the economy. Part of ‘welfare’ expenditure, on the other hand, may seem to be quite dispensable.

It might be argued that capitalists would be happy to support a campaign for ‘smaller government’ as long as the thrust of such a campaign were to reduce welfare expenditure. Capitalists might be inclined to the view that the legitimating function of the state is not directly their concern - that it is the concern, instead, of ideologues and politicians. In any case, to judge from the behaviour of many executives of corporations, they are not averse to coercion by the state when legitimation seems to be failing.

By the same token, capitalists may be expected to endorse smaller government in so far as it involves the abolition of some regulations applying to the conduct of business. There are some institutions of the state which relate to the way in which enterprises interact, and they must be maintained. Other regulations, however, concern the relations between corporations and workers, consumers and householders in the neighbourhood of their factories. They serve to keep the peace, to preserve the health of the population, and so on. Notwithstanding their importance, it may be possible for capitalists to represent such regulations as being luxuries during hard times. An easing of regulations would reduce not only some operating costs, but the administrative costs of assuring the state that regulations were being met.

Explicit concern with Australia’s fiscal crisis is becoming increasingly evident in the daily press. The Australian Financial Review editorial of February 17th, for example, put the view that the Commonwealth should “stand back” in favour of the States - that - in other words - the level of Commonwealth expenditure should be slashed (the editorial writer’s word) in favour of the states’ expenditure on infrastructure for mining and mineral processing. A recent paper by Peter Groenewegen suggests that such a shift in capital expenditure has already well and truly begun. Evan Jones has made it quite clear that “welfare” expenditure, or - more precisely - Commonwealth expenditure on the social wage, declined dramatically during the period 1976-1979.

The point is that capitalists can be expected to endorse efforts to reduce the size of government in the recognition that a fiscal crisis does indeed exist. They can be expected to do so as long as reductions in expenditure take place in areas which concern them least directly, or which concern functions of the state in respect of
which there are alternative devices. Needless to say, endorsement by the executives of the largest corporations can be expected to be cautious. If selected areas of state expenditure can be reduced sufficiently to permit reductions in rates of direct taxation, then so much the better: that is a bonus.

Streamlining the Public Bureaucracy

I mentioned earlier that it seems to me that there may be another reason for the support which capitalists give to efforts to reduce the size of governments. That is the level of state expenditure necessary to effect the functions of the state may be excessively high. The wages of workers in regulatory agencies constitute in part a drain on the social surplus, that part of the product of labour that might finance further capital accumulation. Now there is no reason to believe that the manner in which the labour of public servants is organised is the most efficient possible. It may well be that, for example, too many people are actually doing essentially the same thing or that decision-making is too highly centralised. It may well be that a good deal of ‘fat’ can be trimmed without jeopardising the functions of the state that are essential for capital accumulation.

I am not here supporting the Lynch “razor gang”: after all, a level of employment in the public service which may be regarded as excessive may be achieved. It may well be that, for example, too many people are actually doing essentially the same thing or that decision-making is too highly centralised. It may well be that a good deal of ‘fat’ can be trimmed without jeopardising the functions of the state that are essential for capital accumulation.

Electoral Support for Smaller Government

It is possible that some of the support for smaller government comes from smaller capitalists who believe that the state has materially independent power - that is, power independent of capital - and too much of it. Such a belief may stem from constant visitations by representatives of regulatory agencies, the evidence that the state determines award wages and a lack of tangible support by the state except perhaps in so far as it has implemented tariffs.

It should not be imagined, though, that support for smaller government is confined to capital. It is to be found within “the professional class” and even within the working class. Professions such as medicine and law have long maintained that regulation of the professions is best left to the professions themselves and that the professions are capable of regulating themselves. At times, the degree of self-regulation achieved has been so blatantly in the narrow interests of the professions and/or has been so inconsistent with the assumptions upon which the state’s social policies are based that the state has had to become the regulator. Such interference by the state of course engenders the enmity of any righteous medico or lawyer or dentist.

Distrust and suspicion of the state, or of much of its apparatus, is common among workers. There are regulations about how you should build a house, what you can do in your back-yard, cutting down trees, where you can take the dog for a walk, where the kids can go to school, how to set about pressing for an increase in wages, how and where to demonstrate, and on and on. And the state is patently prone to regulate the wealthy and powerful less than it regulates the mass of people. That is not to say that, at the same time, people do not seek the support of the state; they do; and they expect the state to intervene widely. But the same people remain suspicious about what interests the state ultimately serves. The same ambivalence is to be found among left organisations seeking reforms in the social policies of the state.

Some large state corporations are hardly good advertisements for ‘big government’. The State Electricity Commission of Victoria comes to mind as one large state enterprise which has ridden rough-shod over consumers, workers and its various neighbors in the Latrobe Valley. It is a major project for the left in Australia to devise models for the organisation of state
enterprises in which there is not only a substantial measure of worker control but systematic accountability to the people in general.

Traditionalism and Conservatism

It would be wrong, I think, to imagine that the reasons for the apparent rise of the 'new right' can be completely encapsulated by the drive for smaller government. In the United States there is said to be a concern among a minority of electors (remember that only 50 per cent of those eligible to vote actually voted in the last presidential election) for traditionalism, or a re-establishment of values thought to have been those of the nineteenth century or some earlier era. But, in some of its aspects, traditionalism is related to the campaign for smaller government.

The traditionalists can be found inveighing against legislatures which have made it easier for women to obtain abortions, which have simplified divorce proceedings, which have decriminalised homosexuality, which are considering decriminalising the possession of marijuana, etc. The traditionalists are not only claiming that such moves undermine traditional values and that traditional values should not be undermined, but implicitly, that the state has too much power. The actual decisions to liberalise abortion laws, divorce laws, and so on, are considered likely to increase the incidence of the various actions and behaviour to which the laws refer. The larger and more pervasive is the state, the more influential are such decisions likely to be; the larger and more pervasive is the state, the greater is its authority likely to be in comparison with that of the church or of "traditional" moral values. That seems to me to be the logic of those traditionalists who urge that the size of government should be reduced. And it may be sound logic. Never mind that the same people are often to be found demanding more and harsher laws.

As I write the last lines of these Notes, I read that President Reagan has just announced his intention to reduce both Federal expenditure and rates of income taxation in the U.S. by dramatically large amounts. My reaction to the announcement is that the intention will not be realised (although some of the reductions in expenditure and tax rates may well be met by increased expenditures and taxes at the level of the States). Even though American capital will gain immensely from increased "defence" expenditure and although welfare expenditure will undoubtedly be cut, I find it difficult to imagine that Reagan's enthusiasm will not lead to excessive cuts in those functions of the state on which large U.S. organisations depend.

FOOTNOTES

1 Friedrich von Hayek, Nobel Prize winner in economics, author of, inter alia, Road to Serfdom (Sydney; 2nd edn.: Dymock's, 1945).
2 Milton and Rose Friedman, Free to Choose: A Personal Statement (New York: Harcourt, Brace Jovanovich, 1980), pp. 2-3. A ten-part television series of the same name was put together by the Friedmans for P.B.S. in the U.S. and was shown in 1980.
3 See the Friedman's Free to Choose, op.cit.
4 Ibid, p. 36
5 Ibid, p. 34
6 Ibid p. 53
9 P.D. Groenewegen, "Fiscal Crisis of Federalism", in Alan Patience (ed.); Australian Federalism in Crisis (forthcoming).
11 Wolin, op. cit. Wolin actually argues that the Reagan presidency will be the death of traditionalism rather than its effective supporter. As he sees it, the President will appear to be a guardian of traditional values, but will actually leave his executive free to get on with modernisation without itself being concerned with the restraint which traditionalism puts on the process.
Anti-Semitism and the Soviet anti-Zionist campaign

by Dave Davies

A caricature used in the Soviet anti-Zionist campaign
Late in 1963 a booklet published in Kiev in the Soviet Ukraine sparked a world-wide furore. Entitled "Judaism without Embellishment" and written in Ukrainian by T.K. Kichko, the booklet became the centre of a debate on anti-Semitism in the USSR.

The debate spread to most communist parties including the Communist Party of Australia, where it culminated in a small booklet endorsed in June 1965 by the Political Committee (now called the National Executive) of the CPA.

Among other things, the statement criticised the Kichko book, expressed rather tentative concern at the persistence of people with anti-Semitic prejudice in the USSR and said that "there is evidence leading to a conclusion that a vigorous campaign in the Soviet Union would be valuable to eliminate all surviving remnants from the virulent anti-Semitism promoted under Tsarism and later in the Hitler-occupied areas in World War II".

Such a "vigorous campaign" has not been conducted. On the contrary, a long list of publications open to the same condemnation as the Kichko booklet has appeared in the USSR. This article will give some examples and discuss some of the underlying reasons for these manifestations which have caused such traumas among socialists and friends of the Soviet Union.

Anti-Semitism is defined here as hatred of the Jewish people on racial grounds. (It is realised that Arabs are Semites too, but this will be put aside for the purpose of this article.)

Anti-Semitism has deep roots in many countries. It was officially promoted for centuries by the Christian Church. Jews were convenient scapegoats for political demagogues and exponents of various narrow economic interests and it was little wonder that anti-Semitic prejudices took root in wide sections of the population including the working class, the peasantry and the lumpen proletariat.

A particularly brutal form of anti-Semitism flourished in the Tsarist Russian empire, particularly in the Ukraine, Poland, the Baltic region and western areas of Russia. Jews were confined to a "Pale of Settlement" and subject to pogroms — a Russian word meaning massacre which has become international.

Lenin and other prominent bolshevik leaders wrote on the Jewish question in Russia. Some of their predictions — such as those on the "assimilation" of Jews into the more numerous nationalities have not been proven correct and some of their analyses are open to debate in the light of subsequent events.

At the same time they strongly condemned anti-Semitism and called for sustained efforts to eradicate it. In March 1919, for example, Lenin made eight gramophone records of speeches. He thought the subject of anti-Semitism important enough to devote one record to it. He said, "Only the most ignorant and downtrodden people can believe the lies and slander that are spread about the Jews ..... " And, "Shame on accursed Tsarism which tortured and persecuted the Jews. Shame on those who foment hatred towards other nations."

(Later, Lenin's speeches were transcribed onto a long-playing disc. I bought this record in Moscow, but only seven of the eight speeches were on it. The missing one was the one just quoted.)

There is no doubt that Jews in the USSR have made big advances along with other nationalities in terms of living standards, security and culture. People of Jewish origin are prominent particularly in science and culture.

Given that there are widespread and deep-rooted anti-Jewish prejudices in the USSR and that no campaign has been conducted against them, it is hard to see how any "anti-Zionist" campaign can avoid the danger of striking anti-Semitic chords, no matter how scientifically and carefully it is conducted.

But it will be contended here that the "anti-Zionist" campaign has been conducted with
anything but science and sensitivity, but on the contrary is excessive, out of proportion in volume and venom and frequently based on a one-sided selection of facts and even distortions.

The word "Zionism" itself has been used and misused in so many senses that it has almost lost any meaning. In many contexts it has become synonymous with Jews. For example, if the authorities in a particular country say that the troubles of the day are being stirred up by "Zionists" and there is an atmosphere of popular anti-Semitism, large sections of the population are going to translate that mentally into "It's the bloody Jews again!"

