## Contents

February-March 1970

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EDITORS' COMMENTS</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROBLEMS OF COMMUNIST HISTORY</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eric Hobsbawm</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LABOR AND THE HIGH COURT</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Playford</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABORIGINES—UNION RESPONSES</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Baker</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STATEMENTS ON ABORIGINAL AUTONOMY</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DISCUSSION</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comment on Osmond</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obituary: Norman Lindsay</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dictatorship — Once Again</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workers’ Control</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Aid — A Cold, Hard Look</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lenin, Comintern and Workers’ Control</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE COMMUNIST PARTY AND REVOLUTION</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Douglas Kirsner</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE DEVELOPMENT OF CONSCIOUSNESS</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eric Aarons</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ITALY IN CRISIS</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luciano Lama</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNION EDUCATION FOR SOCIAL CHANGE</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Max Ogden</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIETNAM THIRD FORCE?</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malcolm Salmon</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOOKS</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

AUSTRALIAN LEFT REVIEW is a marxist journal of information, analysis and discussion on economics, politics, trade unionism, history, philosophy, science and art, for the promotion of socialist ideas.

Published two monthly.

Single copies, 40c; Yearly subscription, $2.20; Two years, $4.00


BUSINESS MANAGER: 168 Day St., Sydney 2000. Phone: 26-2161

A STRATEGY FOR SOCIAL CHANGE. The crisis which at present afflicts the Communist Party and indeed the whole socialist movement in Australia, is essentially a crisis of strategy. The elements of this crisis have been building up over a considerable period, at least two decades. The crisis did not arise out of events in Czechoslovakia, although these events helped to clarify many of the issues involved, and forced many people to think through problems and face up to conclusions they hesitated to draw.

The source of this crisis lies much deeper, it is about the prospects and means of a socialist transformation in our country. There are two main elements making up this crisis. Briefly it is the gradual disintegration of the old strategy and the difficulties of elaborating a new strategy for a socialist transformation in Australia. The task of working out a viable socialist strategy in any country is a great and complex undertaking. In fact it is a creative act. There are few cases in history of a successful elaboration of a strategy for socialist transformation. Where it did occur it was the product of a thorough study of the conditions of the country concerned and the working out of a strategy based in these specific conditions.

It is an interesting fact that in every case the successful strategy for a socialist revolution was worked out by departing from established dogma, and in face of the opposition of the
entrenched orthodoxy. Lenin was attacked by the “official” socialist establishment in the West for violating “Marxist principles”. The Chinese revolution, after suffering severe losses by following a “strategy” worked out abroad and based on different conditions, achieved success only when it broke radically with dogma and boldly worked out a strategy for the socialist revolution based on the conditions of China. This was bound to be very different from the conditions in Russia in 1917. The Cuban leadership too, refused to accept the “sound advice” of how not to make a revolution, and proceeded to make one.

It is one of history’s ironies that in all three cases the successful revolutionaries proceeded to make the very mistake which would have wrecked their own revolution — to generalise from their own successful experience and to attempt to apply it to the different conditions of other countries. This was bound to lead to failure, even disaster, as indeed it did. However helpful the experiences of revolution of other countries may be, the task of elaborating a viable socialist strategy has to be faced afresh in each country. It is a difficult enough undertaking even for those closely bound up with the pulse of life and struggle in their own country. It certainly cannot be done from afar.

Australian Communists have for many years blinded themselves to this problem and to all that it implies. We have based our work on strategic assumptions (for no one acts without some assumptions, however vague) which have been false, which have gradually crumbled in face of reality and which have not been replaced by a new strategy which fits our conditions. This is the essence of the crisis in the Communist Party.

What were these strategic assumptions? We believed that the socialist system as it has developed in the USSR constitutes the model for us which, with minor modifications based on our conditions, would be developed in Australia. We assumed that two factors would bring about the socialist transformation leading to the establishment of a socialist system based on the Soviet pattern. Firstly, a deep going economic crisis comparable to that of 1929-33, which would profoundly revolutionise the workers and place fundamental social change on the agenda. Secondly, the growing attraction of the socialist alternative as it flourished and developed in contrast to the countries gripped by sharp and insoluble economic crises. We believed that the socialist countries’ all-round advance would make them increasingly attractive, to act as a magnet for the whole world. It became clear that both assumptions were incorrect. Australian society was not developing in the way we had envisaged, and the Soviet Union and the other
socialist countries were not proceeding in the manner which we had expected.

Thus the old strategic assumptions became increasingly hollow. Many members and supporters of the Communist Party became aware of this, as their assumptions clashed with their experiences. It was a gradual and often painful process of disillusionment. Perhaps the most serious aspect was the slowness of the Communist Party itself to replace non-viable strategic assumptions with a new viable socialist strategy. In the meantime, and in the face of the absence of workable alternatives, many socialists lost heart, confidence and their enthusiasm.

Some have taken a different road. In view of the obvious difficulties for a socialist advance, they have attached their hopes and faith to one of the large socialist countries, trusting that it would lead them through the difficulties. As expectations were disappointed and foundations crumbled, blind faith in the leadership of this or that socialist country became terra firma. This is as much a psychological as a political phenomenon. In this sense there is much in common between those who in 1962-63 pinned their faith on the Chinese leaders and those who today blindly follow the present Soviet leaders. In both cases they are abandoning the painful task of facing up to the inadequacies of our past strategic assumptions and the difficulties of elaborating a new viable socialist strategy. In human terms such reactions may be understandable, politically it is a form of capitulation to the pressures of our society. It is taking the (seemingly) easy way out.

Certainly, changing society is a complex undertaking. It inevitably requires a lot of hard work and retracing of ground. Surely the last 20 years have taught us something about the difficulties and complexities of changing society in Western countries (and not only in the West). But it has also shown, that the objective need for socialism is greater today than ever. In fact mankind's very survival, not just its progress, as in the past, may depend on it.

The significance of the Statement on "Aims, Methods and Organisation" is not that it is THE answer to the problems of a socialist strategy for Australia; it lies in the fact that it is the most serious attempt yet made in our country to elaborate a socialist strategy. It faces up to the problems in our conditions and at this time and seeks to suggest some answers and to advance some pertinent solutions. Their fuller elaboration is the collective task of all serious socialists in our country. Its success will be the turning point for the revolutionary movement.

B.T.
IF THE WORLD MANAGES TO SURVIVE beyond 1984 a year to remember will surely be that of 1968 and the events that unfolded in Paris and Prague. The dramas played out in those two cities have already been recorded and analysed in millions of words and already some of the responses to these events, in actions and reactions, give hope that the world will not only survive but be renewed.

A new contribution to this debate comes from a book entitled Socialism's Great Turning Point, by Roger Garaudy. Reactions to it within the French Communist Party and in wider sections of the left may well become part of the drama. Garaudy has been twenty-five years a member of the Central Committee of the French Communist Party and currently (at least at time of writing) is a member of its Politburo. A scholar of international repute he is best known in this country for his philosophical work and activist contribution to the development of Marxist-Christian dialogue.

When such a man writes that his book is an attempt to break the silence of years because his ideas never penetrate beyond the closed doors of leadership meetings he is summing up a dilemma of all those who see a value in and a need for revolutionary organisation but recognise the conservative brake on social and revolutionary developments that such an organisation can be if its decisions are made by a leadership consensus where centralism operates for everyone but democracy is strictly limited.

This debate is not new, it may well be as old as human organisation, it is certainly the unresolved debate of revolutionaries and it involves above all the freedom of information so that decisions may be genuinely arrived at and discipline is more from self than authoritarian imposition. The debate cannot be avoided because of Paris and Prague. Paris pointed up an almost forgotten lesson, that of the spontaneous action of masses of people which cannot be contained within one organisation and which, at times, takes even far-sighted organisation by surprise. But it also pointed to the necessity for organisation. Prague, on the other hand, seemed to spell out clearly, at least for those in Europe, that the only form of organisation which will be permitted, if one wants to avoid military intervention, is incapable of the full realisation of socialism.

Garaudy says that he does not dispute “the program, the policy or the aims of the party” but that his concern is for the right
of revolutionaries to find their own way to socialism free from foreign intervention or the necessity to accept the rule of one party. The meaning behind the events in 1968 “call into question our party’s whole policy and its conception of French socialism”. He claims that an explicit statement on these matters would not compromise the Communist Party but would remove a main obstacle to unity with other left forces.

The problem is that when a communist party or any leadership group has a monopoly over decision making and when it is in a position to direct the whole economy and to take every decision on activity within the economy right through to artistic creation then authoritarianism, dogmatic distortions and the degeneration of socialism is inevitable. In such a situation a ruling communist party becomes both anti-democratic and anti-scientific and thus becomes the brake on the development of society. The misuse of power, the illegal trials, the jailing and murders commonly called Stalinism are not “mistakes” to be admitted and forgotten. Rather “inquisition is the daughter of dogmatism” and the invasion of Czechoslovakia is the product of the former “mistakes” yet goes beyond it “by applying to an entire people and their communist party the methods used at the Moscow Trials”.

Garaudy believes that the divisions, or more correctly the crisis of communism (the labelling of people and organisations as “revisionist” and “counter-revolutionary”, the silence and passivity of many workers in countries where communist parties exercise power and the by-passing of communist parties by young revolutionary forces in some western countries), all stem from the political concepts which oppose the creation of a model of socialism different from the model which history imposed on the USSR.

In France there are numerous anti-capitalist forces, even a majority of the population, but they tend towards “impotence” and yet the majority force within the opposition is the communists. Garaudy calls the communist party “powerless” and yet says that “nothing constructive can be accomplished without it”. He believes that “constructive work can only by accomplished if the communist party is prepared for a thorough transformation”.

The initial reaction to Garaudy’s book was a condemnation by the politburo which called it, perhaps curiously, “impermissible aggression” against the USSR. Now L’Humanite has published a protest by Garaudy in which he speaks of misrepresentation of his views and even the banning of his books from sale in communist shops. An editorial note claims that to have published Garaudy’s views earlier would have meant that the discussion for the French party congress, due in February, would proceed on the basis of the
platform put forward by Garaudy and not on the collective view. The note is interesting since it contradicts part of the original condemnation. This stated that Garaudy had refused to take part in the working out of the draft theses for the congress but the note makes clear that Garaudy did submit proposals and these were received.

Whether or not the French Communist Party will tolerate Garaudy's views may soon be resolved but his contribution to the debate and the debate itself will go on. Put simply, an authoritarian revolutionary organisation may in some circumstances bring forth revolution but that revolution will be stamped with authoritarianism. In a country like France, or for that matter Australia, it will almost certainly not bring forth any revolution at all.

Until this is faced and resolved the debate will continue.

M.R.

SOCIALIST SCHOLARS' CONFERENCE: In November last three Sydney socialists (Dr. G. Hawker of the History School, University of New South Wales; Phil Sandford, former American SDS activist, now a trade union research officer; Russ Darnley, a student activist) decided to act on the idea of holding a Socialist Scholars' Conference. At present this is planned to run over 4 days in Sydney, May 1970. At the time of writing not many details are known about the Conference, however initial reports do indicate widespread interest in the proposal, mainly from academics.

Precedent for such a conference is found in the USA with the Socialist Scholars' Conference, founded in 1964 by a group of historians. Since 1965 this has been held annually, each time attracting hundreds of interested people and dealing with a diversity of topics, from Labor History to the problems involved in the creation of a radical culture. The original concept was addressed to "scholars who share a Socialist perspective"; on the matter of who should participate the planners stated that "whoever thinks he might be at home or interested will be welcome". Indications are that the Sydney group also intends to hold these general criteria. The only restriction so far made is that all papers presented at the conference "should be well thought-out and
documented, and that they should be at least partly concerned with contributing to Socialist theory”.

I think it can be said now that the conference will mainly be attended by university students and academics. But at the same time it should be pointed out that it is open to all socialists, and by definition “scholars” are not unique to academic institutions. However accepting that the attendance will mainly consist of academics, etc., does not mean that the conference is in anyway "elitist", or irrelevant to the working class movement. On the contrary it could well be a most important stage for the development of socialism in this country.

I say this in the belief that the universities occupy an important position in our society. Each year in Australia they produce some 10,000 graduates, people who in the main, as David Triesman has put it, “socially engineer the decaying capitalist structure to keep the whole nauseating apparatus from collapsing”. They become the spreaders and the perpetuators of a way of looking at the world which believes that an uncritical attitude towards society is a virtue, and that at all costs the capitalist structure must be supported.

Capitalist society cannot get on without its universities. It needs graduates for industry, and the various organs of government. It needs them for teaching the young that view of the world which leads them to the position of subservience mentioned above. As Althusser says “it is by the very nature of the knowledge it imparts to students that the bourgeoisie exerts its greatest control over them”. Therefore the universities must be seen as a major institution in society, the socialist transformation of which is an essential step in the transition to socialism.