It is often stated that what has been conducted in the USSR particularly since 1967 is an anti-Zionist campaign and that this is not anti-Semitism. In general, it may be true that criticism of Zionism as a political trend is not necessarily anti-Semitic. Whether it is or not in a given situation depends on circumstances and the way in which it is conducted.

A new wave of anti-Semitism came to the USSR during the nazi occupation of World War II. Millions of Jews died as part of Hitler's "final solution" of the Jewish question, while the population in nazi-occupied areas was subjected to large doses of racist propaganda against the Jews. It should be added that millions of Jews from the western parts of the USSR and Poland survived when evacuated to eastern parts of the USSR.

The novel *The Fixer* by Bernard Malamud (Penguin) depicts the situation of Jews under Tsarism. The sad book *Babi Yar* by the exiled Soviet writer A. Anatoli (A.V. Kuznetsov) tells of nazi atrocities in the Soviet Ukraine during the second world war. (The Sphere Books paperback of *Babi Yar* contains additional elements of sadness. The version of the book published in the USSR is printed in ordinary type but interspersed are passages in bold type. These were deleted by the Soviet censor. Further passages in brackets were added later by the embittered writer.)

A Russian-speaking visitor to the USSR frequently hears the word "Yevrei" (Jew) or its feminine equivalent used as a term of abuse. A person of any nationality who commits a mean or petty act is often called "Yevrei". The insulting word "Zhid" (Yid) is frequently used. Frequent, too, are anti-Semitic jokes which perpetrate the hoary Jewish stereotypes — mean, grasping, stupid and cunning by turns.

I recall taking up this matter with a Soviet sea captain whose ship was berthed in Melbourne. He seemed educated and open-minded. Not on this subject, however. "My dear Davies," he said, "I must tell you rankly that I am fed up with all these Goldbergs and Silversteins ...." He went on to inform me how Jews seek out gentile blood to bake in matzos for ritual purposes. This was one of the charges in the notorious Beiliss case in Kiev in 1912. What a tragedy to hear it from a well-educated Soviet citizen after decades of socialism.

In Australia too the word "Zionism" is greatly misused. Indeed, there is perhaps no word in the political vocabulary that is uttered with such venom — something which seems strangely out of proportion even allowing for the policies and actions of the Israeli government. I cannot forget what happened when I was leaving a meeting on Viet Nam some years ago in the company of a Jewish friend who had spoken in the rather heated debate in which no mention at all had been made of Israel or the Middle East. A person standing at the door snarled at my friend, "Zionist!"

A strong case can be made for the term "Zionist" to be dropped by marxists, but if it must be used then it should be defined. It is no good "defining" it in terms of invective such as "a vicious racist theory" or "the ideology of the international Jewish bourgeoisie" because they tell us nothing of its content.

An example of the confusion in Australia was an interview which appeared in *Tribune* in 1976 with a leading activist in the Australian Union of Students. The debate on Palestine in the universities was at its height. Asked what was meant by a "Zionist", the person interviewed replied that it was one who supported the continued existence of Israel. This definition thus covered all Communist Parties (including the CPA) and Social-Democratic Parties throughout the world. It was little wonder that the campaign ended in disaster.
Most Jewish people have an extremely broad interpretation of what the term means, allowing it to cover those who have any kind of sympathy towards Israel.

In May 1976 a group of young Jews who called themselves Zionists demonstrated outside a hall in Melbourne against visiting Israeli General Bar-Lev. Their action caused consternation among some of the pro-Israel hard-liners who spat on them and threw punches. But the action bewildered some on the left who could not comprehend that the term "Zionist" might include strong opposition to policies of the Israeli government and did not necessarily denote unmitigated evil.

One can perhaps understand the confusion and misunderstanding in the Australian left on the question of "Zionism". The new generations of leftists were not born when the world went through the horror of the nazi holocaust followed by the formation of Israel with the support of the overwhelming majority of progressive people. Young (and no so young) leftists have grown up in an epoch inspired by struggles of Third World peoples and justified sympathy of the plight of the Palestinians. But these positive developments have contributed to a one-sided evaluation of Israel.

To return to the USSR — there is evidence that some Soviet authorities who should know better also confuse the two terms "Jew" and "Zionist". For example, late in 1974, the American General George S. Brown, a well-known reactionary and anti-Semite trotted out the old story that the banks and the press were owned by Jews. A writer for the Soviet press agency Novosti wrote at the time that "General Brown was right when he spoke of the strong hand of Zionists in the United States".

Since Kichko, a long list of "anti-Zionist" writers has appeared on the Soviet scene. Their works appear in booklets, newspapers and mass-circulation magazines and their names include Y. Ivanov, L. Korneyev, Y. Yevseyev, V. Skurlatov, D. Zhukov, V. Begun, V. Bolshakov, L. Modzhorian and many others.

Titles include: "Caution: Zionism!", "Fascism under the Blue Star", "Invasion without Arms", "Zionism's Secret Weapon", "A Hotbed of Zionism and Aggression" and many others. Even the discredited Kichko has published again in Ukrainian with his "Judaism and Zionism" (Kiev 1968) and "Zionism — Enemy of the Youth" (Kiev 1972).

In July 1978, the mass circulation weekly Ogonyok printed in Russian in over two million copies, carried a series of two long articles entitled "The Most Zionist Business" by L. Korneyev. Its main thrust was that the world's armaments concerns were mainly owned and controlled by Jews.

If that were not enough, the article is spiced with references such as: "Goldwater .... is connected with the Jewish-Sicilian mafia"; the South African industrialist Oppenheimer is "a Christian by religion, a Jew by origin".

One of the sub-headings in this article is worth comment. It reads: "Cosmopolitans of the God of War". If ever a word should be avoided in the USSR in dealing with these matters it is "cosmopolitan" for it evokes the most fearful memories.

In July-August 1952 the flowerof Jewish cultural life in the Soviet Union was savagely cut down by Stalin. The names of those tried and executed included David Bergelson, Itzik Feffer, Peretz Markish and other prominent writers and critics. The full truth of this tragic event — from which Soviet Yiddish culture is yet to recover — is still to be told. It was not included among Khrushchov's revelations. But we do know that it was publicly justified at the time by the infamous struggle against "rootless cosmopolitans".

Criticism of the Israel government, its internal and foreign policy, its denial of legitimate rights to the Palestinians, the seizure of lands and the whole of Jerusalem, the internment of people — all this is legitimate and obligatory on socialists. But some balance is required.

I recall my attendance at the 24th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in Moscow in 1971. Delegates applauded the representatives from Arab Communist Parties as they denounced Israel as "fascist". After the Congress, nearly all those Arabs returned to their homes in exile — in East Berlin, Sofia,
Budapest, Moscow, because their own parties are illegal. The two delegates from the Israeli Communist Party — one of whom was an Arab and one a Jew — boarded commercial flights for Tel Aviv.

An extraordinary case of one-sidedness is to be seen in Yuri Ivanov’s booklet “Caution: Zionism!” which is available in English. He devotes pages to alleged “collaboration” of Zionists with the nazis with the aim of maximising anti-Semitism and hence driving more Jews to seek refuge in Israel. But the monstrous crimes of nazism against the Jewish people are passed over in a few calm lines.

To read Ivanov’s book, one would think that it was the machinations of a few Zionist agents that convinced those Jews who survived to seek refuge in Israel rather than the vast and “efficient” system of nazi death camps, set up with the stated aim of eradicating the whole of the Jewish people.

Early in his book, Ivanov argues that the Jewish people have not suffered any more than others and that to assert otherwise “is tantamount not only to deliberate misrepresentation of the historical facts in the interests of base nationalistic aspirations, but also deliberate adoption of an inverted racialist stand ....”.

Does Ivanov not know of the anti-Semitic campaigns, official and unofficial, conducted in a long list of countries? Does he not know of Hitler’s singling out of the Jews? Does he not know that when the nazis took Soviet prisoners during the Second World War the communists and the Jews were immediately shot? Perhaps the writer Sholokhov who referred to this practice should be branded as a Zionist?

The Soviet monthly magazine Sovetish Heimland, published in Yiddish, has made some muffled criticisms of some “anti-Zionist” publications. The July 1978 issue, for example, reviewed “Zionism and Apartheid” by V. Skurlatov. The review has been written by a scholar in Middle East affairs, Academician M.A. Korostovtsev and translated from Russian. He criticised many “unscientific” concepts of Skurlatov and while stopping short of using the term “anti-Semitic” he wrote that the book resembles those in which “the chief blame for all the anomalies in social life, in politics and in culture, etc. rests not with the exploiting classes that are of varied ethnic composition, but rather on a single people taken as a whole, especially on the Jews”.

Sad to say, Korostovtsev’s views were published only in Yiddish in this small-circulation magazine. And the Russian summary of articles made no mention of it.

In June 1973, Sovetish Heimland published a criticism of V. Begun’s book “Invasion with Arms”. This book has now been republished in an even more objectionable form, once again evoking a critical article from Sovetish Heimland. That magazine is not noted for being particularly outspoken or bold, but its critique by R. Brodsky and Y. Shulmeister speaks of “considerable errors” and “serious defects” — and this on a subject requiring such accurate and sensitive treatment.

The two Soviet writers say, “Though he declares that anti-Semitism should not be accounted as class struggle, Begun himself, nevertheless, proceeds from just this standpoint and he explains anti-Semitic manifestations as a struggle between classes. In the edition under review Begun writes: ‘Judophobic (anti-Jewish) feelings can also arise as a result of the mass invasion by the Jewish bourgeoisie into the most important spheres of social life.’ (p.65) How is this statement to be understood? In the book, “Creeping Counter-revolution”, Begun asserts more frankly that he regards anti-Semitism as “an elemental response of the enslaved strata of the working population to the barbaric exploitation of the Jewish bourgeoisie” (p.79) Yet it wasn’t the Jewish bourgeoisie that had been protected by the police and the gendarmerie which suffered from these ‘Judophobic feelings’ or ‘elemental response’, but the Jewish poor who were just as exploited as were the laboring people of other nationalities. What kind of class struggle can one speak of that takes the form of ‘Judophobic feelings’? Why did Begun occupy himself with such a thankless task as to revise the clear and definite standpoint of V.I. Lenin and of the Communist Party on the essence of anti-Semitism?”

The reviewers note instances where Begun confuses the terms “Zionists” and “Jews”.

Once again, this material is published only in this small Yiddish-language monthly and once again there is no mention of it in the Russian-language summary.
Would it not be more appropriate to publish these critical remarks in the language of the original "anti-Zionist" materials?

One of the worst examples in this genre appeared in 1979. It was a 240-page book entitled "Zionism as a form of Racism and Racial Discrimination" by L.A. Modzhoryan.8

The writer draws on sources published by the authorities in Tsarist times to smear Jews. She plays down the frightful pogroms instigated by the most reactionary elements in Russian/Ukrainian society as mere "reaction to the exploitation to which the broad masses were subjected in capitalist enterprises".

The truth is that the anti-Jewish violence in Tsarist Russia was directed first and foremost at the Jewish poor.

The pogroms, according to Modzhoryan's account, were "artificially exaggerated and widely used by Jewish entrepreneurs and Rabbis .... " Anti-Semitism was nothing but a "bugbear" used by Zionist leaders for their purpose.

This book ignores the emphasis that Lenin and the Bolsheviks placed on the need to combat anti-Semitism. When the Bolsheviks proposed a "National Equality Bill" in 1914, Lenin wrote, "No nationality in Russia is so oppressed and persecuted as the Jewish". Is there any other aspect of Bolshevik history that could be so disparaged in the USSR today?

Modzhoryan really scrapes the bottom of the barrel in her gathering of material with which to smite the "Zionists". Favorably quoted is the bizarre United Nations speech made in 1975 by (of all people) Idi Amin of Uganda. He stated that the United States had been "colonised" by the Zionists, in whose hands were all the instruments of development and power, all the banking institutions, the most important industrial plants and most branches of manufacture. The USA, says Amin to the Soviet reader of this book, is in the power of the Zionists.

Is there any other aspect of Bolshevik history that could be so disparaged in the USSR today?

Modzhoryan really scrapes the bottom of the barrel in her gathering of material with which to smite the "Zionists". Favorably quoted is the bizarre United Nations speech made in 1975 by (of all people) Idi Amin of Uganda. He stated that the United States had been "colonised" by the Zionists, in whose hands were all the instruments of development and power, all the banking institutions, the most important industrial plants and most branches of manufacture. The USA, says Amin to the Soviet reader of this book, is in the power of the Zionists.

What, then, is the explanation for the avalanche of "anti-Zionist" propaganda in the USSR? Paradoxically, I believe it has little or nothing to do with the Soviet Jews. The overwhelming reasons are to be found in the foreign and domestic policies of the USSR and their reflection in Soviet public opinion.

Space does not permit here an adequate discussion of the role of public opinion in Soviet politics. Suffice it to say that the widespread assumption in the West that it plays no role at all — that the leadership merely carries on as if it did not exist — does not correspond with reality. On the other hand, the assertion that "the party and the people are one" is not correct either. Soviet political life provides inadequate means for public opinion to be expressed and manifested — so it does so mainly in indirect and even negative ways such as privatisation of life, attitudes to work, etc.

A great deal of Soviet public opinion concerns material living standards. In this connection, a significant trend of opinion is unhappy about the large sums of money spent on overseas aid. In the 'sixties, a large portion of this aid went to Arab countries, particularly when Nasser was the leader of Egypt. What a shock it must have been when, in June 1967, a war between the Arab states and the tiny and much denigrated Israel ended in defeat for the Arabs in six days. (I am not here entering into the rights and wrongs of that war, but merely referring to the result.)

Then followed a series of setbacks for Soviet policy in the Middle East, including a re-orientation of Egypt back to the West. One of the channels for Soviet public opinion is the telling of jokes — and a rash of anti-Arab jokes broke out, usually racist, which depicted the Arabs as stupid, cowardly, incompetent. There was a feeling that the Soviet government had lost a fortune by backing a poor horse.

The answer was a campaign to depict Israel as part of a powerful world body, ruthless, conspiratorial, completely integrated with the imperialist system and often manipulating that system itself. A joke in the form of a riddle expressed the main preoccupation of the time.

Q. Is Mao Tse-tung a Zionist?
A. That's all we need

Soviet Jews were caught in the backwash. Already suffering from "popular" and "petty" anti-Semitism, ordinary people were made to feel alien, untrusted. This fed the
upsurge of applications by Soviet Jews to leave the country which in turn gave rise to further tensions.

But there are other currents, less spectacular and more complex to complain, which fed the "anti-Zionist" campaign.

"Bash the Yids and save Russia!" was the cry of the Black Hundreds under Tsarism which found some response among the masses. The Soviet Union today is far from those dark times, but there are echoes.

The analogy should not be taken too far. Nevertheless, alongside steady and even spectacular progress in many spheres, there are a number of sources of discontent and frustration in the USSR. Nationalism, including Russian nationalism, has increased. (Russians constitute some 52 per cent only of the population.) Avenues for open political debate and criticism are inadequate, with the result that there is a tendency for certain kinds of dissent to express themselves in strange ways. "Anti-Zionist" phraseology is one way in which dissent can be expressed with little fear of reprisal.

The most bizarre expression of this was a recent "underground" leaflet circulated in the Soviet Union which accused President Brezhnev of being the "chief Zionist" among others who have taken charge of the Politburo.

This factor was a powerful one in Poland in the late 'sixties when anti-Semitism was used by warring factions in the Polish United Workers' Party. The resulting anti-Semitic manifestations led to the small remnant of Poland's Jewish community — including those who had stuck to their socialist commitment through thick and thin — leaving the country.

Some commentators have compared the role of "anti-Zionism" in Soviet politics with that of anti-communism in American politics during the years of McCarthyism. Once again, the analogy can be taken too far, but there are similarities.

The whole picture is not gloomy. Soviet Jews continue to play an important part in Soviet life, often out of proportion to their numbers. There are people of all nationalities who oppose the "anti-Zionist" campaign along the lines of leninist tradition and, given the opportunity, would defeat it in debate.

Also encouraging is the fact that very few examples of anti-Semitism appear in Soviet literature. Indeed, according to some reviews, Jews are frequently presented in a balanced way and their exceptional suffering brought out. The novel "Heavy Sand" by A.N. Rybakov is quoted as one example.

In the more turbulent year of 1961, the poet Yevgeny Yevtushenko was reading his poem "Babi Yar" to mass audiences.

O my Russian people! I know you
Are international to the core.
But those of unclean hands
have often made a jingle of your purest name

The poem concludes:

The Internationale, let it thunder
when the last anti-Semite on earth
is buried forever.
In my blood there is no Jewish blood.
In their callous rage, all anti-Semites
must hate me now as a Jew.
For that reason
I am a true Russian.

If people of mass standing and prestige were to speak out like that today — in the context of a widening of civil and political liberties — the prestige of the Soviet Union would rise and the real anti-Soviet slanderers would have to scuttle for cover.

FOOTNOTES

6. Ibid, P. 26
7. M. Sholokov: The Fate of a Man (Sud'ba Cheloveka).
THE ORIGINS
OF THE PRESENT
SUPERPOWER
CONFRONTATION
A vectorial analysis
by K.L. Kinsman

The best of several good things in Jack Blake’s article in ALR 74 (May 1980) was the use he made of history. In this he has the support, not only of Thucydides, but (more recently) of Professor P.M.S. Blackett, who, in 1948, said: “The first maxim of the scientific study of current events is that one should not attempt to predict the future until one has attempted to understand the past”. (1)

When Prime Minister Fraser said that the issue was not the Olympic Games but Afghanistan, President Carter corrected him. The issue is not Afghanistan, the President said in his State of the Union Message, but the relationship between our two countries over the past thirty-five years — that is, the relationship between the Soviet Union and the U.S.A. I think President Carter was quite right, except that he did not take it back far enough. I propose to take it back to the beginning — 1917.

But before starting on this brief but epic journey, there are certain things I should like to make clear. First of all, the method. What I have attempted to do is to present, as it were, an historical vector — a path carved out through the highly complex web of historical events, intended to help make that
complexity more simple, more intelligible — a process, with which workers in the communications field are familiar, of disentangling a message from its accompanying noise.

It is, of course, a personal vector; which is all you would get from anyone, no matter how expert. And this leads me directly into my second point; which is, that the use of this method enables me to disavow any suggestion that my own personal vector is more true, more correct, more humane etc than anybody else's personal vector. More helpful, possibly — but that is for the reader to decide.

My third point relates to the message of this particular personal vector; namely, that the Soviet Union's external actions, almost from its inception, have been dictated by the requirements, as seen from within the Soviet Union, of national security. This is not the same thing as saying that those actions were justified by security considerations. These are two separate propositions, requiring separate validation. I am concerned with the former, not the latter.

Fourthly, my concern has been with the origins of the present superpower confrontation. Consequently, the vector stops in 1947, with the launching of the Marshall Plan. By that time, the main parameters of the game had been determined, and such events as the Berlin blockade or the CIA takeover of Iran were as logically deducible from previous positions as an end game of chess. I do believe, however, that the end of the war presented the world's statesmen with an opportunity to solve the world's problems which was as criminally bungled as the opportunity presented by Versailles.

Finally, the vector is a vector. Almost by definition it is highly selective, its prime aim being to disentangle message from noise — or indeed from other messages. I have therefore restricted it to cover only the Soviet Union's external actions, and not all of them. Accordingly no reference is made to internal events, such as the Moscow trials, which could be looked at from a security point of view, but whose interpretation, not to say relevance, would unquestionably be challenged. They would, therefore, tend to obscure, rather than clarify, the events under discussion.

The Analysis

Intervention

Actually we do not need to go all the way back to 1917. March 1918 will do, when the Bolsheviks, under duress, signed the Treaty of Brest Litovsk, by which Germany acquired vast areas of formerly Russian territory.

This treaty was nullified the following November. But the day before the Armistice, Winston Churchill gave a foretaste of what was to come, when he told a Cabinet meeting: "We should not attempt to destroy the only police force in Germany. We might have to build up the German army... for fear of the spread of Bolshevism".2

Churchill's warning was soon startlingly justified. In January 1919, Karl Liebnecht and Rosa Luxemburg were arrested, and then murdered on their way to Moabit prison. Noske was governor-general of Berlin at the time, and Pinson records him as saying: "Someone must become the bloodhound. I cannot evade the responsibility". Pinson also says that "Ebert's aim was not 'to combat the revolution', but to combat Bolshevism. But in pursuing this aim, Ebert and Noske came to rely heavily on the old-line soldiers".3

While Ebert and the old-line soldiers combated Bolshevism in Germany, Churchill found plenty of willing volunteers to help combat it in its own heartland — Bolshevik Russia. There were at least five, not counting the Czechs — Britain, France, Japan, America and Poland. The intervention in the west ended in October 1920, with the Treaty of Riga, leaving Poland in occupation of large areas of the Western Ukraine and Western Byelorussia, well east of the ethnic boundary proposed by Lord Curzon the previous July. The Americans had left in April, but the Japanese stayed on until 1922.

Following the departure of British troops from Persia and Baku, the Soviets signed treaties with both Persia and the Turkey of Kemal Ataturk. Also with Germany — the Treaty of Rapallo, 1922. The Entente powers took the hint, and in 1925 broke up the rapprochement between these two pariah states by inducing Germany to sign the Treaty of Locarno. Recognition of the U.S.S.R. by European powers was gradually achieved during the twenties, but not by America until after the advent of Roosevelt.
— 1933, the year Poland signed a non-aggression pact with Hitler.

The Thirties

By this time a new threat to Soviet security had arisen in Central Europe. In 1934 the U.S.S.R. joined the League of Nations, which Nazi Germany and Japan had just left. In May 1935 the U.S.S.R. signed pacts of mutual assistance with France and Czechoslovakia. During 1936/8 the Soviet Union sent food and military aid to the Spanish Republic. And sometime in this period, Anthony Eden coined the phrase: "Steady and collective resistance to all acts of unprovoked aggression".

However, in September 1938 the policy of collective security, with which the name of Litvinov is linked just as much as that of Eden, collapsed. Munich excluded the U.S.S.R. from Europe, and presented Hitler with the Czech fortifications as a free gift. In the middle of the crisis, the U.S.S.R. offered the Czechs military aid independent of France. The offer was refused.