To some extent this was realised in the sixties; the universities became the scene of student clashes with civil and university authorities. They became centres of resistance against the Vietnam war and conscription. The result of this however was to cultivate in the minds of the young activists hostile attitudes towards intellectual and theoretical work. The values of street demonstrations and the clash with the authorities were extolled. And whilst students by taking to the streets became a pressure point in society they only confronted the obvious evils of capitalism, e.g. the Vietnam war, and did so with their hearts and bodies.

This emphasis on action was infectious and permeated the universities. The cost was a real analysis of our society and the neglect of creating a body of theory and scholarship by which we can “establish institutions that can build and sustain a mass
socialist consciousness". In short, the way in which the university could be transformed into an organ for the transition to socialism was neglected.

Whilst the students neglected this task so too did those amongst their teachers who regarded themselves as socialists. Certainly there were notable exceptions; but on the whole the socialist academics were only socialists in a political sense — taking part in demonstrations, writing for left journals, speaking at meetings, engaging in Communist and Labor Party activities. On the academic scene however they were non-socialists, teaching unwillingly, if not unknowingly, the bourgeois view of the world because they had not developed a revolutionary cultural challenge to it — or could not see the links between their particular discipline and the bourgeois hegemony. Again there was the problem of what happens to those who seek openly to work as socialists in an institution where promotions can have a lot to do with whether you rock the boat or not.

Now a conference of socialist scholars such as is envisaged can be a means of changing much of this. By calling for contributions to socialist theory it may encourage socialist academics to see their disciplines in this context and thus set in process the situation Perry Anderson advocates where: "A political science capable of guiding the working class movement to final victory will only be born within a general intellectual matrix which challenges bourgeois ideology in every sector of thought and represents a decisive, hegemonic alternative to the status quo".

Related to this is the effect of such a challenge upon the undergraduates where, if it is made, they will have a real chance of ending their position of subservience both at university and later as members of the work force: instead of supporting a collapsing capitalist structure they may actually engineer its collapse.

R.J.C.
Problems of Communist History

WE ARE TODAY at the end of that historical epoch in the development of socialism which began with the collapse of the Second International in 1914 and the victory of the Bolsheviks in October 1917. This is therefore a suitable time to survey the history of the Communist Parties which were the characteristic and dominant forms of the revolutionary movement in this era. The task is difficult because Communist Party historiography has special complications, which will be considered below in connection with James Klugmann's regrettable failure to overcome them1, but also for wider reasons.

Each Communist Party was the child of the marriage of two ill-assorted partners, a national left and the October Revolution. That marriage was based both on love and convenience. For


Eric Hobsbawm is recognised as one of the foremost marxist historians. This article first appeared in New Left Review No. 54, and is reproduced here with permission of the author and the publishers.
anyone whose political memories go back no further than Khrushchev's denunciation of Stalin, or the Sino-Soviet split, it is almost impossible to conceive what the October Revolution meant to those who are now middle-aged and old. It was the first proletarian revolution, the first regime in history to set about the construction of the socialist order, the proof both of the profundity of the contradictions of capitalism, which produced wars and slumps, and the possibility—the certainty—that socialist revolution would succeed. It was the beginning of world revolution. It was the beginning of the new world. Only the naive believed that Russia was the workers' paradise, but even among the sophisticated it enjoyed the general indulgence which the left of the 1960's now gives only to revolutionary regimes in some small countries, such as Cuba and Vietnam. At the same time the decisions of revolutionaries in other countries to adopt the Bolshevik model of organisation, to subordinate themselves to a Bolshevik International (i.e. eventually to the CPSU and Stalin), was due not only to natural enthusiasm, but also to the evident failure of all alternative forms of organisation, strategy and tactics. Social democracy and anarcho-syndicalism had failed, while Lenin had succeeded. It seemed sensible to follow the recipe of success.

The element of rational calculation increasingly prevailed, after the ebbing of what had, in the years after 1917, looked like the tide of global revolution. It is, of course, almost impossible to separate it in practice from the passionate and total loyalty which individual Communists felt to their cause, which was equated with their Party, which in turn meant loyalty to the Communist International, and the USSR (i.e. Stalin). Still, whatever their private feelings, it soon became clear that separation from the Communist Party, whether by expulsion or secession, meant an end to effective revolutionary activity. Bolshevism in the Comintern period did not produce schisms and heresies of practical importance except in a few remote countries of small global significance, such as Ceylon. Those who left the Party were forgotten or ineffective, unless they rejoined the 'reformists' or went into some overtly 'bourgeois' group, in which case they were no longer of interest to revolutionaries, or unless they wrote books which might or might not become influential on the left some thirty years later. The real history of Trotskyism as a political trend in the international communist movement is posthumous. The strongest among such exiled Marxists worked quietly in isolation until times changed, the weakest broke under the strain and turned passionately anti-communist, to supply the CIA culture of the 1950's with several militants, the average retreated into the hard shell of sectarianism. The communist movement was not effectively split. Still, it paid a price for its cohesion: a substantial, sometimes an enormous, turn-
The joke about the largest party being that of the ex-Communists has a basis in fact.

The discovery that Communists had little choice about their loyalty to Stalin and the USSR was first made—though perhaps only at the highest levels of the parties—in the middle 1920's. Clear-sighted and unusually strong-minded Communist leaders like Palmiro Togliatti soon realised that they could not in the interest of their national movement, afford to oppose whoever came out on top in the CPSU, and tried to explain this to those less in touch with the Moscow scene, such as Gramsci. (Of course even a total willingness to go along with Stalin was no guarantee of political, or for residents of the USSR physical survival in the 1930's.) Under the circumstances loyalty to Moscow ceased to depend on approval of the Moscow line, but became an operational necessity. That most Communists also tried to rationalise this by proving to themselves that Moscow was right at all times is another matter, though it is relevant to the argument, because it confirmed the clear-headed minority in the belief that they would never be able to take their parties with them against Moscow. A British Communist who attended the meeting of the leadership in September 1939 which was told that the war was not, after all, supposed to be a people's anti-fascist war but just an imperialist one, recalls saying to himself: 'That's it. There's nothing to be done. An imperialist war it is.' He was right at the time. Nobody bucked Moscow successfully until Tito carried his party against Stalin in 1948—to Stalin's and a lot of other party leaders' surprise. Still, he was by then not only a leader of a party but also of a nation and a State.

There was, of course, another factor involved: internationalism. Today, when the international Communist movement has largely ceased to exist as such, it is hard to recapture the immense strength which its members drew from the consciousness of being soldiers in a single international army, operating, with whatever tactical multiformity and flexibility, a single grand strategy of world revolution. Hence the impossibility of any fundamental or long-term conflict between the interest of a national movement and the International, which was the real Party, of which the national units were no more than disciplined sections. That strength was based both on realistic argument and moral conviction. What convinced in Lenin was not so much his socio-economic analysis—after all, at a pinch something like his theory of imperialism can be derived from earlier marxist writings—but his palpable genius for organising a revolutionary party and mastering the tactics and strategy of making revolution. At the same time the Comintern was intended to, and very largely did, give the movement immunity against the terrible collapse of its ideals.
Communists, it was agreed, would never behave like international social democracy in 1914, abandoning its flag to follow the banners of nationalism, into mutual massacre. And, it must be said, they did not. There is something heroic about the British and French CPs in September 1939. Nationalism, political calculation, even common sense, pulled one way, yet they unhesitatingly chose to put the interests of the international movement first. As it happens, they were tragically and absurdly wrong. But their error, or rather that of the Soviet line of the moment, and the politically absurd assumption in Moscow that a given international situation implied the same reactions by very differently situated parties, should not lead us to ridicule the spirit of their action. This is how the socialists of Europe should have acted in 1914 and did not: carrying out the decisions of their International. This is how the Communists did act when another world war broke out. It was not their fault that the International should have told them to do something else.

The problem of those who write the history of Communist parties is therefore unusually difficult. They must recapture the unique and, among secular movements, unprecedented temper of Bolshevism, equally remote from the liberalism of most historians and the permissive and self-indulgent activism of most contemporary ultras. There is no understanding it without a grasp of that sense of total devotion which made the Party in Auschwitz make its members pay their dues in cigarettes (inconceivably precious and almost impossible to obtain in an extermination camp), which made the cadres accept the order not merely to kill Germans in occupied Paris, but first to acquire, individually, the arms to do so, and which made it virtually unthinkable for them to refuse to return to Moscow even to certain imprisonment or death. There is no understanding either the achievements or the perversions of Bolshevism without this, and both have been monumental; and certainly no understanding of the extraordinary success of Communism as a system of education for political work.

But the historians must also separate the national elements within Communist parties from the international, including those currents within national movements, which carried out the international line not because they had to, but because they were in genuine agreement with it. They must separate the genuinely international elements in Comintern policy from those which reflected only the state interests of the USSR or the tactical or other pre-occupations of Soviet internal politics. In both national and international policies, they must distinguish between those based on knowledge, ignorance or hunch, on marxist analysis (good or bad), on local tradition, the imitation of suitable or unsuitable foreign examples, or sheer trial and error, tactical insight or ideological formula. They must,
above all, make up their mind which policies were successful and sensible and which were neither, resisting the temptation to dismiss the Comintern en bloc as a failure or a Russian puppet show.

These problems are particularly difficult for the historian of the British CP because, except for a few brief periods, they appear to be so unimportant in this country. The party was both entirely loyal to Moscow, entirely unwilling to involve itself in Russian or international controversies, and an unquestioned chip off the native working class block. Its path was not littered with lost or expelled leaders, heresies and deviations. Admittedly it enjoyed the advantage of smallness, which meant that the International did not expect the spectacular results which put such a strain on, say, the German party, and of operating in a country which, even on the most cursory inspection, was unlike most of Europe and the other continents. Being the child, not of a political split in social-democracy, but of the unification of the various groups of the extreme left, which had always operated to some extent outside the Labor Party, it could not be plausibly regarded as an alternative mass party to Labor, at least an immediate alternative. Hence it was left free—indeed it was generally encouraged—to pursue the tasks to which militant British leftwingers would have devoted themselves anyway, and because they were Communists, to do so with unusual self-abnegation and efficiency. Indeed initially Lenin was chiefly concerned to discourage the sectarianism and hostility to Labor, to which the native ultra-Left was spontaneously drawn. The periods when the international line went against the grain of the national leftwing strategy and tactics (as in 1928-34 and 1939-41) stand out as anomalies in the history of British Communism, just because there was so obviously—as there was not in all other countries—such a strategy. So long as there was no realistic prospect of revolution, there was only one TUC and the Labor Party was the only—and still growing—party likely to win the support of the politically conscious workers on a national scale, in practice there was only one realistically conceivable road of socialist advance. The disarray of the Left today (inside and outside the Labor Party) is due largely to the fact that these things can no longer be taken for granted and that there are no generally accepted alternative strategies.

Nevertheless, this apparent simplicity of the British communists' situation conceals a number of questions. In the first place, what exactly did the International expect of the British, other than that they should turn themselves into a proper Communist Party, and—from a not entirely certain date—that they should assist the communist movements in the Empire? What precisely was the role of Britain in its general strategy and how did it change? This is by
no means clear from the existing historical literature, which is admittedly (apart from Macfarlane's book) not of high quality. 2

In the second place, why was the impact of the CP in the 1920's so modest, even by unexacting standards? Its membership was tiny and fluctuating, its successes the reflection partly of the radical and militant mood of the Labor movement, partly of the fact that communists still operated largely within the Labor Party or at least with its local support. Not until the 1930's did the CP become, in spite of its modest but growing membership, its electoral weakness and the systematic hostility of the Labor leadership, the effective national left.

Thirdly, what was the base of communist support? Why did it fail, again before the 1930's, to attract any significant body of support among intellectuals, and rapidly shed most of the relatively few it attracted (mostly from the ex-Fabian and Guild Socialist Left)? What was the nature of its unusually strong influence — though not necessarily membership — in Scotland and Wales? What happened in the 1930's to turn the party into what it had not previously been, a body of factory militants?

And, of course, there are all the questions which will inevitably be asked about the rightness or wrongness of the party's changing line, and more fundamentally, of this particular type of organisation in the context of inter-war and post-1945 Britain.

James Klugmann has not seriously tackled any of them. This extremely able and lucid man is clearly capable of writing a satisfactory history of the Communist Party, and where he feels unconstrained, he does so. Thus he provides the best and clearest account of the formation of the party at present available. Unfortunately he is paralysed by the impossibility of being both a good historian and a loyal functionary. The only way yet discovered to write a public "official" history of any organisation is to hand the material over to one or more professional historians who are sufficiently in sympathy not to do a hatchet job, sufficiently uninvolved not to mind opening cupboards for fear of possible skeletons, and who can, if the worst come to the worst, be officially disavowed. That is, essentially, what the British government did with the official history of the Second World War, and the result has been that Webster and Frankland were able to produce a history of the air war which destroys many familiar myths and treads on many service and political toes, but is both scholarly and useful — not least to anyone who wishes to judge or plan strategy. The Italian CP is the only one which has so far chosen this sensible, but to most politicians almost unthinkable, course. Paolo Spriano has therefore

been able to write a debatable, but serious and scholarly work. James Klugmann has been able to do neither. He has merely used his considerable gifts to avoid writing a disreputable one.