25 March — the occupation of Prague. 20 May — Sir Alexander Cadogan records that the "P.M. says he will resign rather than sign alliance with Soviets". 25 July — Admiral Sir Reginald Aylmer Ranfurly Plunkett-Erle-Erle-Drax led a military mission by a particularly slow boat to Moscow. Adamthwaite comments:

During the months of haggling...the one question that really mattered, whether Poland and Romania would allow Soviet forces to cross their frontiers, was never raised. It was left to Voroshilov to ask this key question...on August 14th. The failure of the Western negotiators to give a satisfactory answer led directly to the suspension of the military conversations.4

24 August — the Nazi-Soviet pact was signed, with a secret protocol delimiting German and Soviet spheres of influence in Poland and the Baltic States. The German invasion of Poland was launched on 1 September. The Red Army marched into the non-ethnic areas of Poland on 17 September. Arrangements were made for strategic bases in the Baltic States — followed, after the fall of France, by their incorporation in the U.S.S.R. Finland was less accommodating, and war broke out on 30 November. A fortnight later the U.S.S.R. became the first state ever to be expelled from the League of Nations.

The French formed an army in the Middle East under General Weygand (the Saviour of Warsaw) and Britain seriously thought of sending to Finland planes that were going to be badly needed in south-east England, as soon as the phoney war was over.

The so-called "winter war" ended in March 1940. The sole demands made on Finland were the original strategic demands the rejection of which had started it — demands that can fairly be said to have saved Leningrad. To the south-east of the Soviet Union, additional depth was obtained by the acquisition of Bessarabia and N. Bukovina.

The War

Came June 1941 and the collapse of Stalin's gamble. A.J.P. Taylor says that "Churchill had decided his policy in advance, and announced it over the radio the same evening — unreserved solidarity with Soviet Russia in the war against Hitler".5

Taylor has a note (same page) that "Some Conservatives took the line, which Senator Truman did in the USA, that Germans and Russians should be left to cut their own throats. Moore-Brabazon, the Minister of Aircraft Production, indiscrretely said this in public, and protests from the workers in aircraft factories forced him to leave office". What Taylor does not say is that Churchill kicked Moore-Brabazon upstairs to the House of Lords.

One of Stalin's first demands was for the opening of the Second Front. This demand was reiterated in May 1942, when Molotov came to London to sign the twenty-year Anglo-Soviet Treaty of Alliance. Roosevelt was in favour of opening the Second front in 1943, but Churchill was able to delay it until May 1944.

The following sequence of events in 1945 is interesting:

• 17 January - capture of Warsaw;
• 29 January - Zhukov crosses the 1938 German frontier;
• 4 February - Yalta Conference opens. Stalin promises to enter the war against Japan three months after victory in Europe;
• 14 February — the bombing of Dresden
• 7 March - American forces cross Rhine;
• 12 April - death of Roosevelt, accession of Truman;
• 13 April - Red Army takes Vienna;
• 23 April - Red Army reaches Berlin; - Czechoslovakian Skoda Works destroyed by U.S.A.F.;
• 30 April - Hitler’s suicide;
• 2 May - Berlin surrenders to Red Army;
• 8 May - VE-Day (Anglo-Americans)
• 9 May - capture of Prague, VE-Day for the U.S.S.R.

Attention then switches to the Far East, and we have:

• 16 July - Atom test bomb exploded in New Mexico;
• 17 July - Potsdam Conference opens;
• 6 August - Hiroshima;
• 8 August - U.S.S.R. declares war on Japan, exactly on time;
• 9 August - Red Army invades Manchuria; - Nagasaki;
• 14 August - Japan agrees to surrender;
• 24 August — Japanese Kwantung Army surrenders to Red Army;
• 2 September - Macarthur receives formal Japanese surrender aboard the U.S.S. Missouri;
- VJ-Day;
- the end of Lend Lease;
- the end of what Doris Lessing calls the second intensive phase of the twentieth century war.

Potsdam

There have, as President Carter points out, been 35 years of intermission. Taylor singles out the meeting at Potsdam as marking "the beginning of the Cold War, and therefore of post-war history. Any chance of permanent friendship was lost," he suggests, "when Truman forgot about the reconstruction loan to the USSR which Roosevelt had contemplated".6

The Potsdam meeting was, in fact, the first public exercise in Trumanship — something that was later enshrined in the Truman Doctrine. Henry Stimpson, the then Secretary of War, is quoted as saying: "Truman stood up to the Russians in the most emphatic and decisive manner, telling them as to certain demands that they absolutely could not have, and that the US was entirely against them....He told the Russians just where they got off, and generally bossed the whole meeting".7

The basis for Truman's aggressive attitude was the successful atom bomb test in New Mexico. Stimpson said that the President was "tremendously pepped by it", and quotes the President as saying that "it gave him an entirely new feeling of confidence in talking to the Russians".8

The key public issue at Potsdam was not, however, the atom bomb, to which I shall return, but reparations. The Yalta proposal for joint reparations from the whole of Germany was abandoned in favour of each country having a free hand in its own zone. "The Russians", Werth says, "fought this proposal for over a week." Werth comments: "Potsdam marked....the beginning of the end of the 'Big Three Peace', of which the main pillar, as the Russians saw it, was joint control of Germany."9

The Atom Bomb

It is extraordinary — and extraordinarily illuminating — to read Churchill's own account of how Stalin was told at Potsdam about the atom bomb. The problem was how to tell Stalin that the Anglo-Americans possessed a new and powerful bomb, "but not with any particulars". In the end, Truman said "I think I had best just tell him, after one of our meetings, that we have an entirely novel form of bomb which we think will have a decisive effect on the Japanese".

"On July 24th", Churchill continues, "after our plenary meeting had ended, I saw the President go up to Stalin, and the two conversed alone....I can see it all as if it were yesterday. He seemed to be delighted....I am sure he had no idea of the significance of what he was being told. 'How did it go?' I asked Truman. 'He never asked a question,' he replied." 10

The point was that, with the development of the atom bomb, the participation of the U.S.S.R. in the Pacific war was no longer required — indeed, was no longer welcome. "The President and the State Department," says Taylor, "would have liked to get through without Soviet assistance at all," as Churchill confirms in a minute to Eden.11

Events themselves bear out this analysis. In June 1945 the Franck Committee, in a memorandum to the President, strongly deprecated the first use of the bomb against Japanese cities. On 8 August, the Washington correspondent of the London Times reported that:

The decision to use the new weapon was apparently taken quite recently, and amounted to a reversal of previous policy...In the view of some highly placed persons, those responsible came to the
conclusion that they were justified in using any and all means to bring the war in the Pacific to a close within the shortest possible time.

This report is confirmed by Stimpson in an article in Harpers Magazine in February 1947. "On 1 June, after discussion with the scientific panel, the Interim Committee unanimously adopted the following recommendations," of which the first was that "the bomb should be used against Japan as soon as possible."

Why the hurry? After all, it took nearly three years to organise the Second Front. The answer has already been given: to forestall Soviet entry into the war, or at least create the conditions for the occupation of Japan as an exclusive American prerogative.

In a speech on 9 August Truman said two things:

We gladly welcome into the struggle against the last of the Axis aggressors our gallant and victorious ally against the Nazis.

Though the US wants no territory or profit or selfish advantage out of this war, we are going to maintain the military bases necessary for the protection of our interests and of world peace. Bases which our military experts deem to be essential for our protection, and which are not now in our possession, we will acquire.

After the War was over

The history of the immediate post-war years is dominated by three main features:
1. The launching of the Cold War in February 1946 by Winston Churchill, at Fulton, U.S.A.
2. The publication of the Baruch Plan in June 1946.
3. The Marshall Plan, which was outlined at Harvard exactly a year later.

I do not wish to say anything about Fulton, except that it came less than six months after VJ-day, and less than four years after Churchill’s own government put its signature to the Twenty-year Anglo-Soviet Treaty of Alliance.

On 24 January, 1946, just a month before Fulton, the U.N. Assembly set up the Atomic Energy Commission. In March, just a month after Fulton, the State Department released the Acheson-Lilienthal Report, described by Blackett as a "brilliantly written document...whose initial assumptions, that there can be no monopoly by one nation of the atomic bomb...closely follow those of the Franck Report". 12

This new report proposed an Atomic Development Authority which would own and operate all key atomic plants, and envisioned a transitional period during which stockpiles of bombs and plants to produce fissile material would "continue to be located within the United States....Our monopoly on knowledge cannot be, and should not be lost at once". 13

Three months later, on 13 June at the first meeting of the Atomic Energy Commission, Bernard Baruch put forward, on behalf of the U.S. Government, proposals for the international control of atomic energy. At the second meeting, six days later, Andrej Gromyko presented the Soviet proposals.

Blackett comments that "the American proposals amounted to the adoption of the Acheson-Lilienthal Report with the important addition that decisions relating to atomic energy.....should not be subject to the veto power". 14 Baruch himself, in his introductory statement, said, "The subject goes straight to the veto power contained in the Charter of the United Nations....The matter of punishment lies at the very heart of our security system".

Of the proposed Atomic Development Authority, Baruch said that, "The personnel should be recruited on a basis of proven competence, but also, as far as possible, on an international basis" (my emphasis). And he concluded: "But before a country is ready to relinquish any winning weapons it must have a guarantee of safety, not only against offenders in the atomic area, but against the illegal users of other weapons — bacteriological, biological, gas — perhaps — why not? — against war itself". 15

Nobody seems to have pointed out to Baruch that the Red Army was also, in its way, a winning weapon — like possession of the Carpathian mountains, or a strategic area like Afghanistan. In short, the Baruch Plan was rejected by the Soviets.

Adam Ulam, in his biography of Stalin, suggests that, "Once the Soviet Union demonstrated that it would not play ball (at least not according to the American rules) at the U.N., a considerably body of opinion reverted to the theme that Stalin aspired to world domination". He comments, "If the Americans had been less neurotic, Soviet-
American relations could have been correct, if distant”.

The basis for the American neurosis was clearly indicated by Stimpson, in an article in the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists February 1947. “The future may see a time when such a weapon may be constructed in secret and used suddenly against an unsuspecting nation or group, of much greater size and material power.” This will readily be recognised as being very different from constructing it in secret and using it against an unsuspecting nation of smaller size and material power, which is trying to find someone to whom to surrender.

Finally, the Marshall Plan — 1947. Primarily, this was the translation of the thinking behind the Baruch plan into the economic arena. Ulam comments: “In the State Department there was surprise, not unmixed with apprehension...when the Soviet Government accepted the ... invitation to meet and examine the U.S. initiative...How could one persuade Senator Taft that Communism could be fought by handing over money to Stalin.”

Conclusion

P.M.S. Blackett wrote in 1948:

The Baruch Plan failed because, in its attempt to secure nearly complete security for America, it was inevitably driven to propose a course of action which would have put the Soviet Union in a situation whereby she would have been subservient to a group of nations dominated by America...The only way in which the American people can obtain complete safety from atomic bombs is by effective American control over all other nations. 18

I remember those days well. When the Atomic Energy Commission was set up I was still in the army. By the time the Marshall Plan was proposed I was studying at the London School of Economics. Ever since VJ-day the talk had been about internationalism — the United Nations — One World. That was the title of a book by a group of American scientists One World or None published in March 1946.

Unfortunately the Soviet and American peoples — yes, and the British and Australian peoples too — were “hot for certainties”, to borrow a phrase from George Meredith. And they got what he would have called a very “dusty answer”.