In doing so he has, I am afraid, wasted much of his time. What, after all, is the use of spending ten years on the sources — including those in Moscow — when the only precise references to contemporary unpublished CP sources — give or take one or two — appear to number seven and the only references even to printed Communist International sources (including Inprecorr) number less than a dozen in a volume of 370 pages. The rest are substantially references to the published reports, pamphlets and especially periodicals of the CP in this period. In 1921-2 the Presidium of the Comintern discussed Britain 13 times — more often than any country other than the French, Italian, Hungarian and German parties. One would not have known it from Klugmann's book, whose index lacks all reference to Zinoviev (except in connection with the forged letter bearing his name), Borodin, Petrovsky-Bennet, or, for that matter, so purely British a field of party activity as the Labor Research Department.

An adequate history of the CP cannot be written by systematically avoiding or fudging genuinely controversial issues and matter likely to be regarded as indiscreet or bad public relations within the organisation. It cannot even be offset by describing and documenting, more fully than ever before, the activities of the militants. It is interesting to have 160 or so pages on the party's work from 1920 to 1923, but the basic fact about this period is that recorded in Zinoviev's Report to the 4th World Congress at the end of 1922, namely that "In no other country, perhaps, does the communist movement make such slow progress", and this fact is not really faced. Even the popular contemporary explanation that this was due to mass unemployment is not seriously discussed. In brief, Klugmann has done some justice to the devoted and often forgotten militants who served the British working class as best they knew how. He has written a textbook for their successors in party schools, with all the clarity and ability which have made his high reputation as a teacher in such courses. He has provided a fair amount of new information, some of which will only be recognised by the very expert at deciphering careful formulations, and little of which — on important matters — is documented.

But he has neither written a satisfactory history of the CP nor of the role of the CP in British politics. And if he applies the same methods to volume 2, where the "controversial issues" become less easily avoidable, he will produce an even more disappointing book.

JUDGES IN ADVANCED CAPITALIST COUNTRIES are men of a conservative disposition, in regard to all the major economic, social and political arrangements of their societies. They have the same outlook as the ruling class which owes its position to the private ownership of property. The law in advanced capitalist societies defends capitalist relations of production and the political and social conditions which are based on them.

In Britain, at the beginning of the twentieth century, the constitutional lawyer A. V. Dicey noted that judges were for the most part...
part men of a conservative disposition.\textsuperscript{1} Several decades later Harold Laski observed that British judges were recruited from the ranks of successful lawyers; and, overwhelmingly, our system makes the successful lawyer a man who has spent the major part of his life serving the interests of property. He comes, therefore, almost unconsciously, to accept the assumptions of the economic system in being, and to adopt, without examination, the legal doctrines evolved for the protection of those assumptions.\textsuperscript{2}

The same holds true for Australia. The distinguished biographer of Chifley has written that "the law is a conservative profession, and those who attain in their maturity eminence in its practice overwhelmingly tend to be conservative to a point where they are rarely moved to question (but usually find it second nature to buttress) the existing social and economic order."\textsuperscript{3} Barristers who are appointed judges have spent their careers in circumstances of personal affluence and have made their money by attending to the affairs of affluent people. While at the Bar, most of them have established close personal relations with leaders of the business community, and they have often been company directors or retained by companies as advisers.\textsuperscript{4} Moreover, not a few have actively participated in anti-Labor politics.\textsuperscript{5}

Judges, however, do not simply mirror the interests of the ruling class. It would be "a grievous over-simplification . . . to suggest that the law is a direct, unmitigated expression of capitalist interests".\textsuperscript{6} The relation between law and the economic and social conditions which gave rise to it was analysed by Engels in a letter to Conrad Schmidt in 1890:

In a modern state, law must not only correspond to the general economic condition and be its expression, but must also be an internally coherent expression which does not, owing to inner contradictions, reduce itself to naught. And in order to achieve this, the faithful reflection of economic conditions suffers increasingly. All the more so the more rarely it happens that a code of law is the blunt, unmitigated, unadulterated expression of the domination of a class — this in itself would offend the 'conception of right'. Even in the Code Napoleon the pure consistent conception of right held by the revolutionary bourgeoisie of 1792-96 is already adulter-

\begin{itemize}
\item L. F. Crisp, \textit{Australian National Government} (Melbourne: Longmans, 1965), p. 64.
\end{itemize}
ated in many ways, and in so far as it is embodied there, has daily to undergo all sorts of attenuations owing to the rising power of the proletariat. . . . Thus to a great extent the course of the 'development of right' consists only, first, in the attempt to do away with the contradictions arising from the direct translation of economic relations into legal principles, and to establish a harmonious system of law, and then in the repeated breaches made in this system by the influence and compulsion of further economic development, which involves it in further contradictions. (I am speaking here for the moment only of civil law.)

While a marxist analysis of the role of the judiciary in capitalist societies should neither underestimate the strength of the intellectual traditions of the law nor ignore the complexity of the interrelations between political and judicial activity, it is clear that the judiciary has no more been 'above' the conflicts of capitalist society than any other part of the state system. Judges have been deeply involved in these conflicts; and of all classes it is certainly the dominant class which has had least to complain about the nature and directions of that involvement.

II

Reformist governments in federal political systems have suffered frequently at the hands of those judicial bodies entrusted with the task of interpreting the constitution. The conservative majority on the United States Supreme Court dealt several devastating blows to Roosevelt's New Deal legislation in the period up to 1937, while the High Court of Australia declared invalid a number of important measures introduced by the Curtin and Chifley governments such as a national health scheme, a government monopoly of internal air services and nationalisation of the private banks. It is a widespread myth that interpretation of a constitution involves nothing more than a mechanical measuring of a statute against the fundamental document. Sir Robert Menzies has noted that there is "no question" that constitutional law is "only half law and half philosophy — political philosophy". Judges involved in constitutional cases are not 'law-vending' machines, and they cannot fail to be influenced by their political philosophy or view of the world. In leading constitutional issues, to quote the distinguished biographer of Chifley, "some advantage, however intangible, is likely to accrue to the side whose case approaches closer to the predominant political philosophy in most minds along the Bench."

An examination of appointments to the High Court of Australia over the last few decades illustrates Sawer's point that "parties of the right habitually appoint social conservatives to such positions, but need make no parade of it since most eminent lawyers are social conservatives". 11 Sir John Latham, Chief Justice 1935-52, was a former anti-Labor Deputy Prime Minister. His successor, Sir Owen Dixon, held conservative political assumptions. 12 The present Chief Justice, Sir Garfield Barwick, was previously Minister for External Affairs in the Menzies government. Apart from Barwick, three other members of the present Court were at one time involved in anti-Labor politics. Sir Victor Windeyer was an unsuccessful candidate for Liberal Party pre-selection for the N.S.W. Senate team at the 1949 Federal election. Sir William Owen was an unsuccessful candidate for United Australia Party pre-selection for the seat of Vaucluse at the N.S.W. State election in 1932. Sir Douglas Menzies was once an active member of the Young Nationalists and the Liberal Party in Victoria.

Any Left government seriously intent upon instituting fundamental socio-economic change would be concerned about the composition of the High Court. In the light of the setbacks in constitutional issues experienced by Federal Labor governments, what has been their record regarding appointments during their periods in office? Although constitutionally entitled to increase without upper limit the membership of the High Court, they have never considered following the footsteps of Roosevelt who threatened to enlarge the conservative-dominated U.S. Supreme Court in 1937. They could, of course, choose Labor-inclined lawyers to fill vacancies as they occur, but this type of deliberate choice would produce howls of "packing the Bench", partly because such lawyers are not typical among leaders of the Bar. Consequently, Labor governments have generally leant over backwards for fear of being accused of "packing the Bench". 13 As we have seen, it is a fear from which the anti-Labor parties are free.

Of the twenty-five judges appointed to the High Court since Federation, seven were selected by Labor governments and of

13. Federal and State Labor Governments have been less reluctant to appoint Labor-inclined men to the various arbitration courts. The special role of "Labor judges" in the arbitration system is outside the scope of this article, but see Ralph Gibson, "The Arbitration Machine", *Communist Review*, June 1960; and Playford, "Judges and Politics in Australia".
these one resigned without sitting. In 1913, when the Fisher government had to appoint three judges, W. M. Hughes, the Attorney General,
did not even try to find a Labor man; all he wanted was someone not too hopelessly State-right in outlook. He got a mediocrity (Powers), a State-righter (Gavan Duffy) and his third choice, A. B. Piddington — an able and civilized man who would have made a much better judge than Gavan Duffy — was terrified into immediate resignation by the screams of rage which his appointment elicited from the reactionary Melbourne and Sydney Bars. Hughes then appointed the non-political, and constitutionally colourless, Rich from the N.S.W. Supreme Court. 14

Sir Charles Powers had once been a conservative Cabinet Minister in Queensland, while Sir George Rich refrained from retiring from the High Court until his 87th birthday in May 1950, partly because he did not want the Chifley government and in particular its Attorney-General, Dr. Evatt, to be in a position to replace him. 15

In 1930 Evatt, a recent N.S.W. State Labor parliamentarian, and Mr. E. (later Sir Edward) McTiernan, a Federal Labor parliamentarian, were appointed to the High Court by the Scullin Labor government which had already had Court setbacks when endeavoring to carry out industrial arbitration policy and which could expect constitutional difficulties with its economic policy. There was an immediate cry of “packing the Bench” from conservative quarters. The Sydney Morning Herald thundered that “these are political appointments, and politics should have nothing to do with judicial office”. 16 It should be noted that the two appointments were made by Cabinet during the absence overseas, and against the strong opposition, of Scullin and the Attorney-General, Mr. Frank Brennan. Scullin even sent a message from the ship threatening to resign but his threat did not reach Canberra until after the decision had been taken. 17 Both Evatt and McTiernan went on to distinguished judicial careers. However, noted a distinguished constitutional lawyer, the “general social evaluations resulting from their Labor backgrounds were evident in some marginal cases”. 18


15. Sawer, Australian Federalism in the Courts, pp. 60-61.


Only one High Court vacancy came up during the tenure of office of the Curtin and Chifley governments. Sawer later wrote that there were at least two barristers of high standing whose legal and political outlook was a good deal more radical than that of any member of the Bench as it then stood. However the government took

the safe, timorous course of appointing Sir William Webb of the Queensland Supreme Court . . . an able and respected lawyer but neither outstandingly brilliant nor in the least likely to originate new constitutional ideas.19

Elsewhere, Sawer noted that Webb had been accused of pro-Labor sympathies by members of the anti-Labor parties after his appointment as Chairman of a Federal Industrial Relations Council in 1942, but they “never showed in his judgments”.20 One newspaper report stated that Webb had been chosen the fill the High Court vacancy in preference to Mr. J. V. (later Sir John) Barry, KC, a distinguished lawyer who had contested a seat for Labor at the 1943 Federal election and who was favored by the leftwing of the ALP.21 Immediately after his retirement from the High Court in 1958 Webb was appointed chairman of directors of Australian Consolidated Press Ltd., one of the unsuccessful applicant companies for a Brisbane TV licence, and he later became chairman of directors of Electric Power Transmission Pty. Ltd., the largest firm engaged in erecting steel towers for electricity commissions in Australia.22

The record of the postwar Attlee Labor government in Britain (1945-51) was no better. Lord Balogh has noted that not only did Attlee appoint “the most obscurantist Archbishop in modern British history” (Fisher) but also “the most reactionary Lord Chief Justice” (Goddard).23 A prominent Labor barrister wrote of the High Court Bench in Britain:

The post-war Labour Governments leaned over backwards to avoid giving their supporters judicial appointments. As a result, the present-day Bench is, with one possible exception, the exclusive province of gentlemen who are politically well to the right of the Conservative Party.24

22. Playford, “Judges for Hire”.
Lord Attlee himself was typically untroubled about Labor's failure to appoint Labor-inclined lawyers to the judiciary:

I was responsible for a large number of appointments to the judiciary and of promotions. Of these the only ones whose political views I know were Lord Somervell and Lord Reid, Conservatives, and Lord Birkett, a Liberal.25

Two years after British Labor lost executive power, an article in The Solicitors' Journal noted approvingly that "in the matter of its judicial appointments the late Government has a particularly happy record; few of its choices had even so much as a slight Left incline while Lord Reid was selected from the ranks of its opponents".26 But at least British Labor did not have to contend with a written Constitution.