FOOTNOTES

1 P.M.S. Blackett Military and political consequences of Atomic Energy, Turnstile Press, 1948. I have made liberal use of secondary sources, but of none more freely than of this book by Blackett. First published in 1948, it is a better guide to the international relationships of the 1980s (if any) than anything I have seen written in the last twelve months, and indeed beyond, for a good many years.


3 K.S. Pinson, Modern Germany Macmillan, 1966, Ch. 14, pp. 384 and 389/70.


6 Ibid, p. 720

7 Alexander Werth, Russia at War, 1941-1945, Pan Books, 1965, p 914.

8 Ibid, p. 914


11 Taylor, p. 728. The Churchill minute to Eden is referred to by Werth, p. 921.

12 Blackett, p. 108.


14 Ibid. p. 131


16 Adam B. Ulam, Stalin, Allen Lane,1974, pp 640-1. This book was first published in America in 1973. The following year, Ulam was appointed Director of the Russian Research Centre, Harvard, where he had been professor of Government since 1950. The biography is fundamentally anti-Stalinist, but it has some interesting passages, such as those quoted.


18 Blackett, pp 144-5. It is good to open and close with a quotation from this absolutely first class book.
In a short autobiographical narrative titled *Scoundrel Time*, American playwright Lillian Hellman has given a vivid account of what it was like to be cited before the Un-American Activities Committee at the height of the McCarthy era.

Although one of the foremost political dramatists of her generation, Hellman had, until recently, remained relatively unknown outside the U.S. It took the combined acting power of Jane Fonda and Vanessa Redgrave and the film *Julia* — based on a story by Lillian Hellman — to make her name internationally famous.

There’s a photograph of Hellman in this book, showing her in 1975, when she wrote *Scoundrel Time*. This is the face of a survivor, one who’s still able to smile. The smile is much the same as that seen on an earlier picture from 1935: a good, hard, toothy smile — a thing worth rescuing across 40 years.
There's also 40 years of work, routine and experience behind her writing. This author is past her prime; but if *Scoundrel Time* appears in parts to have been put together in a rather slapdash manner, it never loses the dramatist's touch.

There are occasional echoes of Dashiell Hammett in her writing — the creator of the tough, realistic crime novel, with whom Hellman lived the better part of 30 years, until his death in 1961 — just as there are echoes of Hellman in Hammett's work — notably Nora Charles in *The Thin Man*.

Hellman's writing is generally superb, and there's no question of her "standing in the shadow of a great husband".

Still, Hammett had a significant influence on her life. For one thing, he had become a member of the American Communist Party "in 1937 or 1938". Hammett believed that he was "living in a corrupt society" and that "nothing less than a revolution could wipe out the corruption". When McCarthy's obviously corrupt henchmen cited him before their committee in 1951, Hammett made it a point of honor not to co-operate with them, and went to jail.

After that, it was clear that, sooner or later, "McCarthy's boys" (as Lillian Hellman calls them with undisguised contempt) would get on to her, too; political terrorism had arrived in America.

The political climate in the U.S. had changed dramatically after President Roosevelt's death. His successor, Harry Truman, step by step, reversed all progressive social legislation and severely cut the rights of trade unions. The Marshall plan and the Truman doctrine spelt out his Cold War policies. In order to achieve such a radical change in attitude towards a former ally, the Soviet Union, Truman had to "scare hell out of the country", as Senator Arthur Vandenberg put it at the time.

The Cold War and the fable of a communist threat were conceived with cold-blooded political cynicism, as Lillian Hellman observes: "Senators McCarthy and McCarran, Representatives Nixon (the subsequent president), Walter and Wood, all of them, were what they were: men who invented when necessary, maligned even when it wasn't necessary. "I do not think they believed much, if anything, of what they said: the time was ripe for a new wave in America, and they seized their political chance to lead it along each day's opportunity, spit-balling whatever and with whoever came into view. .... The anti-Red theme was easily chosen from the grab-bag, not alone because we were frightened of socialism, but chiefly, I think, to destroy the remains of Roosevelt and his sometimes advanced work ...."

After the 1946 congressional elections, which gave the Republicans their first majority in 16 years, the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) began to grow in stature. Up to then it had led a slimy, back-alley existence for about ten years, specialising in racist and anti-Semitic innuendo. Self-respecting members of Congress tried to steer clear of it.

In 1947, Truman ordered a loyalty check of all public servants, and his Attorney General slapped together a list of all
organisations he deemed undemocratic. Now the hunt was on for communists and radical democrats.

They seemed to be everywhere — even in Hollywood. The committee charged with the task of testing the ideological purity of cultural workers, found no difficulty in detecting "communist propaganda" in the movies. There was, for example, Song of Russia, a film depicting smiling Russians. And an "expert" declared that it was one of the basic communist propaganda tricks to show smiling Russians. The next thing was that scores of Hollywood actors were dragged before the committee. Lillian Hellman recalls how some of them met the test:

"Gary Cooper was asked, in a most deferential and friendly manner, if he had read much Communist propaganda in the scripts submitted to him. Cooper, as a man who had not been called upon ever to speak very much, thought that one over and said no, he didn't think he had, but then he mostly read at night. There were to be shudders as well as laughter when Charles Laughton, who had been a close friend of Bertolt Brecht, received a cable from the East German government inviting him to attend his old friend's memorial service. Mr. Laughton immediately phoned J. Edgar Hoover (the director of the F.B.I.) to say that he had received the wire, but after all that it wasn't his fault and shouldn't be counted against him."

In mid-1952 the McCarthyist hysteria would reach its peak. On February 21, the bell was rung at Lillian Hellman's door: "An over-respectable-looking Black man, a Sunday deacon, in a suit that was so correct—incorrect that it could be worn only by somebody who didn't want to be noticed, stood in the elevator, his hat politely removed. "He asked me if I was Lillian Hellman. I agreed to that and asked who he was. He handed me an envelope and said he was there to serve a subpoena from the House Un-American Activities Committee. I opened the envelope and read the subpoena. I said, 'Smart to choose a Black man for this job. You like it?' and slammed the door."

The HUAC was dangerous: under American law, any congressional committee has the right to call citizens before it and demand that they answer whatever questions it puts to them. Although this procedure has no juridical character, it differs little, in its methods and effects upon the individual, from a proper court of law.

However, under the provisions of the Fifth Amendment (to the U.S. constitution), citizens have the right to refuse an answer to a question if, by answering it, they would incriminate themselves. Those who made use of the constitutional right before HUAC were immediately branded as "Fifth Amendment Communists". Those who did not take recourse to this law and yet refused to point a finger at friends and acquaintances — as did the "Hollywood Ten" — were taken to court for "contempt of Congress" and given jail sentences.

But even accepting the shelter of the Fifth Amendment had its tricky aspects. Thus, for example, one couldn't refuse an answer to the question whether one knew President Roosevelt, as there was nothing self-incriminatory in that. But if asked whether one knew Charlie Chaplin or Dashiell Hammett, one had to refuse an answer. The committee was thus able to point the finger at individuals and cast a slur upon them on the basis of nothing more than a vague suspicion.

Lillian Hellman had no intention of becoming either stigmatised as a "Fifth Amendment Communist" or of giving information about her friends. Her lawyer, too, agreed it was time somebody took a moral stand vis-a-vis the committee. Thus she wrote.

"I am ready and willing to testify before the representatives of our Government as to my own opinions and my own actions, regardless of any risks or consequences to myself .... But to hurt innocent people whom I knew many years ago in order to save myself is, to me, inhuman and indecent and dishonorable. I cannot and will not cut my conscience to fit this year's fashion .... I was raised in an old-fashioned American tradition and there were certain homely things that were taught to me: to try to tell the truth, not to bear false witness, not to harm my neighbour, to be loyal to my country, and so on .... It is my belief that you will agree with these simple rules of human decency and will not expect me to violate the
good American tradition from which they spring ....

I am prepared to waive the privilege against self-incrimination and to tell you anything you wish to know about my views or actions if your Committee will agree to refrain from asking me to name other people. If the Committee is unwilling to give me this assurance, I will be forced to plead the privilege of the Fifth Amendment at the hearing."

Naturally, the committee refused her request (or offer) and she was obliged to appear at a hearing on May 21, 1952. "The opening questions", writes Heilman, "were standard: what was my name, where was I born, what was my occupation, what were the titles of my plays. It didn't take long to get to what really interested them: my time in Hollywood, which studios I had worked for, what periods of what years, with some mysterious emphasis on 1937. (My time in Spain, I thought, but I was wrong.) Had I met a writer called Martin Berkeley?"

This Martin Berkeley, whom she never even knew, had claimed that in his home the Hollywood chapter of the C.P.U.S.A. had been formed — and that Lillian Heilman was one of the foundation members.

Hellman: "When this nonsense was finished, Mr. Tavenner (one of the inquisitors) asked me if it was true. I said that I wanted to refer to the letter I had sent, I would like the Committee to reconsider my offer in the letter .... Mr Wood (the chairman) said that in order to clarify the record Mr. Tavenner should put into the record the correspondence between me and the Committee. Mr. Tavenner did just that, and when he had finished Rauh (Hellman's counsel) sprang to his feet, picked up a stack of mimeographed copies of my letter, and handed them out to the press section. I was puzzled by this — I hadn't noticed he had the copies — but I did notice that Rauh was looking happy.

Mr. Tavenner was upset .... Then (he) asked me if I had attended the meeting described by Berkeley, and one of the hardest things I ever did in my life was to swallow the words, 'I don't know him, and a little investigation into the time and place would have proved to you that I could not have been at the meeting he talks about.' Instead I said that I must refuse to answer the question. The 'must' in that sentence annoyed Mr. Wood — it was to annoy him again and again — and he corrected me: 'You might refuse to answer, the question is asked, do you refuse?' But in the middle of one of the questions about my past, something so remarkable happened that I am to this day convinced that the unknown gentleman who spoke had a great deal to do with the rest of my life.

A voice from the press gallery had been for at least three or four minutes louder than the other voices. (By this time, I think, the press had finished reading my letter to the Committee and were discussing it) .... Suddenly a clear voice said, 'Thank God somebody finally had the guts to do it.' .... Wood rapped his gavel and said angrily, 'If that occurs again, I will clear the press from these chambers'. 'You do that, sir,' said the same voice.

Shortly afterwards the hearing was over. HUAC had suffered its first major defeat, even if, strictly speaking, Hellman's defiance of the committee was based on relatively narrow political grounds and succeeded by working its way around one of the more dubious legal propositions in the committee's methodology.

The HUAC hearings pursued three aims: to elicit names; to achieve defamation of individuals as "Fifth Amendment Communists" or to set in train legal procedures against them. Hellman wasn't going to name names; she had offered to speak freely about herself, and could thus not be defamed; and legal procedures couldn't be taken against her because she had been forced into taking the Fifth Amendment.

Lillian Hellman had escaped the McCarthyist inquisition — but not unscathed. Life for her had changed. Many people avoided contact with her and, worse still, she was black-listed in Hollywood which meant that she could not get employment there. A British producer eventually offered her a job — at a fifth the salary she had earned in Hollywood. But in order to travel to Britain she needed a passport and had to fight hard and long to get it, because as a rule "unfriendly" witnesses were refused passports. Civic rights and political liberty had been severely curtailed.
In spring 1954 the McCarthy era officially came to an end. The popular mood had swung against the witch-hunts. In addition, the Senator from Wisconsin, in his tireless struggle against world communism, had picked on an adversary that was several times too large for him: the U.S. army.