III

Australian Labor leaders and Fabian constitutional lawyers certainly recognise the limits placed on reforms by the High Court as currently constituted, but they lack the determination to overcome the problem. The late Professor Ross Anderson of the University of Queensland once suggested that in appointing lawyers to the High Court a Federal Labor government would do well to appoint men who are sympathetic to the socialist idea, or at least men who fully understand the nature of the political and social forces at work in the constitutional field. However, he continued:

This is not to advocate 'stacking' the High Court with political supporters of the Government. Any proposal of that kind should be strongly resisted, because all parties can play at that game, and it would be the quickest way to undermine public confidence in the Court, the prestige of which is one of the basic components of our way of life.27

Whitlam also realises that over the last few decades different High Court decisions could have been given by judges of equal competence and integrity, and that the A.L.P. has "to devise policies which will secure not only the approval of electors but also the approval of judges".28 But his solution would appear not to be changing the composition or size of the High Court but rather to emasculate still further the already weak socialist component of the objectives of the Labor Party.

WHEN IN SEPTEMBER, 1963, the Congress of the Australian Council of Trade Unions unanimously adopted its present policy statement on the Aborigines, it moved far forward from many of the earlier union and labor movement attitudes on racial purity and discrimination on the basis of color of skin and blood. The September, 1963, declaration read:

Congress declares that it is the natural right of the Aboriginal people to enjoy a social and legal equality with other Australians.

Aboriginal people while forming a part of the Australian population are at the same time distinct viable national minorities entitled to special facilities for self-improvement.

We note that legal equality and status is being denied under the Commonwealth Constitution . . .

Congress calls on all State Governments that have not done so to grant full rights to all Aborigines.

Congress demands that State and Federal government attitudes and actions affecting our indigenous people be in accordance with the UNO Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Convention 107 of the ILO.

John Baker is secretary of the Union of Postal Clerks and Telegraphists, publicity officer of the Australian Council of Salaried and Professional Associations and a member of the executive of the Federal Council for the Advancement of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders.
The policy declaration then moved on to specify the requirements of such a program in land ownership, education, health, equality under industrial acts and many other fields of living and general social standards. Before analysing what precisely this declaration meant, we have to recognise the kind of evolution through which union and labor movement views had passed in the preceding 200 years to reach their advanced views of 1963-69.

The early labor movement views, particularly in Queensland, where they had a clear articulation by William Lane in The Worker and by others, were marked by phobias about Chinese and an almost complete indifference to the treatment and fate of the Outer Islanders, whom they termed Kanakas. The Aborigines, as a form of lesser slave labor, at the time, didn't attract the same virulent racist denunciations that the Chinese, Indians and black Kanakas received, but the consensus of the time included them, except where they may have been boxers, cricketers or footballers.

But even in 1904, Federal Labor Leader J. C. Watson, was asking in the House of Representatives “whether we would desire that our sisters or our brothers should be married into one of these races to which we object”. How far was he from the Tasmanian magistrate, who last year denounced a young conscientious objector for not agreeing to go “up north” to fight the yellow hordes before they came down here and, as he forecast, “raped the lad’s mother in her bed?” And the Labor Party platform in 1905 placed high on its charter the object “the cultivation of an Australian sentiment based on maintenance of racial purity.”*

What have been the obstacles to Australians in this century achieving more humane, enlightened and internationalist attitudes to questions of race, colour and the indigenous black people of the Southern Hemisphere? Invaders, governors, soldiers, convicts and the settlers were not confronted here with the old, sophisticated and relatively advanced economic, political and cultural systems of Africa and South America during their invasions. There was no exchange of ambassadors between Western Australia and Britain or Holland, as there was between Britain and some of the West African newly “discovered” states. In Australia, the first invaders didn't meet the challenge that the Dutch-British forces met when pushing North from Cape Town and being confronted with the armies of the Zulu Nation driving South against them. The white invaders' reactions when seeing Australia and the Aborigines were too often like those of William Dampier 300 years ago when stepping on to the shores of Western Australia: “The Inhabitants of this Country are the miserablest People in the world. The Hodmadods of Monomatapa, though a nasty People, yet for wealth are Gentlemen to these. . . . Setting aside their human shape, they differ but little from Brutes. . . .”

Moving forward from Dampier, the 1956 Select Committee of the Western Australian Parliament gave almost a paraphrase of Dampier to White Australians receiving it without a protest. The Report saw the Aborigines' conditions and style of life as about as miserable, fly-blown,
Between 1905 and 1965, when the ACTU Congress reaffirmed the rights of the Aboriginal people as a viable national minority distinct from other Australians, there were many debates and battles lost by unions and Labor Party members against the prevailing views on race and color and the main phobia — The White Australia Policy. But even in 1946, when at the NSW Conference of the Australian Labor Party, I opposed the vicious racist and white-supremacist declaration moved on behalf of the Executive by Australian Workers Union General Secretary Dougherty, my own union's federal officials, noting the overwhelming vote for Delegate Dougherty's resolution, brought charges which would have had me dismissed from the Commonwealth Public Service.

Don't let us underestimate the racism and color bias built up over a century of organised hatred of Chinese, Japanese, Indians, Indonesians, Islanders and Aborigines by the publicists and politicians, who have made skin color and racial differences some of their main weapons. From a newspaper owner a couple of years ago calling for the shooting of so many hundred American blacks to teach all blacks a lesson, across to the Normanton father advertising

dirty, poor, under-nourished and hopeless as Dampier had. The Committee conveniently overlooked the planned and unplanned destruction of the Aborigines' environment and organisation and ignored the overt and covert massacres. The Committee could never have read John Boyle O'Reilly's poetic account of the thousand imprisoned, starved and weakened Aborigines on Rottnest Island killed in their losing battle with the two hundred savage dogs made hungry by the settlers' committee and guards. And Commonwealth officials since Federation have only, in the main, echoed the consensus from the Select Committee of 1956 back to Dampier. A folk-song of 50 years after settlement commenced at the Swan River reflected the Dampier spirit —

And I've been out exploring in search of a run
With my packhorse and pistol, my compass and gun —
We feasted delicious, ha, ha, ha, ha,
And shot blackfellows vicious, ha, ha, ha, ha.

In other songs on the despised Aborigines, the song-writers seemed to have imbibed the full spirit of Dampier and, so they should have, for his first impressions of Australia became the standard picture presented to the Australian schoolboy:

"I . . . met a nigger family
Tramping on the way;
The meanest, poorest wretches
I have seen in W.A."

"Black Alice, so dusky and dark,
The Warrego gin, with the straw on her chin,
And teeth like a Moreton Bay shark."

"Your father he was black
And the gabbas called him Jack;
So remember you're an abo."

AUSTRALIAN LEFT REVIEW—FEB.-MARCH, 1970

25
his preference for the shooting of his daughter to her existence in equality with Australian blacks, and across again to the racist bias that has been appearing in one of the Perth daily papers since the Laverton shooting, we can still find some of the same virulent race and color bias that the Queensland press of business, some unions, tory party and Labor groups, showed last century and still in some parts, practise openly today.

Australians may have passed the 1967 Referendum overwhelmingly, but the national attitudes are, at best, tolerance of many forms of discrimination, and an indifference to the needs for equality and small interest in the rights of a viable, distinct, national minority with all that these words mean. Nevertheless, the ACTU policies of 1963 and 1965 represent a tremendous advance by unions and union attitudes compared with the attitudes of the establishment — the business, government and public service bureaucracies. Their attitudes to the Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders and to other nations, races and people in and around Australia have not progressed far IF THEIR DEEDS MEAN ANYTHING. It is still more important to play cricket and football with the South African white racists than to adopt the almost unanimous views of the world against the South Africans in the Olympic Federation.

Generally, it is the nature of unions and union councils to move further, earlier and with somewhat more determination than either the political parties or the general community. But today the unions are being challenged by the Aborigines themselves and by the general policies of the international trade union movement, where black, white, brown and purple people have to sit down in some measure of equality and unity. "Act now!" is their demand.

What then do the declarations on "The Aboriginal People of Australia enjoy(ing) a social and legal equality" mean? They mean certainly a complete absence of discrimination of any kind and they mean white society and white institutions of power and government clearing away discrimination and bias from attitudes, practice and the culture of white Australia. The declarations say "enjoy". That doesn't mean that Aborigines should be told to get their rights the hard way, like unions and others have to. It means nothing less than rights being there to be enjoyed freely like the air of an unpolluted environment. The obligation is on white society to ensure that Aborigines know what is available to them and how they can acquire and enjoy those rights.

When we come to the key statement in the declarations of the trade union movement — "Aboriginal people ... are at the same time distinct, viable, national minorities" what does this mean? They are distinct and discernible and cannot be swept under the
carpet as the framers of the Commonwealth Constitution thought would be the case. Viable means in this context "practicable", in the sense that it is quite practicable to exist as a minority. Viable means "able to live in particular circumstances" and this the Aborigines have demonstrated over 20,000 years. It means capable of maintaining a separate existence. The description of Aborigines as a national minority means that they are a separate and distinct nation and that they are a national minority within the white Australia majority. The majority people which cause a national minority to die out by any one of the means of mass destruction used through history are guilty of genocide — the mass murder of a national group or nation.

We have the challenge from Lord Bertrand Russell that Australia's attitude to the Aborigines is the other side of the penny to its attitude to the killing of people in Vietnam; they are both genocide. Trade union policy is that Aborigines must be preserved and helped to persist within Australia as a distinct, discernible, viable, independent, national minority.

But what of the Aborigines where they are not a minority within a given area? What of the Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders, and the northern "half" where the Aborigines are the majority people? They should be treated as having over-riding rights to land, mineral wealth and their tribal and national laws should have precedence over those of the white majority — nothing less than that the law makers of Arnhem Land, the Pitjantjara country, Moe Island or any other such area should have the role of paramount law makers and those of Canberra and the State Parliaments should be secondary to the law makers of Yirrkala within Yirrkala, for example.

It is one thing for union congresses to lay down and reaffirm such declarations, but another thing for unions to take them up and try to enforce them. And here we come to the need for unity between organisations in which there is already black, national, independent, viable authority being exercised, and those which agree with those principles but are predominately organisations of white society. One must activise the other, one must reinforce the decisions of the other. There has to be unity of purpose and solidarity.

But the areas where struggles are generated and should be generated in order to achieve progress are not only in the organisations of Aboriginal authority and power, combined with supporting organisations where the authority may be that of unionists or churchmen and the Federal and State Governments. There is also the area between the defaulting Governments of white authority
and power, and world public opinion. The force of world opinion is being exercised continually in the area of Papua-New Guinea, Fiji, Western Samoa and other areas of Oceania. Its importance for the African States is one of the remarkable developments of the 1960's. Now it should be openly, vigorously and consistently invoked in the case of Australia and its attitudes to Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders.

With the assistance of friendly organisations of white authority such as the unions and churches, organisations of the Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders should now move their fights, also, onto the world scene. Moved onto the world scene as freely as the international mining consortiums are moving across seas to penetrate the reserves, sacred grounds and tribal lands of the Aborigines.

The acceptance of the Aborigines by the trade union movement as separate, distinct, viable, national minorities places the imprimatur of more than two million unionists on the drive nationally and internationally to realise everything contained in that policy declaration. That goes much further than even the declaration on land rights, it goes to the rights of a people as a nation and as a national minority which has the right to end the discrimination against itself as a national minority. That is, as I understand it, Australian trade union policy in the 1960's.

We should work to ensure that it is implemented in the 1970's. Future meetings of the Federal Executive of FCAATSI will turn to this problem in the light of today's declarations on power. Aboriginal Power! In spite of shortcomings in the implementation of others' programmes, the Rights and Advancement Movement should feel satisfaction that the largest mass organisations of white society — the unions — have declared in favour of their main power, rights and cultural demands. Union Power and Aboriginal Power should be united to ensure that the declarations are implemented in the 1970's.
Statements on Aboriginal Autonomy

Recently Aboriginal advancement organisations have issued statements on Aboriginal autonomy. We print below statements by the Federal Council for Advancement of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders (FCAATSI), the Western Australian Aboriginal Association and the Aborigines Advancement League (Victoria).

FCAATSI

1 The Federal Council for the Advancement of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders welcomes the response by the Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders, in many parts of Australia, to the call for re-assertion of their rights to land, and suggests that they redouble their efforts, and at every point, seek funds from the Federal and State Governments for the necessary financial assistance to proposed pastoral, mining, fishing and industrial undertakings organised and owned by Aboriginal People.

2 The Council points out, also, that the appropriation of all Australian lands by Crown, States and the Commonwealth from its Aboriginal occupants was an act, that cannot now and for the future be justified morally or legally in the face of natural and present international law. The rights of Aboriginal people everywhere must be asserted against Governments, that are still expropriating Aboriginal occupants of lands, for their use by overseas mining and pastoral companies, and for their use and ownership by private firms and persons in Australia.