Before he could even begin his hearings on the alleged communist infiltration of the army, McCarthy himself was called before an investigative committee and charged with inciting government employees to commit illegal actions. The Senate censured him on two points, a rare occurrence. His political career was over. But McCarthyism was neither dead nor discredited, and many of McCarthy's co-workers (Richard Nixon as a prime example) continued to have political careers in spite of it.

The prevailing liberal view of McCarthyism (and Viet Nam, and Watergate ... ) seems to be that the American political system is basically sound and, given time, will rid itself of most of its political cankers. Lillian Heilman disagrees: "We were not shocked at the damage McCarthy had done, or the ruin he brought on many people .... There were many broken lives along the path the boys had bulldozed, but not so many that people needed to feel guilty if they turned their backs fast enough and told each other, as we were to do again after Watergate, that American justice will always prevail no matter how careless it seems to critical outsiders. It is not true that when the bell tolls it tolls for thee:"

Yet some, like Hellman, could not simply forget. The wounds inflicted by McCarthyism were deep, and when they had healed what hurt were the scars. Like Hammett, Hellman considered McCarthyism as essentially deeply immoral and judged its protagonists on moral grounds. Unlike Hammett, who converted his righteous indignation into a party-political affiliation, Hellman internalised the problem: "My belief in liberalism was mostly gone. I think I have substituted for it something private called, for want of something that should be more accurate, decency .... It is painful for a nature that can no longer accept liberalism not to be able to accept radicalism."

The judgment appears accurate not only about Hellman as an individual, but as a comment on one sector of the urbane, "civilised" intelligentsia. There are obvious political shortcomings in a "resistance" to state persecution of the individual that limits itself to an assertion of human decency. Nevertheless, the political significance of what she did cannot be measured solely by its relatively narrow legal definition. Hers was a challenge to all the sanctimonious "Cold War liberals" and ex-radicals who rationalised their way into becoming informers, using anti-communism as a justification to protect fortune and career.

Her bitterest words Lillian Hellman has kept for America's intellectuals, anti-communist or no: "I am still angry that their reason for disagreeing with McCarthy was too often his crude methods — the standards of the board of governors of a country club .... They went to too many respectable conferences that turned out not to be under respectable auspices, contributed to and published too many C.I.A. magazines .... None of them, as far as I know, has yet found it a part of conscience to admit that their Cold War anti-communism was perverted, possibly against their wishes, into the Vietnam War and then into the reign of Nixon, their unwanted but inevitable leader .... None of them, as far as I know, has stepped forward to admit a mistake."


The author of this article says: "I thought if the National Times starts printing Lillian Hellman's cooking recipes, it's time to remember where the woman's really at."

Gyn/Ecology is both a celebration/cerebration of women's power and a savage rejection of the necrophilia of Patriarchy. Mary Daly comes from a theological background and her book echoes that tradition. Written in a poetic, visionary style, Gyn/Ecology is a Journey, a process, it is for the "Hag/Crone/Spinster in every Living woman. It is for each individual Journeyer to decide/expand the scope of this imagination within her. It is she, and she alone, who can determine how far, and in what way she can/will travel. She and she alone, can dis-cover the mystery of her own history, and find how it is interwoven with the lives of other women." (p.xiii)

The history of women, of course, intersects and is played out within the structures of Patriarchy. For Daly "Patriarchy is the homeland of males; it is the Father Land and men are its agents .... Males and males only are the originators, planners, controllers and legitimators of Patriarchy" (p.39). Within Patriarchy there exists a state of war in which men strive to subdue the power and independence of women through practices as foot-binding, witch-burning suttee and ultimately through the annihilation of women altogether by themselves giving birth to transsexuals, test-tube babies, etc.

The second section is a more detailed examination of a number of systems of control and torture of women .... foot-binding, genital mutilation, American gynaecology. And the third is a call to women to abandon Patriarchy, to create our own 'otherworld'. We "whirl into another frame of reference .... Unweaving their deceptions we name our Truth. Defying their professions we discover our Female Pride, our Sinister Wisdom. Escaping their possession we find our Enspiriting Selves. Overcoming their aggression we uncover our Creative Anger and Brilliant Bravery. Demystifying/demythifying their obsessions we re-member our Woman-loving love. Refusing their assimilation we experience our Autonomy and Strength. Avoiding their elimination we find our Original Being. Mending their imposed fragmentation we Spin our Original Integrity ...." (p.423)

The structure of the book is in three parts. The first section establishes the background, the patterns and methods of Patriarchal Culture. In particular, she focusses on myth and language. "This book is primarily concerned with the mind/spirit/body pollution inflicted through patriarchal myths and language on all levels. These levels range from styles of grammar to styles of glamour, from religious myth to dirty jokes, from theological hymns honouring the 'Real Presence' of Christ to commercial cooing of Coca-Cola as the 'Real Thing' .... Phallic myth and language generate, legitimate and mask the material pollution that threatens to terminate all sentient life on this planet." (p.8)

It is extremely difficult to review the book because it can be and is read in so many different ways. At a discussion at the Marxist Summer School, one of the recurring comments was that people had found it "inspirational" .... that it had generated a whole range of ideas and opened up new ways of seeing things. It was also suggested that to read the book on an empirical level is a mistake, and that what the book is about is "Representations" .... that the sections on Suttee for example, were about how the laws and practices of Patriarchy are inscribed on women's bodies.

It is this aspect of the book which many radical feminists identify with and develop in a political sense with other women. Images from the Background, presented in Sydney by the Fools Gallery Theatre Company derives its inspiration from Gyn/Ecology in that the company delineates the "Background .... the unnoticed, disregarded field of reality against which the perceived acceptable 'business of life' is played" (Program notes, p.1). For the Fools Gallery Company however the purpose of such a delineation is to "attempt to put power and joy into living as individuals, an attempt to delineate and then destroy the barriers between men and women and the world." (ibid)
Although this is the political implication which many people draw from Gyn/Ecology I do not think that this is Mary Daly's political vision. Nor do I think you can accept the book as a poetic vision only and not as an attempt to come to terms with everyday reality. Daly goes to great lengths to attack the publicly recognised women's movements as "male designed, male orchestrated, male legitimated, male assimilated". She similarly attacks the homosexual movement and feminist therapy. She criticises many women as "fembots", "Daddy's girl", "Daddy's little Titterers" in an ironic use of the labelling she is so critical of in other people. She makes specific practical political suggestions, as for example, her solution to the contraceptive problem .... "It is obvious to Hags that few gynaecologists recommend to their heterosexual patients the most foolproof of solutions, namely Mister-ectomy. The Spinsters who propose this way by our be-ing, liv-ing, speaking can do so with power precisely because we are not preoccupied with ways to get off the heterosexually defined contraceptive dilemma." (p.239)

Read on this level I think that the book has very deep political and theoretical failings. One most obvious example is the a-historicism of her work. The framework of Patriarchy is assumed in all instances. There is no other explanation for witch-burning for example, than that men hate and want to destroy women. No reference is made to struggles in the Church, the class divisions in society, natural disasters making for instability during that period. It is the same with the other sections of the book on genital mutilation, suttee, foot-binding, etc.

There is no way open for any criticism within the framework of the book. Daly specifically castigates those who would be critical as "fembots", token women doing Daddy's work. In this respect, I think the book must be seen to be extremely authoritarian and anti-women.

In terms of political strategy, there is no consideration of the material circumstances of most women's lives, certainly no consideration of how men and women might live without exploitation and domination since it is presupposed that that is impossible, and to strive to do so is merely a distraction and draining of our energy which should be woman-centred. There is no attention paid to the class nature of capitalist, or any other society, and the bearing this has on Patriarchal power relations in such a society, or the functions Patriarchy fulfils in class society.

Despite such criticisms Gyn/Ecology does raise one of the most fundamental political and personal problems for women .... that is, given the violence which has been, and continues to be, practised against women, how is it possible to create a society where women and men can live in harmony.

Architect or Bee? The Human/Technology Relationship by Mike Cooley, published in Australia by TNC, $8.95. Reviewed by Peter Mason.

In 1917 Bertrand Russell wrote a speech for the war workers of Glasgow dealing with a pressing problem that is every bit as pressing today: how, as an individual, to avoid being crushed by the huge, impersonal institutions of the twentieth century. Above all how to escape the tendency to greed and self interest which, he said, modern capitalism forces upon all who are not heroic or exceptionally fortunate.

"Vast organisations", he told them, "are an inevitable element in modern life, and it is useless to aim at their abolition .... It is true that they make the preservation of individuality more difficult, but what is needed is a way of combining them with the greatest possible scope for individual initiative."

One very important step towards this end would be to render democratic the government of every organisation .... There can be no real freedom or democracy until the people who do the work in a business also control its management".

In the sixty years that have passed since that speech the problems of the individual in the face of these vast organisations have grown so great that most of us, being neither heroic nor exceptionally fortunate, feel generally overwhelmed by them.

Architect or Bee throws a unique and brilliant spotlight on these problems of modern living. It shows how a group of workers in England, far from being daunted by the size and technical power of their institution, have used their imagination to discover how that very technology could be used efficiently and profitably for socially useful purposes. And not only did they show it: they actually did it!

Mike Cooley's title, Architect or Bee, highlights the human importance of retaining some individual initiative in the processes of production. It comes from a passage in Das Kapital:

A bee puts to shame many an architect in the construction of its cells; but what distinguishes the worst of architects from the best of bees in this. The architect raises the structure in imagination before it is erected in reality. At the end of every labor process, we get a result that already existed in the imagination of the labourer at its commencement.

Cooley himself is an industrial designer who has seen his profession changed out of recognition by the coming of the computer. Yet he's saddened by his observation that the human liberation
promised by automation and robot devices doesn’t seem to be happening. Instead, the power of high technology is being used to remove not only the tedium and the unpleasantness but also the skill and the initiative from challenging jobs. The position of the worker is thereby literally degraded.

But this is all subjective; theoretical; and to some extent arguable. What about the action that Cooley and his fellow-workers have been engaged in at Lucas industries in Britain?

The Lucas Aerospace Division was formed as part of a “rationalisation” program during Harold Wilson’s white heat of the technological revolution. GEC had already been rationalised, leading to the sacking of 60,000 staff. One of the sacked was my friend Jerry Booth, who had worked for GEC for over 20 years. The shock of being fired and the problems of relocation were too much for Jerry; he died not long after at the age of 47.

So Mike Cooley and his friends set up what they called the Combine Committee at Lucas Aerospace to defend their positions against the kind of tactics that had been used by GEC. But not content with purely defensive action, they started to ask some keen questions about what they really ought to be doing with their collective expertise, ranging from fitting and turning through all of the engineering skills, including such fancy modern techniques as computer-aided design.

As good technocrats they knew that science and technology are already sufficiently advanced to free the world from most of its squalor, poverty and disease if we so choose.

Yet working at Lucas they were made painfully aware of the appalling gap between that which technology could provide for society and that which it actually does provide. There they were, pouring their skill and effort into making gadgets for that most stupidly conceived and ill-timed of all aeroplanes, the Concorde, while in the city around them hundreds of old age pensioners were dying from cold through lack of a decent heating system.

They saw the most sophisticated and profitable technical equipment being rushed into service while even more sophisticated devices — human beings — were being wasted by the growing structural unemployment. Cooley points out that about 180,000 building workers are out of a job, yet about seven million people are living in semi-slum conditions. In Cooley’s own London area, 20 per cent of the schools don’t even have an indoor toilet.