3 The most glaring example of such acts is now the continuing expropriation of Aborigines in the Northern Territory, where this proceeds under the authority of the Commonwealth.

4 We affirm that the future autonomy of the Northern Territory and other areas, and the moral and legal rights to its lands and natural resources by the Aboriginal people, within the Northern Territory, should be basic policies of FCAATSI, and the Aboriginal People in the N.T. should be moving steadily towards autonomy (self-government) and ownership of lands and resources (where Aborigines desire ownership of tribal lands), similar to that which has proceeded or is proceeding in Papua-New Guinea, Western Samoa, Nauru, Fiji, and elsewhere in the Pacific-Oceania areas.
WESTERN AUSTRALIAN ABORIGINAL ASSOCIATION

The Aboriginal people seeks:

(a) Acknowledgment by the Commonwealth Government of the validity of the Aboriginal people’s claim to ownership of the Australian continent.

(b) An agreement by negotiation for signature by the Commonwealth Government and State Aboriginal Representatives making Commonwealth Government’s right to govern Australia conditional on the grant of an annual allocation of Commonwealth revenue adequate for speediest fulfilment of needs for advancement of Aborigines.

(c) Compensation by way of an agreement to be formulated setting down the overall period and amount of finance to be made available annually for the economic, social and political development of the Australian Aborigines.

(d) An agreement in respect of the establishment of a National Aboriginal Trust Office and its subsequent conversion after a period of twenty to twenty-five years or so, into an independent National Aboriginal Trust Organisation administered by Aborigines.

Basis:

Australia has not as yet made any money available for the exclusive use of the Aboriginal people as a form of compensation for dispossession and it is now up to the Commonwealth Government to remedy this omission.

Morally, Australia has committed robbery, violence and murder in order to confiscate and annex this island continent and she will stand charged with unlawful possession of property stolen from the original inhabitants until such time as she is prepared to sign such an agreement and to carry out the terms of that agreement satisfactorily.

This claim is submitted on behalf of Aborigines throughout Australia.

ABORIGINES ADVANCEMENT LEAGUE (VICTORIA)

TO USE THE WORDS of Jean-Paul Sartre, “Not so very long ago, the earth numbered two thousand million inhabitants: five hundred million men, and one thousand five hundred million natives.”

That is white power.
Since the end of World War II, many of the colored peoples who lived under white colonial rule have gained their independence and colored minorities in multi-racial nations are claiming the right to determine the course of their own affairs in contradiction to the inferior state under which they had lived.

That is black power.

Black power is not one single style of action. It does not necessarily mean violence or black supremacy, although in some expressions it has used violence and sought black supremacy. Those expressions have gained publicity because of their dramatic nature.

Black power also means what Dr. Barrie Pittock has described, as follows: “The Black Power idea in essence is that black people are more likely to achieve freedom and justice for themselves by working together as a group, pursuing their goals by the same processes of democratic action as any other common-interest pressure group such as returned servicemen, or chambers of commerce. Up to this point Black Power is hardly controversial, and the idea, whether known by that name or not, is widely accepted amongst Aborigines who are active in their own cause.”

In fact, several expressions of that kind of black power can be seen, in which Victorian Aborigines are involved. The take-over of the Easter conference of the Federal Council for the Advancement of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders by the Aboriginal delegates was one. The Victorian Aboriginal Tribal Council is another. The United Council of Aboriginal Women is another.

The Aborigines Advancement League supports the principle of black power, without necessarily condoning all the ways by which it expresses itself in various parts of the world, or indeed, in Australia.

It is inevitable and healthy that there will be differences in the ways Aboriginal people understand black power and in the methods which they are prepared to use to obtain their ends. The League is able to provide a forum where all views can be discussed.

The League exists for the benefit of Aboriginal people. Its Aboriginal members are in a position to tell the League what it should be and do to best serve the interests of the Aboriginal people. Its non-Aboriginal members will stand back while those decisions are being made, and will work to put them into effect in collaboration with the Aboriginal members.
COMMENT ON OSMOND

A RECENT ARTICLE by Warren Osmond (ALR 6, 1969), dealing with the student radical movement in transition from the 'sixties to the 'seventies, poses the movement’s problem as, “what is consciousness and how is it changed?” (p. 51; author’s italics). The article suggests, with evidence, the need for a “mass line” approach to replace the original, outmoded “vanguard” / “confrontation” strategy. Two principal tactical changes are sketched as possible embodiments of the changed strategic perspective:

1 The seeking-out of felt needs (in this case, of students) as the basis for strategic demands.
2 The establishment of new, decentralised, individual modes of communication, to permit real dialogue and genuine understanding as necessary parts of the process of change.

I propose to make a few tentative comments on these ideas. The reader is urged to study Osmond’s article in full, for in summarising I have not done justice to the strategic argument he presents. My comments will be made on the article itself, not on the above summary.

Osmond, in discussing the “felt needs” concept, has taken care to state that this is “far from being a capitulation to some form of reformism” (p. 53). He goes on to refer to the attempt (in previous strategies) “to force changes in the students’ whole structure of needs, implying a massive jump from being a “bourgeois” student to being a “revolutionary” student. I believe he has two linked reasons for rejecting the latter strategy: (a) it treats students “as objects to be radicalised” (p. 52) — which is implicit in the notion of forcing changes; (b) because of this, it doesn’t work very well — students are “alienated by the radicals”, etc. I agree with these claims, and with the rejection of vanguardism.

However,

(a) The article does not explain precisely how the reformist trap is to be avoided. Thus the vital link between strategy and tactics remains to be elaborated.
(b) The discussion and summary (pp. 53-4) very strongly imply that we must reject not only the forcing of “changes in the whole structure of needs”, but also the whole notion of this kind of change, however it is attempted. (See especially point 6 of the summary.) This amounts to a perfect formula for reformism.

I shall elaborate on these two difficulties in turn.

(a) An excellent discussion of the “reform and revolution” problem is provided by André Gorz’s essay of that title (Socialist Register 1968; SDA reprint, Adelaide, 1969). Gorz states:

“In practice, what distinguishes a socialist strategy of reforms . . .
is less each of the reforms proposed... than: 1, the presence... of organic ties between the various reforms; 2, the rhythm and modalities of their initiation; 3, the presence... of a will to profit by the collapse in the balance provoked by the first reforming actions...

(The "socialist strategy of reforms" is Gorz's term for a revolutionary strategy in the pluralist, neo-capitalist context where, as he argues, a "gradual and cumulative" set of changes must initiate the revolutionary process. I shall observe here that the applicability of these principles to the present problem may be disputed.) Applying Gorz's analysis to Osmond's strategy, we may note that "felt needs", in themselves,

(i) are independent,

(ii) may very easily be accommodated by the existing structure (or even anticipated by it),

(iii) neither contain nor provoke a change in consciousness, but at best could only be used by radicals to reduce the hostility of the mass of students.

Thus we must go beyond the insistence upon felt needs as a basis for strategy.

(b) The very essence of a revolutionary strategy is that it reflects, embodies and creates, organically, a change in the entire structure of needs. Thus in the university context, one of the unfelt (by most students) needs is the creation of an intellectual, rather than crudely "professional", university. Surely the changing of consciousness must involve the creation, in the broad mass of students, of precisely this need. One could give other examples to illustrate the point that the very purpose of focusing upon felt needs is to change them, by permitting for (in this case) students the new possibility — the added option — of developing individually the inner logic of present needs, newly illuminated by a socialist framework.

It is implicit in the existing structure of felt needs that students are dealt with as objects by the power structure (in the lecture room, tutorial class, laboratory, and supremely in the exam), yet have not attained awareness of this. Osmond correctly points out that a simple vanguard/confrontation approach adopts this very objectification. Indeed, what is meant by the concept of "the radicals alienating the others" is that the "others" are treated doubly as objects — by the system and by the radicals — but only perceive the process as it is carried out by the radicals. Clearly this only puts barriers in the way of developing the students' awareness that the system objectifies them, I agree with Osmond that this process has taken place, and that it must cease. But it must cease for a purpose — namely, the development of awareness, on the part of students, of their relations with the system. Such an awareness will assuredly not follow automatically upon the return to felt needs. Thus the change of direction proposed by Osmond is timely and correct, but the trajectory of his strategy is too short: felt needs are only worth returning to in order to be transcended.

In experiencing individually the transformation of their felt needs, students will for the first time perceive themselves, not dimly but clearly, coherently, consciously, as potential subjects rather than objects — i.e., as the "natural" controllers of their own destinies. Indeed, this is precisely what the awareness of objectification means — the two perceptions are opposite sides of the same coin, they cannot exist without each other. And this "coin" is, of course, the very contradiction (namely, between what is and what might be) which, being capable of
resolution only through struggle, provides the “subjective” driving force for revolutionary change. This is the significance of consciousness and its mode of relation to “objective” conditions. Consciousness, then, does not emerge unless the existing needs are themselves made the subjects of change.

How to go about changing, or transcending, felt needs remains the big question, and I shall only offer a couple of preliminary suggestions.

First, to reiterate Warren Osmond’s point, wherever a need is felt or an issue arises, there must be a radical voice to speak to the need. This will mean an involvement of a very special kind in “campus politics”. Every issue will, in effect, have to be attacked from the left — i.e., the very terms of the issue must be called into question. Certain requirements follow: Radical students cannot lead the campaigns over particular issues unless the terms of the issues have been thrashed out into terms acceptable to the radicals. (Example: Should there be 4, 5 or 6 students on Council? — to be an SRC-pushed issue. What is the role of the university? — to be the debating terms constantly pushed by the radicals.) Radicals must seek to reform, as a first and lasting priority, the mode of debate on campus. (Examples: Scrap lunch-hour meetings with black/white motions, create extended teach-ins for which lunch-hours are just preparation. Use teaching facilities to create dialogue — e.g., turn tutorials into radical course critiques, write radical essays and have them run off and distributed. Develop counter-newspapers on campus, in which the details of struggles are documented and analysed.) In sum, the radicals should change the form and language of the existing debate, by starting from it but resisting reformist immersion in it.

Secondly, a revolutionary strategy must include the creation of new needs — needs which do not come under the heading of “campus politics” as the term is ordinarily used. Here we touch on the limitations, in my view, of the strategy outlined by Osmond. But we also arrive at the dilemma of the vanguard — that it is sterile and self-defeating to simply “create” needs absolutely de novo, i.e., with no relationship to existing, “felt” needs.

The resolution of this problem, which would amount also to a resolution of the reform/revolution question might lie in the elaboration of a different kind of critique: one that is based, explicitly, on a more or less defined alternative. Such a critique would not start with “felt” needs, but should be made to end with them: the alternative is proposed, elaborated, discussed, and it is shown how the alternative would meet and abolish existing needs. (Example: Political science courses at present force the student to absorb a large bulk of institutional detail — how many members in the house of commons; which countries have bicameral systems. It is reasonable to speculate that students as a whole dimly perceive the uselessness of such rubbish, and feel quite strongly that it is boring. A radical alternative — which might be transmitted in the form of pamphlets handed out in lectures — would start with quite different assumptions (e.g., real power matters more than formal power; politics cannot be split off from life and work), and would embody the outline of a different course. It would be pointed out, in developing the alternative, that a study of this kind would be not only more intellectually honest and more appropriate here and now, but also more interesting, less tedious, etc. In this way, new needs would be created, which embodied yet transcended the old ones.)
Finally, I wish to mention the trap of building up an even more selfish class of university-trained young people. The acceptance of felt needs creates such a danger; the building up of new needs may even intensify it. It will be meaningless to create a set of universities in which academic freedom (so called) extends to all, in which the very real repression of students is overcome, if these changes are not linked organically to a change in the self-awareness of students — awareness of their status as amongst the most privileged members of one of the most affluent and morally degraded societies in the world.

Students must discover that the condition of their own liberation really is the liberation of all their millions of brothers throughout the world, that there is no meaning in an oasis of equality in a desert of inequality. The existence of "academic socialists" speaks eloquently to the fact that this kind of danger is not automatically met by the creating of a higher form of struggle: that is, no struggle transcends itself, yet what a revolutionary socialist consciousness requires is that the university struggle must continuously be transcended. With the shift in emphasis from Vietnam to student power, there is a real possibility that the struggle may develop an introspective twist that would work against the "struggle to transcend the struggle".

Briefly, this might be countered in two ways. First, the base of campus support for the NLF must be strengthened. Secondly, the movement must as soon as possible come to grips with the plight of the ancillary staff — the slave class of the university system. It is important to note that even an elementary critique of both these problems will inevitably involve complex challenges to both the university system and the capitalist mode of production. In this way, the stage might well be set for a very wide transcendence of felt needs, and hence for the development of a sensitive socialist consciousness in some of the 100,000 university students of this country.

ADRIAN WILSON
(Medical Student, Adelaide University)

OBITUARY:
NORMAN LINDSAY

SO NORMAN LINDSAY is dead. When you were raised on The Magic Pudding you can't help feeling sorry.

He had a long life. He was 90. It seems that the gods did not love him. And yet they might have been more grateful, for Lindsay did his best for some of them — particularly for the female pagan divinities! Do you remember his Venus Crucified? That was a fine etching, whose repute alone must have lured many a young lady to visit an art-loving bachelor's flat.

Lindsay hated Puritans, and put a lot of them into that picture. There they are, hammering the nails in and enjoying it! The Cromwellian dragoon, the wild-eyed evangelist, the pious grocer with hands folded in prayer and one sharp eye on the till.

The ironic thing is that Lindsay ended up on their side. Not on that of the dragoon Other Rank, perhaps, but on that of the Pentagon. Not with the hard-working parish minister, but with millionaire-Christianity. Not with the corner storekeeper, but with the chain-store owners. When the Bulletin was at its pro-Fascist worst, Lindsay was doing its political cartoons.

Just for the money? No, apparently from conviction. Lindsay publicly declared himself a supporter of
the class system. As it became more and more obvious that the class system was insupportable, so Lindsay found less and less to say in his pictures. He slid downhill into cliche and repetitiveness and the aesthetics of the chocolate-box.

I do not say that he would have done better to produce enormous portraits of Stalin instead. I certainly do not blame him for not getting with the trend and go-going all psychedelic. In fact I rather write off a lot of the New-Left-revolutionary stuff as being "Lindsayesque" in its preoccupation with what is purely sensual.

What I blame him for is his deliberate cosmopolitanism, his rejection (in all but a very few works) of what is national, his affectation of the silly attitude that the artist or writer is some sort of godlike, superhuman creature. Evidently his early admiration of Banjo Paterson taught him nothing about fundamentals, though it may have improved his horsemanship.

But he did write The Magic Pudding; and on that account alone, though the gods did not love him, countless Australian children did and still do.

JOHN MANIFOLD.

DICTATORSHIP — ONCE AGAIN

I FOR ONE do not necessarily agree with every point of view expressed by National leaders of the Communist Party, but unlike Alan Miller (ALR 6/1969) I personally welcomed John Sendy's article on Proletarian Dictatorship as an attempt to engender and encourage greater understanding of the theoretical and practical problems involved. I am certain that few will see it as an attempt to undermine the concept, but rather as an effort to lift a very important subject into the field of critical scrutiny and discussion; an attempt indeed at scientific and objective analysis rather than dogmatic assertion and reiteration. Only in this way will the Communist Party of Australia be able, in the light of Australian conditions, to develop and enunciate a positive program for radical social change.

Having read Alan Miller's contribution therefore, one can well understand his concern, since there seems to be a ready willingness to dogmatize, and an equal unwillingness to accept the fact that the CPA leadership sets out to objectively examine all points of Communist philosophy and ideology, so that it may evaluate in a positive and honest fashion the distortions or errors that have been made, and are being made. For dogmatists, and these in the main lead in the criticism of party policy and leadership, to question the unquestionable is an unpardonable sin. Everything is, and has to be, above reproach and beyond doubt. Error is unthinkable and, if proved, irrelevant.

Sendy is rebuked for attempting an evaluation of the practice of "Proletarian Dictatorship", and assessing its relationship to theory, or intention. He ought not do so, according to Miller, because he either doesn't understand the theory, or more probably because he is deliberately setting out to undermine it. For Miller it is quite clear (though is it not strange that he sees little distortion, comprehends few problems), and therefore ought not be the subject of discussion and debate, and this after all is all that Sendy is doing; discussing, debating, the concept.

True, the monstrous distortions of socialist legality imposed by Stalin are acknowledged though even here there ought to be a clearer appreciation of not only what he did, but
that he was indeed able to do it. This is seen simply as a departure from "Collective leadership", though precisely what is meant by collective leadership is not made clear. Does it simply mean that there ought to be a dictatorship of not one, but a number — an elite perhaps? Again, Alan Miller does not distinguish between "Dictatorship of the Proletariat" and "Dictatorship of the Communist Party". Perhaps he regards them as synonymous. Be that as it may, it is a real theoretical and practical problem.

Re-examination, discussion and debate is naturally opposed by dogmatists, and there is inevitably a failure, deliberate or otherwise, to see that such is motivated by a desire to establish in Australia a Socialism free of the errors, the mistakes, that have been made in established Socialist states. This is done by Australian Communists, not to belittle the efforts that have been made in the USSR and elsewhere, though any differences should be openly aired, but because there is a recognition of the profound responsibility of Australian Communists to establish a society free of dogma, where there can be a creative application of the Communist philosophy, and thus a fulfilling by the CPA of its internationalist responsibilities. This does not mean that the Communist Party must not, and cannot, be the leading force for revolutionary change or in a revolutionary government. If the Communist Party is to be the vanguard of the working class and the revolutionary movement, it will, as it must be, on the basis of advocating correct policies in an open contest of ideas.

And such an open contest need not be seen as counter-revolutionary, as Alan Miller seems to infer when he refers to the Democratic Rights Charter, but rather as a manifestation of real political democracy. It is most untrue to say that there is an objection to party leadership in Soviet life when in fact it is the KIND of leadership that is questioned. Alan Miller, along with some others, seems to see the Communist Party as having some kind of divine right to leadership, and in Australia this must mean that co-operation with other progressive elements (coalition of left forces) is subject to this "fact" being acknowledged. Hardly the basis for developing a united front.

Sendy is further rebuked for describing Stalin's regime as "totalitarian" and referring to current Soviet "bureaucratic, hierarchical institutionalism". Was not Stalin's regime totalitarian? Is there not reason to be concerned at the bureaucratic excesses in contemporary Soviet society?

Maybe this whole question of differences within the CPA could be resolved simply, by supplying every Communist with a pair of the rose-coloured spectacles similar to those Comrade Miller must be wearing.

H. AUSTIN

WORKER'S CONTROL

AS JACK HUTSON SAYS, the slogan of "Worker's Control" is not new. It was not only raised by the Guild Socialists, Anarchists and so on in the early days of the development of workshop organisation, it was also raised in the Second World War by the Independent Labor Party and Trotskyist groups in the U.K. to divert the workers away from the life and death struggle against fascism. Prior to this, similar slogans were advanced by Anarchists and Trotskyists during the Spanish Civil War.

Those who desire to press on with this "Worker's Control" campaign do
so it seems because they feel that this slogan can direct attention to the need to change the capitalist controlled system and replace it with Worker's Control (Socialism). The advantage of the term "Worker's Control" over the term "Socialism" is not explained.

In my view the word "Socialism" is far better because it is the complete alternative to capitalism and its explanation calls forth a wide discussion on all the political, economic, moral and cultural aspects of it, whereas "Worker's Control" is only part of the meaning of Socialism.

The big illusion that seems to be accepted in some quarters as sound reasoning is the idea that "Worker's Control" can be introduced gradually and that one day we will discover that the workers have gained complete control over all the factories. This idea of gradually elbowing the employers out of control, bit by bit, until the workers have taken over is quite unreal.

In the course of the industrial struggle the workers advance and struggle for democratic demands. If these demands are won, it means that certain spheres of industrial activity, previously controlled by the employer, are taken from them and are controlled by the workers.

But as long as the capitalist system prevails the workers are not able to secure the essential reins of control — the ownership of the plant, the supply of raw materials, the markets for the finished product, the accumulation of capital, the distribution of profits and so forth. These features of control are only taken from the capitalists when the workers win political power.

The advocates of "Worker's Control" would have us believe they are very revolutionary when in actual fact it is precisely this revolutionary factor in the struggle for Socialism — the transference of State power from one class to another — that they miss entirely.

Of course, the struggle for greater trade union and workers rights in industry is part of the struggle for Socialism, and Communists who have won positions of leadership among workers must explain this fact and must continuously carry on education and propaganda work among the workers showing the link between the immediate demand and the ultimate socialist objective.

Yet, we find this slogan of "Worker's Control" advanced. It seems that this slogan seeks to embrace a bit of each. It is, we are told, both an immediate demand and an ultimate goal but in actual fact it is neither one thing or the other.

There is no real point in talking about "Worker's Control" as a separate question, as a thing in itself, as a distinct aim, because worker's control is an integral feature of the new Socialist society we aim to achieve.

To raise the demand for "Worker's Control" (assuming we can get unanimity among its advocates as to what precisely is meant) at a time when the fight for peace, the fight for civil and democratic liberties and the industrial economic struggles are all urgent issues requiring immediate attention is to raise a slogan that neither stimulates nor unifies the movement. It becomes a diversion. This is why the experts of diversion, the Anarchists, the Trotskyists and the Hill Group are enthusiastic about it.

As I have already said, the idea that we can develop a campaign to secure, bit by bit, more and more worker's control over this and that factory until we have wrested control from the employer is completely
unreal. What on earth do those, who advocate this point of view, think the employers and the capitalist State will be doing in the meantime? Yet, we cannot escape from the conclusion that the Anarchists and Trotskyist at least would have us think this way. One gets the impression from Denis Freney that we need worker's control without any kind of State. It seems that when we control the factories the capitalist State will disappear, and we do not need a Socialist State because it would be bureaucratic anyway. It is difficult to understand how some communists can take this political half wit seriously.

One of the features of industry in Australia that distinguishes it from a number of European countries is the comparative weakness of job organisation. Over 60 years of the arbitration system has created the widespread view that wages and conditions are matters for experts (officials, lawyers, court advocates) and there is little for the rank and file to do. Comrade Lance Sharkey said in 1959, "The Shop Committee movement in Australia was weak and has only really commenced to grow under the influence of our Party". (The Trade Unions, P. 39).

What is needed in Australia is a campaign to strengthen trade union and political organisation in the factories and other jobs. This is the most urgent current industrial task. This is the task to which Communists and other left wing workers must now earnestly turn their attention. A conference to secure clarity on the immediate issues and to discuss measures for strengthening rank and file union organisation, is more necessary, more real and more urgent than any gathering to discuss "Worker's Control".

The need is to develop a powerful Shop Stewards movement here in Australia. Any talk of worker's control without a powerful Shop Stewards movement is infantile "Leftism" that is miles away from reality. As Comrade Lance Sharkey also said, "After the taking of political power by the workers the Shop Committee role is again extraordinarily important. The Shop Committee, together with the Party branch in the factories, realise workers control of industry" (The Trade Unions, P. 39, emphasis added).

J. Goss

STATE AID — A COLD, HARD LOOK

STATE AID remains one of the more emotionally charged political issues of the day. For this reason, any rational evaluation of its costs, impact and effects is a most important contribution to the debate which continues to rage. The question of State Aid to non-State schools is too important to be left to the whims of vote-catching politicians, or to the hopes of certain sectarian and self-interested sectors of the community.

Recent studies clearly show that the present system of "across the board" payments to non-State schools results in a further widening of the gap between the wealthy sections of the population and the rest of the people. Research done by Professor P. J. Fensham at Monash University illustrates this fact most dramatically. In a study of secondary education, his survey proves fairly conclusively that the Government's contribution to the education of children at fashionable non-State secondary schools is virtually equivalent to the Government expenditure on a pupil at a Government secondary school.

The study is confined to the upper income type of private school. Professor Fensham has estimated that the aid given to these schools is
greater than that given to the poorer private schools (i.e., the bulk of parochial Roman Catholic schools). Furthermore, it is almost equal to that granted, on average, to children at Government schools. The following table brings these facts out sharply:

Existing and proposed aid from Federal and State Governments to Victorian independent secondary schools expressed in terms of an equivalent amount per pupil.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>GIRLS' SCHOOL</th>
<th>BOYS' SCHOOL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>State per capita (20 plus 20)</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal per capita</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport (average)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Payroll tax saving</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commonwealth schools</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior Govt. schools</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tax deductions to parents</td>
<td>135?</td>
<td>135?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>292+</td>
<td>309+</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These figures almost match the estimated $332 for the cost of educating a Victorian child in a State secondary school.

The figures in the table require a little explanation.

1 The State contribution of $40 consists of the $20 now paid and the $20 increase proposed by Sir Henry Bolte in recent legislation.

2 The Federal per capita grant of $50 is a straight Commonwealth hand-out.

3 The transport allowance is a payment made by the Government when the school is more than 3 miles away and the student is not travelling past another of the same denomination. This sum can be quite large for the Wesleys' or Methodist Ladies' Colleges, but is insignificant for Catholic parish schools.

4 The saving on payroll tax arises from the fact that non-State schools do not pay this tax, whereas State schools do. Professor Fensham thus takes this as a direct charge against education.

5 The Commonwealth and Junior Government scholarship charges arise from the fact that the wealthy private schools have a higher proportion of students on such scholarships than the State schools. This is no doubt due to the fact that the parents of these students can afford to give their children more assistance and opportunity to stay at school longer.