So they set to work collectively and produced an alternative Corporate Plan for products that could be made, and mostly made profitably, with the existing machine tools and skills at Lucas Aerospace. The very thoroughness with which the Plan was developed, both in the engineering and the economic aspects, gave the group a strength that it had previously lacked, as shown by this revealing extract.

Before we even started the Corporate Plan, our members at the Wolverhampton Plant visited a centre for children with Spina Bifida and were horrified to see that the only way the children could propel themselves about was literally by crawling on the floor, so they designed a vehicle which subsequently became known as HOBCART. It was highly successful, and the Spina Bifida Association of Australia wanted to order 2,000 of these. Lucas would not agree to manufacture them because, they said, it was incompatible with their product range. At that time the Corporate Plan was not developed and so we were unable to press for the manufacture of HOBCART. However, the design and the development of this product were significant in another sense. Mike Parry Evans, its designer, said that it was one of the most enriching experiences of his life when he carried the hobcart down and saw the pleasure on the child’s face. It meant more to him, he said, than all the design activity he had been involved in up till then. For the first time in his career he actually saw the person who was going to use the product he had designed. He was working in a multi-disciplinary team together with a medical type doctor, a physiotherapist and a health visitor. I mention this because it illustrates very graphically that it is not true to suggest that aerospace technologists are only interested in complex esoteric technical problems. It can be far more enriching for them if they are allowed to relate their technology to really human and social problems.

Mike Cooley then describes some of the socially useful projects that have been developed under the Alternative Plan. Although there is a wide mix of products, some for British conditions, some for the Third World, they avoid what Cooley refers to as the unhappy tendency for alternative technology to provide products which are little more than playthings for the middle class in their architect-built houses.

The projects they are working on are things such as a heating system, based on a heat pump (with the old-age pensioners particularly in mind); a hybrid petrol-electric engine for a motor car that would halve fuel consumption and last for at least...
15 years; a life-support system for use in operations for heart attack patients en route to intensive care.

There is a road/rail car, a vehicle that runs equally well on the road or on the railway lines. This could lead to a really integrated, safer and more efficient transport system in a country such as Britain; whilst in developing countries it has the enormous advantage of going up gradients ten times steeper than the maximum for a train, cutting the cost of track building and laying to one-fifteenth.

The portable kidney machine is a particularly poignant example. Lucas Aerospace had been trying to sell off its kidney machine division to a company in Switzerland. The Lucas workers found to their horror that 3,000 people die in Britain every year because they cannot get a machine. In Birmingham, if you are under 15 or over 45 you are, as the medics put it so nicely "allowed to go into decline". Unless, of course, you have enough money to pay for one privately.

So the Lucas plan didn't just protect the kidney machine division but went on to the design of a portable version enabling the sufferers to continue a more active life and to retain their dignity.

Architect or Bee is written simply and with touches of Cooley's puckish wit which give it sparkle. Bill Richardson, Assistant Secretary of the ACTU, sets it well in the Australian context in his Foreword written specially for the Australian edition.

I can perhaps best convey its essential flavor by quoting a passage in which Cooley is making his plea for human-centred systems of organisation:

The new technologies highlight the fact that we are at a unique historical turning point. We must not allow our common sense to be bludgeoned into silence by technocratic and scientific jargon, nor should we be intimidated by the determinism of science and technology into believing that the future is already fixed. The future is not "out there" in the sense that America was out there before Columbus went to discover it. It has yet got to be built by human beings and we do have real choices, but these choices will have to be fought for, and the issues are both technical and political.

If we ignore this we may find (and here he is quoting Norbert Wiener, the founding father of cybernetics) "All our inventions and progress seem to result in ending material forces with intellectual life, and in stultifying life into a material force".

A microphone is not an ear, a camera is not an eye and a computer is not a brain. We should not allow ourselves to be so confused or wrapped up in the technology that we fail to assert the importance of human beings.

We have to decide whether we will fight for our right to be the architects of the future, or allow a tiny minority to reduce us to bee-like responses.

Architect or Bee is an important book. I would not be surprised if it becomes a classic, the modern equivalent of Bertrand Russell's earlier foray into the same field.


Alan Roberts, an activist in the anti-war and anti-uranium mining movements, is a marxist who takes environmental problems seriously. In the last years he has written a number of articles on environmental politics, the nuclear issue and the implications of ecological issues for left wing thought and practice. This book, launched early last year in Sydney, brings together reworked versions of some of his earlier writings along with much that is new.

The whole that Roberts has constructed out of this material is not always as coherent as he intends it to be. The transitions between sections are sometimes as obscure as those of the philosopher Hegel whom he occasionally mentions. An introduction could have been a great service to the reader.

Nevertheless, it is not difficult to discover the main themes of the Self-Managing Environment. Roberts' principle contention is that environmental degradation, in both capitalist and non-capitalist countries, is primarily a consequence of consumerism.

"Consumer values" refer to a complex of quite different goals and motivations: possessions as a major source of self respect, the future valued according to the hopes it holds out for fresh consumer satisfactions, the social system judged by its capacity to provide them (or the illusion of them), the continual creation of new commodities and new demands -- all accompanied by, and depending upon, the downgrading of competing values and alternative satisfactions. (37-38)

Roberts exposes the reactionary views of those who tell us that we must all tighten our belts for the sake of the environment. But he also criticises the socialists who think that environmental problems will go away once capitalist ownership is eliminated.

Consumerism, Roberts thinks, is an understandable consequence of a system of production in which workers are deprived, dominated and manipulated.

That is to say, to continue with the alienated workplace is necessarily to prolong the sway of
consumerism and invite ecological disaster. And conversely: no ecological harmony is conceivable unless the producers control their own labour activities. (54)

The answer to environmental problems is therefore "self-management" — "the full and immediate control of the workplace by the workers themselves"; (56) and social and economic planning which is built up from grass roots participation. The self-managing society, the dream of many anarchists, marxists and guild socialists "has now been put on the agenda by the ecological crises of our time." (63)

The other themes that Roberts introduces in his book bear on this main argument. He criticises the nuclear power industry not only for the dangers it poses to life and health, but as a "social project, predicated upon a definite social structure, that of capitalist consumerism." (85) He describes some of the battles for the control of the workplace waged between workers and employers and the role of technology and "management science" in these battles. And he emphasises the continued resistance of workers to the drudgery and meaninglessness of their jobs.

Roberts warns us against those left wing groups and activists who hinder popular movements with their elitist preconceptions or their attachment to old orthodoxies. He is particularly hard on those marxists who are suspicious of environmental movements because of their middle class composition. To insist on the working class purity of a campaign, he suggests, is to be untrue to the spirit of Marx, who looked for revolutionary potential in any movement or strata. Roberts is obviously sympathetic to environmental movements, community action groups, women's liberation, the struggles of which he regards as struggles for self management, in a broader sense of that term.

The trouble is that when Roberts introduces and explains "self-management", he uses the term in a narrow sense — to mean "workers control". The broader concept of "self-management", which he needs to link the struggles of other groups to the struggles of workers in their workplaces, is left pretty much to fend for itself. Roberts never makes more than a gesture towards explaining how "alienation" in community life and the problems of women in the home are related to alienation in the workplace; or how the struggle of women or of community action groups are similar to and different from the struggle of workers for control of their workplace; how consumer values are affected by the way people live in their families and communities. Nor does he consider how the broader notions of self-management and alienation could affect his main argument about the relation of consumerism and lack of autonomy.

Roberts is in effect doing what so many other socialist thinkers do: he focusses on production and the relation between workers and bosses; women's struggles, environmental struggles, etc. come into the picture as afterthoughts and the nature of their demands are never integrated theoretically with the nature of the class struggle. Though he sympathises with these liberation and environmental action groups, nevertheless like the marxists he criticises, he fails to take them seriously enough.

Once we move out of the workplace into the community or family, then it becomes less obvious that "consumerism" is the problem, and "self-management" the answer. For Roberts, consumerism is irrational — the desire to acquire unnecessary goods. But when we look at how people's needs are related to their lives, then his account of the roots of environmental degradation seems less satisfactory.

At one point he mentions that the nuclear family is a fundamental buttress for consumerism; each self-sufficient unit purchases its own deep freeze, refrigerator, dishwasher, washing machine etc which stand idle or underused most of the time. This is indeed irrational, but the irrationality is in the family and its situation, not in the heads of the people who buy these things. People buy washing machines and dishwashers primarily because they are necessary for carrying on a reasonable life in a society in which the family is expected to be a self-sufficient unit. Convenience appliances are particularly necessary for married women who work and then come home to do their domestic chores.

Cars are one of the most environmentally destructive of consumer goods. But to suggest that cars are popular because people are carried away by consumer values is to neglect the role cars play in daily life. The fact is that people who live a long way from work and shops and friends in a city with inadequate public transport do need to have cars. A lot of the consumer demands of people, in both the East and the West, may simply result from their attempt to obtain what has become necessary for life in a modern urban society.

To do something about the environmental effects of private transport and household appliances means that something has to be done about the organisation of cities, about the nuclear family, domestic labour, public transport, and no doubt a large number of other things. Roberts is right to emphasise that whatever is done will be done by the people directly concerned. But to offer "self-management" as a solution is no more helpful than offering the "expropriation of capitalists" as a solution. For Roberts "self-management" becomes a panacea for all our social and environmental ills.

One reason for Roberts' failure to give his universal remedy a content, is probably his reluctance to give any directions to people: to say
what they ought to be doing or what popular movements ought to accomplish. He is extremely critical of those "experts" and self appointed leaders who claim to know the line of revolutionary advance. He sometimes seems to be suggesting that Marxists should encourage self-management movements and otherwise keep out of the way.

Given the history of radical movements, his concern is laudatory. The trouble is that not all efforts by people to control what affects their lives are progressive. Community action groups can organise to keep black people out of their neighborhoods; farmers sometimes get together to break through picket lines. Marxists must do what they can to fight reactionary views and to present socialist ideas. There are good and bad ways of doing this, but if doing it at all is elitist, then I don’t see how elitism can be avoided.

However, to suggest that Roberts is one of those socialists who presents us with outdated formulas for new situations, is clearly incorrect. In many ways, he is in the vanguard (if he will excuse this expression) of thought on socialism and the environment. It will take us some time to digest all the ideas he throws out - on science and technology, economies of scale, the relation between practice and theory, etc. It will be worth the effort. If his views are not always as coherent and well developed as we would like, this only goes to show that relating the concerns of environmentalists to marxist theory and practice is not an easy task.

It should be mentioned that the book is well written and often witty. It deserves to have a much wider circulation than its price will allow.

Film Review ....

**Breaker Morant**

Despite the love affair which *Breaker Morant* has had with the media — near universal acclaim from critics and film institutions alike (witness *Breaker's* clean sweep of the AFI awards last year) — as a film, it stinks. It is neither well made nor original, and without Don McAlpine’s totally undiscriminating and/or doting relatives of the performers. As a political film — which its supporters claim it to be — it stinks to high heaven. The position it adopts regarding war in general, the Boer War in particular, Australia’s colonial heritage and British imperialism are repellent and reactionary.