6 The tax deduction to parents is a conservative estimate of the tax savings resulting from fees and other costs associated with sending children to private schools over and above that which is incurred by parents of State school pupils.

The figures in Professor Fensham's table do not include various grants for science laboratories, libraries and capital expenditure. Such expenditure can be readily calculated.

Thus in Victoria, in the three financial years from 1968 to 1971, the Commonwealth has allocated $1,641,900 for science laboratories and apparatus, and $708,600 for libraries in non-Catholic private
somal, This runs out at an annual expenditure of $783,500 or $30 per student per annum. Some of the more wealthy schools have received very substantial grants from the Federal Government. For example Scotch College has been given $100,300. Kingswood College $90,550, Mentone Girls' Grammar $82,000 and Elsternwick Methodist Ladies' College $60,000.

The survey makes it clear that there would be little difference in the cost to the Government if the pupils of these private schools moved into State schools. The number of private schools in the category studied in the survey would account for approximately half the secondary pupils in non-State schools. This number includes the majority of non-Catholic and some of the Catholic schools.

As the Financial Review of the 5th December said: "What this all means in effect is that the poorer Roman Catholic schools, about which there is obviously a general feeling of sympathy in the community and from which the political pressure has principally arisen, have generated a situation in which they and the Government schools are little better off, while schools which were surviving on their own terms before State aid was introduced are getting a bonus."

CATHY MCDONALD

LENIN, COMINTERN AND WORKERS' CONTROL

LENIN ON WORKERS' CONTROL

A NUMBER of writers in ALR (e.g. Tom Supple, No. 5, 1969) and elsewhere have criticised the objective of "workers' control" as an illusory slogan to advance under capitalism. The idea that the workers could, or should try to, control the controllers, control production, has been declared anarchist and/or utopian.

In view of the fact that such declarations are often made in the name of "Leninism", it may be of interest to point to some of Lenin's writings on this question and decisions with which he was associated.

There are, for example, a number of articles of 1917, prior to the revolution, such as The Impending Catastrophe and How to Avert It. Some may feel inclined to dismiss these as not generally relevant, but only applying to a revolutionary situation, so let us look at some decisions of the Communist International in Lenin's day.

For example, at the 3rd Congress of the C.I. (July, 1921) the resolution on relations with the Red International of Labor Unions said in part:

"All the economical struggles of the working class should gather around the slogan 'Workers' Control over Production', which control ought to be realised as soon as possible without waiting for the ruling class and the government to prevent an initiation of the same." (Pamphlet published by the C.P. of Great Britain, p. 73.)

The Fourth Congress (Nov.-Dec., 1922) sent a letter to a Congress of Factory Councils in Germany which stated:

"The most important question at present is the formation of a united proletarian fighting front for the defence of the eight hour day, for ensuring sufficient food for the workers, for workers' control of production, and to offset the organisation of German fascism..." (CPGB pamphlet, p. 19.)

What Lenin said on a particular subject in particular conditions should not be taken as disposing of an argument, but it should at least weigh with those who like to proclaim themselves "Leninists".

E.A.
Douglas Kirsner

The Communist Party and Revolution

THE TECHNOLOGICAL POSSIBILITY of a socialist society has existed in Australia for many years now. The present level of production could provide abundance for all. The abolition of capitalism and a fundamental redirection of social structure and purpose could bring universal happiness. That this has not occurred, and in the foreseeable future does not appear likely to occur in Australia, should entail a drastic reappraisal on the part of revolutionaries of method and what are presumed to be facts — both past and present. Such examination may result in a jettisoning of very many 'sacred' assumptions and in an emphasis on new forms of revolutionary activity. It will mean forsaking "marxism-leninism" and other dogmas, and replacing them with an open marxist approach toward actual conditions, and not with orthodox marxist-leninist theory which mystifies them.

Doug Kirsner is a member of the Editorial Board of ALR. He is a post graduate student in philosophy at Monash University.

42 AUSTRALIAN LEFT REVIEW — FEB.-MARCH, 1970
The success of the 1917 revolution and those subsequent to it elsewhere, has meant the spread to many countries of the doctrines of means to revolution which worked in those countries. The success of the Party of Lenin brought leninist methods and organisation to socialist parties in countries where conditions were very different from those in pre-revolutionary Russia. The Communist Parties in most advanced capitalist countries still retain the leninist perspective of revolution and revolutionary organisation, but it is precisely in these countries that revolution has not occurred and shows no sign of occurring in the near future. Because they have had revolutions, some view the communist parties as possessing authority in everything. If Australian revolutionaries copy the style of revolutions which have taken place in the economically "backward" countries, and mimic the propaganda of the governments of these countries, they will not help to abolish Australian capitalism. Their actions will have been guided by a 'marxism' treated as a dogma and this without understanding of real conditions — only of abstracted ones.

Revolutionaries in Australia cannot simply ignore the Soviet Union and its past, especially if they are involved in an organisation whose past is closely connected with the USSR. The Communist Party of Australia still identifies itself with Soviet socialism because it neither repudiates it nor analyses its past. This cannot be evaded by saying that the way to socialism will be different in each country, for this eludes what is essential in socialism. Socialism does not equal living well with state intervention (as it does with the Social-Democrats), nor is it equivalent to the current Soviet fashion. The CPA should not identify itself with the USSR’s version of 'socialism' with its bloody and oppressive history. If the version of socialism that the CPA aims at is in fact contradictory to Soviet socialism, why not say so?

In drafting a program for social change in which the CP occupies an important position, it is surely important to analyse not only capitalism and its past, but also to understand what has passed as socialism and its history. Man’s practice constitutes history, and it is only in terms of this practice (not abstracted and thus empty practice) that the future can be constructed freely. The Stalinist period in the USSR has not been so much understood as repudiated by many Western communists. The question as to how a party, which led a revolution to freedom, legitimates an authoritarian and repressive social system must be viewed in terms other than those of 'errors' and 'aberrations' of a fundamentally sound socialist practice. (Stalinism is not merely the historical accident of a 'cult of personality'.)
Similarly, it is unproductive for the CPA to take the attitude that what has been done is done (i.e. of no relevance). A critical analysis of the past, especially where this hurts, might bring more self-awareness and independence. It is impossible to sever oneself from one's past merely by saying that one has done it. If one understands one's mistakes, attitudes and presuppositions ('understands', not 'recognise'), then one is in a position to act freely. This applies to the CPA. If the CPA simply says that it is changing its position without understanding its past, it has not changed fundamentally: it has merely adopted another line which it could change again at any time. A thoroughgoing and critical assessment of the USSR and its history, together with the CPA and its past, might bring at least as much enlightenment as any program about Australia.

The authority of the modern capitalist system over the underlying population does not derive through physical violence. It is in a continual process of legitimising itself through the formal and informal societal institutions. The state is only one part of this system. Any conspiracy theory of modern capitalism is bound to fail for lack of adequate evidence. The bourgeois state naturally works in the interest of the capitalist class. But this by no means shows that the capitalist class directly manipulates the state. While pluralist theories of capitalist society neglect how, and in whose interests, society is actually structured (as contrasted with how the controllers of these institutions say they are structured), vertical or monolithic analyses take too narrow a view of the concept of domination. If controllers of institutions are convinced by the capitalist definition of reality, they need not be told what to do or what to think. People are brought up to view institutionalised inequality as equality, with only the malfunction of the system being regarded as unfair. When the system is running smoothly (as perhaps it might under a Labor Government), it is itself weighted to ensure bourgeois domination. (The hegemonic class culture, by definition, pervades society as the true consciousness.) Bourgeois democracy is seen as providing choices, including the choice not to choose. But the authoritarian nature of the economic system is not regarded as anti-democratic. A peculiar form of meritocracy is often seen to rule factories and businesses — that of those who have fought for the right by making money, despite the 'managerial revolution'. Workers perceive that they have rights, but they often feel that the bosses also have rights. The classical capitalist twofold division into civil society and the state, into capitalist and political systems, still retains much credence.

AUSTRALIAN LEFT REVIEW—FEB.-MARCH, 1970
Under the established bourgeois hegemony, the system produces and reproduces itself. Even revolutionaries tend to legitimise the system by showing that the system is democratic. Naturally, this is only one side of the dialectical relation of revolutionaries to the rest of society, but nonetheless it cannot be ignored.

When social-democratic or communist parties attain a degree of influence, they become accommodated to the system of domination. They begin to see much of the 'reason' behind what had formerly seemed partisan decisions of some of the rulers. They see the difficulties in actually changing structures so deeply embedded in the system. They become subject to enormous economic pressures and threats from the capitalist class which holds a great amount of economic sway. They realise that any change in one sector may bring vast repercussions in others because the undermining of basic values, ways of living and preferences are involved. The easy way out of this is to, for example, nationalise some industry because it would be more 'profitable' and in the 'public interest' in which case other industries may not be nationalised because they are not 'profitable' and would not demonstrably serve the 'public interest'.

For Marx, the proletariat represented the absolute negation of capitalism. The interests of the capitalist are capitalism, and those of the proletariat were necessarily anathema. The proletarian labored for the capitalist for the price of his labor power. The aim of private enterprise was profit for the capitalist. While proclaiming the government for all, and claiming always to act in the 'national interest', the capitalist ideologist, if only because of the structure of the system, was furthering the vested interests of the hegemonic class of capitalists. Since Marx's day, while material conditions have markedly improved for the workers, the central contradiction of capitalism remains: that between the social character of production and the private means of appropriation. While everybody's income has increased, that of the capitalist has increased most. There is nothing today to suggest that the capitalists, under conditions of the new capitalism, are profiting any less than before. If this is so, why do large sections of the proletariat support the capitalist system? How is it that in Australia a Liberal Party Government can be kept in office by the vote of large sections of the working class?

The fact of a politically-quiescent working class, however, does not negate the class model of society. But the class model does not imply that the identity of the agent of historical change is the proletariat. (Unless the proletariat is defined as whoever the agent happens to be. For example, a communist party consisting mainly of intellectuals leading a revolution and defining itself as the proletariat 'for-itself', that is as self-conscious, or as representing the proletariat as it ought to be.)

The capitalist system has stabilised itself in Australia to the extent that even many of the goals and needs in the lives of the workers are generated by the system. A better life is defined in terms of material satisfaction provided by a greater quantity of goods produced by the capitalist system. Where living better means earning more, the criticism of capitalism must be based, not on the amount of economic privation experienced, but on the immense difference between real possibility and actuality. The extent to which production does not reflect real need can be measured by the fantastic expenditure on public relations, sales promotion, advertising, and fancy packaging. Artificial needs are imposed on people. So much production is deliberate waste.

Advanced capitalist society is not defined by scarcity. The possibility of sharing the fruits of technological resources among people according to their needs, may threaten capitalism in a way that socialism, as represented by higher wages and more adequate housing, does not. In an 'affluent society', where the basic material needs of the great majority are catered for, and where the possibility of 'living better' by working harder or longer is seen as actual, where the alternatives are defined as 'unreal' or 'impractical', that is, are incompatible with the capitalist system, and where 'national unity' is prized because of the threat of a real or imagined enemy, the proletariat becomes accommodated.

The contradiction in advanced capitalist society is best evidenced by the possibility of the existence of utopia. Utopia is a 'good place' which exists 'nowhere'. Now that the technological possibility of this good place is rooted in advanced industrial society, there exists an imperative to actualise utopia. Marx wrote in the 'Preface to the Critique of Political Economy':

Mankind always sets itself such tasks as it can solve; since looking at the matter more closely it will always be found that the task itself arises only when the material conditions for its solution already exist or are at least in the process of formation.²

Critical concepts lose most of their meaning as they become integrated with the capitalist system. 'Freedom' is defined as what we have to preserve, and as what the communists do not
have (cf. "The Free World") or as having the choice between buying different brands of useless objects (free enterprise), or having a letter printed in the capitalist-controlled press (free speech). 'Democracy' is equated with a choice between two parties which only differ in the more efficient means to run capitalism: and this is contrasted with the one-party rule in the USSR. 'Happiness' is being married, with a house, a car and children's education. And so on with 'peace', 'normal', 'rational', 'public interest', 'law and order' and many others. The meaning of an expression is how it is used in the capitalist reality.3

In a situation where one's needs are administered the notion of possibility must be given new meaning. The choice between capitalism and socialism should not be presented as one between Soviet-style socialism and capitalism. Where capitalism defines possibility in terms of a greater quantity of material goods and fewer working hours, socialism or communism defines possibility as universal enjoyment of as many goods as one needed, of liberation of man from abstract division of labor, of a society in which man's relations with his fellows and with nature are no longer alienated and reified, of a non-authoritarian society where decision-making is autonomous, of a society in which waste is not a necessary product, etc.