Let’s take the first charge: that the film is boring and imitative. It relies on a familiar western motif — a revenge killing — crossed with a military courtroom drama. The unique feature of this military trial of lower ranks is the charge: not that the defendants refused to obey orders (*King and Country, Paths of Glory*), or that they should have disobeyed illegal or immoral orders (*The Man in the Glass Booth*) but rather that, if anything, they obeyed orders — or the spirit of the orders — too well.

The case concerns three volunteers in an Australian contingent attached to the British Army fighting the Boers in 1901. The volunteers belong to an “irregular” force established to combat guerrilla activity in the countryside. In prosecuting these activities, Morant, the officer in charge, orders his men to shoot prisoners, motivated in part by the hideous murder of his best friend in a Boer attack, and in part by what he understands to be the unit’s irregular brief. The British Army court martials the three for violating the rules of war. Early on we learn that the trial is merely an elaborate ritual: the three are doomed for reasons of state, to placate the offended sensibilities of the German Kaiser who might be tempted to substantially support the Boer cause as a protest against British flouting of wartime codes of conduct.

The court martial is the central focus of the film’s “story” opened out with flashbacks to the three defendants’ lives in Australia and to the activities under review at the trial. We learn that the three — of whom one, Breaker Morant himself, is an expatriate black sheep and ne’er-do-well Englishman; another, Handcock, is a bit of a wide boy, decent but impulsive, who finds poverty and domestic regimens intolerable nuisances to be avoided in traditional ways; and a third, a young boy beloved of his mother — are basically good Aussie (in Morant’s case, Aussiefied) blokes. All the much-vaulted male Australian virtues are on display in the flashbacks — high spirits and larrikinism; resourcefulness and mateship; hard-drinking and womanising. Easy-going, non-deferential, get-the-dirty-job done qualities abound. Our outrage that these flawed-but-decent men should be sacrificed to British Realpolitik mounts as the film progresses, a dimension, I might add, which is almost the sole movement to be found in this dreary film.

Since the “drama” resides in the courtroom, no amount of well-photographed sentimentalising of Home or rhapsodising of Action against the anonymous but omnipresent Boers can rescue the film from the doldrums of a slack script. For nothing much turns on the arguments in the courtroom; it is a foregone conclusion that they will all be found guilty and that one or all of them will pay the Supreme Penalty (sorry about the cliches, but the Boys’ Own verities of this film lead one inexorably into Capital Letter Country). The courtroom merely provides a forum where the Australian contingent can demonstrate their cocky, irrepressible, unintimidated resilience (the defendants) and their conscientious versatility (Jack Thompson, the initially outclassed defence
counsel who almost beats the best the British have to offer in this rigged advocate game) and where the British are portrayed as totally venal, opportunistic and unprincipled. This is strictly pass-the-popcorn stuff: as the audience, you get to cheer for the goodies and boo the baddies — an exercise tinged with a frisson of sadness for the Tragedy we all know will come.

The film utilises the courtroom sequences, not as a forum for the working out of circumstance and motivation concerning the application of principles of justice, conceived wither historically or universalistically, but rather to demonstrate imperial petty-mindedness and British military justice at its most servile. The message comes through loud and clear: British justice is a sham and a charade; the defendants don’t stand a chance no matter how much “right” is on their side.

And this brings me to the second charge: that the film is morally and politically bankrupt. Although references to “duty” abound, it is clear that issues of morality are almost totally absent from this film. For the defence that Morant et al maintain — that they were only following orders — is one that would be untenable (even risible) were it presented as justification by, say, SS officers. Post-Auschwitz, post-Viet Nam, we have come to question whether the vesting of the capacity to distinguish right from wrong in “the individual” rather than in “the social” is itself a product of the rise of the Corporate State — precisely the entity most likely to issue illegal orders and to prosecute unjust wars.

The consideration of the question of whether the lodging of normativity within the individual is the condition of existence of a state and state institutions without norms is clearly a fundamental question of the modern age. We live in the shadow of Auschwitz: whom can we blame? Who is guilty — everyone? no one? Are blame and guilt even relevant categories? And how should we live in a no-fault world, where issues of responsibility and obligation have no purchase? Is the living of modern life tantamount to the negotiation of a guaranteed insurance policy?

Well, if you’d rather not bother your heads with these matters, Breaker Morant is the film for you, for it represses its clear opportunity to consider these issues. Instead, it trades on colonial jingoism for its “analysis” of Australian-British relations for which the film is highly praised. The wide range of film reviewers in this country have fallen all over themselves in an orgy of critical impoverishment, lauding Breaker Morant’s courageous criticism of Britain’s imperialism vis-a-vis Australia, and its calling into question Australia’s colonial past.

All of this is sheer nonsense. For what the film specifically does not do is analyse that network of colonial inter-relationships that led (1) a brink-of-Federation Australia to send a contingent of volunteers — not conscripts — to South Africa to prosecute a British imperial enterprise and (2) a group of men with so hazy a definition of who they were and what might be the difference between Right and Wrong — in short, a group of men haplessly dependent upon imperial authority — that they would willingly and loyally engage in a war which, with its concentration camps, interrogation techniques, and “elimination” of prisoners ushered in the “modern” era of political control.

So this is the first point of Breaker Morant’s reactionary politics: the mystification of the colonial experience. The film milks “history” for some cheap Pommie-bashing; as we gaze admiringly at the film’s audacious anti-British stand, the fact that the film at no point turns its gaze upon the plight of the Boers, clear objects of a strategy of British imperial domination in which Australia is unquestioningly implicated, simply escapes our notice. The systematic way in which imperialism sets the colonised against one another goes unrecognised. Apparently, according to Breaker Morant, the only thing wrong with being colonised is that every now and again a few colonials become the meat in the imperial sandwich.

The film is not anti-British, or anti-imperialist at all. It simply states that the Brits can be shits to friend as well as foe; that they are more likely to manipulate, use and ultimately sacrifice lesser orders like the Anglo-Irish, Australians, etc. and isn’t that a shame? Given this description of Anglo-Australian relations all we can do, it would appear, is to keep on following orders and hope for better treatment next time. This message is an self-servicing whine, not a vigorous critique. No issue of principle — colonial or otherwise — is at stake in this film. By eliminating the Boers from the equation, the game is simply between the evil powerful — the Kitchener’s and their machinations — and the simple virtues of comrades in arms.

And this is the second area of mystification — war as adventure, as mateship, as a haven from the petty routines of civilly street. Breaker Morant must be the longest Army recruiting commercial ever made: death and glory; danger and excitement; women in their place — weepily available for the odd roll in the hay; resourceful officers who stand by you; no unnecessary spit and polish. The only drawback appears to be the possibility of being victimised by Machiavellian British politicians and spineless British generals. But then you get to die so beautifully — with a clear conscience, righteously outraged at your plight — blasted into oblivion in the glorious sunrise, holding your mate’s hand in a vindication of the human over the political. Oh my stars and garters; how can the 16-year olds resist? — which
is undoubtedly why the current Join the Army advertisements echo Breaker Morant.

But the real question is, how could almost all the critics in Australia not resist? How could they almost uniformly admire this nasty and mediocre film? The imprimatur of Cannes may have helped, together with a canny commercial appraisal. But it may be more than that — the critics’ confusion is more widely based: it is the whole society’s inability to think through the issue of our colonial heritage — witness My Brilliant Career.

Right now, local filmmakers are agonising over the “problem” — as they see it — of saying something “Australian” in an industry so internationalised and corporatised that anything really distinctive has almost no chance of being accepted by film bureaucrats at home or abroad. My view is that the desire of the Oz industry to be both Oz and international bespeaks a still colonised mind, unable to recognise the real limitations of both the medium and the message. The role of film critics in exacerbating the confusion, in celebrating as “real achievements” the crippled attempts of derivative and damaged “creators”, is appalling. It bespeaks their cultural colonisation as well, demonstrated by a structured inability to recognise both the absence of historical vision and of the necessity to raise hard questions about the colonial past. It also demonstrates that hallmark of underdevelopment, a well-developed tolerance for unmerited self-congratulation.

— Kathe Boehringer.

**COUNTERSPY**

“Shocking .... paranoid .... cynical: “ex-CIA director William Colby on *CounterSpy.*

The magazine for people who need to know...

What is the CIA up to? What are other intelligence agencies around the world (including ASIO, ASIS) doing?

*CounterSpy* analyses such questions, as well as “naming names” of CIA officials. *CounterSpy* also provides more general analyses of world crises.

Write to *CounterSpy*, PO Box 647, Ben Franklin Sta., Washington DC 20044, USA, for details of subscription rates.

**Intervention No. 17**

SPECIAL ISSUE: BEYOND MARXISM?

In recent years, it has become common to speak of a “crisis in Marxism”. While the precise focus of this term is unclear, it is apparent that there is a widespread disenchantment among radicals with some of the central tenets of Marxist orthodoxy. For example: there is increasing scepticism concerning the alleged primacy of material production in social life; there is suspicion of the claim that any coherent and liberating political practice must be based on the leadership of the working class. A number of issues which have come into prominence since the early 1970s have posed problems for Marxism. These include: power and the state; feminism, politics of sexuality, family, marginal social movements; language, ideology, the politics of signs; the nature of socialist politics, the revolution/reform dichotomy. To many, the attempt to deal adequately with these issues has seemed to involve recourse to categories and theories not recognisably Marxist.

*Intervention No. 17* (to be published in January 1982) will be devoted to these issues. We invite contributions. The deadline will be 1 November, 1981; however, it is important that we be informed of any work that is being planned as soon as possible - certainly not later than mid-July. If there is enough interest, we may organise a weekend seminar-discussion of potential contributions in August.

Enquiries, suggestions, contributions, etc. to:

Judith Allen, Paul Patton, Ross Poole,
School of History, Philosophy and Politics,
Macquarie University,
SOCIALIST RESPONSES TO THE RESOURCES BOOM:
ANALYSIS AND STRATEGY

A conference to be held in Canberra on October 17 & 18, 1981 — organised by the Canberra Left Discussion Group.

THEME

The aim of this conference will be to thrash out a socialist analysis of, and strategies towards, a major concern of Australian political economy in the 1980s — the so-called "resources boom". So far, although there is an awareness of the importance of the issues involved and some analysis has been undertaken, there are few signs that a coherent programmatic socialist response is emerging. We want the conference to move beyond analysis, to concentrate on considering strategy.

ORGANISATION

Since the object is to work towards specific policies and programs the conference is aiming for a discussion among equals, not the typical academic style of one-way communication by "experts". Our intention is that copies of session papers and background papers should be circulated to participants prior to the conference. Each session of the conference would then start by comments by a discussant, followed by the author's response, leading to a general discussion, possibly in smaller groups.

We are considering holding sessions on the following topics: strategies for responding to structural change in the manufacturing sector; strategies for a sustainable energy and resources future; national defence and foreign policy implications; women's employment; the experience of action groups confronting specific resource/environment issues.

This is not a final list. If you would like to present a paper, please contact us to discuss your ideas as soon as possible.

To help in planning for the conference, we would like an early indication of likely attendance. We intend to make this a low budget conference with informal billeting. We expect the duplication of circulated papers to be the main cost.

If you think you may come, please write to:

Hugh Saddler,
Centre for Resource and Environmental Studies,
A.N.U.,
PO Box 4,
CANBERRA. A.C.T. 2600.

or

Richard Curtain,
Dept. of Sociology, Arts,
A.N.U.,
PO Box 4,
CANBERRA. A.C.T. 2600.