Workers under neo-capitalism have an interest in the preservation of the system. Life under conditions of modern capitalism is far from unbearable; if sometimes difficult, "that's life, isn't it?" There is always that chance of promotion, strikes can sometimes bring results, and if profits are 'shared', everyone can be a 'capitalist'. People are better off than their fathers and look like being even better off in the not too distant future. People do not want to lose what they have. (This, incidentally, provides one of the reasons for the continued return of the Liberal Government.) The devil they know will not take from them what they already possess. They have a stake in a system that can guarantee incremental improvements for the workers if this means that the capitalists' profits improve substantially. For it is 'possible' for a worker to become a capitalist. Since some have actually done so, there appears to be the abstract possibility of everybody doing so. One of the characteristics of bourgeois society is that only formal possibilities are guaranteed. Everyone has the chance of becoming a capitalist only if few do.

The workers have become wedded to the system that supplies them with their livelihood. They see no sense in giving this up for

some form of Stalinist dictatorship. No other society is seen as ‘possible’ — the alternatives seem to exhaust the possibilities (The invasion of Czechoslovakia helped the capitalists by apparently demonstrating the impossibility of any ‘third’ road.) If capitalism delivers the goods, it does not seem worth the risk or trouble to strive for a system which may or may not do so, and which almost certainly will be authoritarian ‘at least at the beginning’.

As distinct from previous social transformations the socialist (or communist) revolution must be a conscious one. It is the positive overcoming of capitalism by masses conscious that revolution is necessary to their well-being.

At present, even if there does exist some primitive awareness of the failure of capitalism, a critical consciousness demanding change to socialism or communism belongs to a tiny minority of society. For there to be a revolution the mass of the people must be convinced of the necessity for the transformation of society.

Questions of historical agency for a revolution in Australia are entirely abstract since no pre-revolutionary situation exists (the question must be resolved in historical practice). The preparatory — but nevertheless, essential — foundations must be laid. The rupture in false consciousness, with the consequent critical consciousness will, in the first instance, be an intellectual task. Analysis, critique, propaganda, projection of alternatives, may well be the most important (though by no means the only) tasks of revolutionaries in Australia today. The intellectuals are those most likely to have consciousness of projected possibilities by virtue of the nature of their discourse.

The political organisation most appropriate to the present period in Australia seems to be a loose association of marxists, based around a common set of aims, in which there is no authoritarian structure. The organisation would be primarily devoted to analysis, critique and propaganda.

The organisation would not be a political ‘party’. It would not aim at power through parliamentary elections (‘power’ and ‘politics’ as defined by capitalist ideologists). Decisions would be by mass meetings, and any elections would be for positions with specific tasks (with right of recall). Members would not be ‘bound’ to carry out decisions (except of course, those elected for a particular purpose). There would be maximum autonomy for individuals who would be encouraged to form any action or theoretical group they desired.
If socialism is to be possible, the relationships between members of the organisation must be free, and represent in microcosm those of the future society. (As free as possible in that there would be no artificial constraints — quite the contrary.) An authoritarian organisation could only bring an authoritarian 'socialism'. If other forms of organisation become necessary at a given time, they can be formed. Marx and Engels never had a rigid or dogmatic view on Party organisation. Marx even dissolved the League of Communists in 1852 (and did not belong to a political organisation for years afterwards). Engels wrote that particular forms of organisation could in time become 'fetters' to the development of revolutionary forces.4

The Draft Program of the CPA is a marked improvement on previously adopted programs. However it reflects much of the present division, uncertainty and confusion in the Party and leadership. It is a Draft that makes concessions to everyone, and should therefore satisfy no-one.

This article, it is hoped, challenges some of the assumptions underlying the Draft. The following are a few summary remarks in three important areas of the Draft.

1. Attitude to the USSR and other Socialist Countries. The Draft, in effect, blames Western Imperialism for the oppression and lack of freedom in Socialist countries. It justifies both past and present Stalinism in the terms of the Soviet ideologists viz. that socialism must develop slowly because it is threatened by Imperialism. Thus lack of progress, aberrations and invasions, though unfortunate, are necessary.5

The attitude towards the Socialist countries marks the inconsistency in the CPA’s position. It is loathe to view the USSR and its history at all objectively, fearing to loosen ties with the Soviet regime and its Australian devotees still further. It seems afraid to criticise the USSR at any fundamental level, although the Soviet version of socialism bears little resemblance (even in spirit) to the socialism advocated in the Draft. The USSR would score very low in the CPA’s ‘Charter of Democratic Rights’. The CPA can achieve little credibility with anyone other than fanatical admirers of the USSR if it continues to pussyfoot about the USSR, if it attempts to justify the unjustifiable. In order to be an


AUSTRALIAN LEFT REVIEW—FEB.-MARCH, 1970 49
effective communist party the CPA must also understand its own past.

2. Consciousness: A major flaw in the Draft is the lack of an analysis of capitalist false consciousness. If bourgeois domination takes the form of manipulation, what is required is a complete rupture in that consciousness. The possession by the masses of a critical consciousness is a basic prerequisite for revolution.

3. Aims: The Draft's adumbration of the guidelines of 'The New Society' bears more resemblance to a transitional program towards a new society than to a rough approximation of a socialist society.

Priorities are not allocated to the features. The abolition of the White Australia Policy finds itself on a level with workers' control. Social-democratic and liberal policies of the ominous sounding 'minimum living wage' and 'social responsibility in science' are advocated.

The difference between reform and revolution lies in whether the whole conglomeration of demands can be realised within the system. One of the problems with the features of "The New Society" is that most of them could constitute the program of a social democratic party. The real possibilities inherent in our society are not taken seriously.

Communism should be the immediate objective of the CPA.

5. It is incredible that the leadership of the CPA which was among the first and most forthright critics of the Soviet-led invasion of Czechoslovakia should write in the Draft:

"Heroism in the revolutionary struggle and achievements in socialist construction by the peoples of the socialist countries are a source of inspiration for the forces of progress everywhere. But the struggle between imperialism and the socialist countries is not a simple one. This struggle has restricted the power of imperialism to act in its own interests. It has also sometimes conditioned and restricted the full development of socialism and correct relations between socialist countries, with accompanying negative effects on the appeal of socialism in other countries."
A GROWING EMPHASIS in the left is on the priority to be given to the development of consciousness as the key factor in the revolutionary process, and, within this, the building of a body of ideas challenging those prevailing in our society. “Revolutionary culture”, “counter-hegemony”, “counter-consensus” are various terms used. Acceptance of the key place of consciousness in the development of revolution directs attention to the processes by which consciousness develops or may be developed in large numbers of people. It is, clearly, a most intricate subject. It involves physiology, psychology, philosophy. It involves the reaction of human beings on each other individually and as “classes”, politically and culturally; the role of social institutions and structures. It involves the different ways in which the process might take place in different groups of people.

Knowledge is mushrooming in these fields, taken separately. There are new ideas about “the nature of man” which bear on the problem. Noam Chomsky, for example, regards the capacity and need for creative self-expression as the fundamental human capacity, and there are many other studies at a more earthy level (Lorenz and others). There are the new forms of human communication and their consequences: “... those who wish to link consciousness with action should consider McLuhan’s concept of ‘implosion’ ... (which) almost certainly does introduce new contradictions of a fundamental kind in all societies ...” 2. There is the great expansion of higher education in response to the development of the productive forces in general and the scientific and technological revolution in particular which, in important ways, changes the conditions in which revolutionary consciousness may develop. There is the bearing of the new stage of development of the social productive forces on previous concepts of “historical materialism” 3.

From such sources and studies a new “synthesis” on the problems of the development of consciousness may arise. But in the

1. Interview in New Left Review No. 57.
3. See for example Civilisation at the Crossroads, ALR Publication, Ch. 4.

Eric Aarons is a member of the editorial board of ALR and a member of the National Executive, CPA.
meantime people act on the basis of certain assumptions about it, and it is my purpose to discuss those which, partly explicitly, partly implicitly, underlie the Communist Party's "Statement of Aims, Methods, and Organisation" and other documents being discussed in preparation for the 22nd Congress at Easter.

Marx set himself the task of providing a body of ideas and theories in the fields of political economy, sociology, history, politics and philosophy "to provide (the proletariat) with a true slogan of struggle" ¹ and as a counter to the "hired prize-fighters" of capitalism ⁵ and the views of other trends (reformist, utopian socialist, anarchist, etc.) within the revolutionary movement. However his view was not that the fruits of this work should simply be "taken to the workers" (though he did that) and that the problems of the development of their revolutionary consciousness would then be solved. He regarded the proletariat as having to emancipate itself, in its own mind, from the fears, prejudices and false consciousness it largely had, and he believed that this could happen only in the course of practical activity, the class struggle, in all its manifestations. This was in line with his general philosophical view, against both idealism and the old materialism, on the question of the relations of theory and practice, consciousness and praxis, social consciousness and social being ⁶. In the Manifesto of the Communist Party he described the general course of the class struggle as he saw it, and spoke of "the proletarian movement (as) the self-conscious independent movement of the immense majority in the interest of the immense majority". He said "... we tell the workers that they must go through fifteen, twenty, perhaps fifty years of war and civil war not only in order to alter existing conditions, but even, to make themselves fit to take over political power" ⁷.

In these days of difficulties encountered concerning the revolutionary consciousness of the majority of the population including "the workers" (however these are defined in class terms), some are concluding that another class or stratum, perhaps the intellectuals, will be the agency of revolution. Even in the unlikely event (as I see it) of any revolution actually taking place without the workers, the problem is only postponed. Though the solution of the problem of material abundance is with us even now, who can imagine practice of the principle of "from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs" with the present

---

¹. Letter to Ruge, September, 1943.
². Preface to second edition of Capital.
³. See for example the "Theses on Feuerbach".
⁴. Quoted by John Lewis in The Life and Teaching of Karl Marx, p. 126.
state of consciousness of the population, let alone other and higher forms of social intercourse? Emancipation cannot be bestowed, it must be won in the process of overcoming opposing class forces and in self-transformation.

Lenin had a similar starting point which he elaborated further on such questions as the key role of intellectuals in developing socialist theory and the view that without such socialist consciousness on the part of revolutionaries and their activity to merge it with the struggles that arose, bourgeois (or other non-socialist) consciousness would prevail. Lenin was describing the actual state of affairs when he said that the mass movement of the working class and the ideas of modern socialism arose as distinct, though not absolutely separate streams. This was so (he said) because socialist theory has to be based on the “knowledge of the age”, and it is one more indictment of capitalism that few workers are in any position to acquire that knowledge. He qualified the separation of the two streams by recognising the merit of those workers who had become, in their role in the movement “intellectuals”. Further, he recognised that there was no impassable barrier between the more limited ideas that arose from life experience, and the more general ones mostly formulated by the intellectuals: “...the ‘spontaneous element’, in essence, represents nothing more nor less than (socialist) consciousness in an embryonic form”.8 That is, he did not regard revolutionary consciousness as something just imposed from outside, onto unthinking “things”, but as the conscious articulation of deeply felt suffering, problems and needs.

It should also be noted that Lenin advanced two different aspects of the idea that socialist consciousness came from ‘outside’. In addition to the above he held that it had to come “from outside the economic struggle, from outside the relations between workers and employers” 9 (over the division between wages and surplus value and related questions). This aspect of the class struggle, important though it was, was too narrow, too limiting of vision and experience, to by itself enable a revolutionary consciousness to develop to the necessary extent. In combating the contrary view (“economism”), Lenin put the main emphasis on democracy, identified in those conditions with the struggle to overthrow the Tsarist autocracy. This developed into a life-time struggle for the political, ideological and practical hegemony of the proletariat in the bourgeois-democratic revolution, against the liberal bourgeoisie and also in contest with other trends in the

movement. The issue of democracy in this context was not a passing one. Later he also conflicted with those he dubbed "imperialist economists" who could not "solve the problem of how to link the advent of imperialism with the struggle for reforms and democracy — just as the Economism of blessed memory could not link the advent of capitalism with the struggle for democracy". ¹⁰

While Lenin's views on what constituted "counter-hegemony" may seem rather narrow and "over-political" or "over-organizational" to many today, and this is important to examine¹¹, this does not alter the main principle involved in the way in which revolutionary consciousness may be expected to develop through the interaction of the "theoretical" and "practical".

To what extent can the views of Marx and more particularly Lenin, taken broadly, be regarded as "elitist"? This is beyond my scope here, but Cohn-Bendit in Obsolete Communism The Left Wing Alternative, regards Lenin's at any rate as virtually completely so, both in acceptance of the task of "bringing revolutionary consciousness to the workers" and in forms of organisation. He states that the view "that class political consciousness can only reach the working class from outside, has been refuted in practice" (p. 213, Penguin edition), and that the workers would do still better in this respect if left to themselves. Of course this does not happen and will not happen. There are differing views within the ranks of the workers for a start, and everyone who has a belief or a view that he wishes to impart (and the exceptions to this "wish to impart" are few indeed) is active, intervening and trying to influence consciousness, action and outcome. The bourgeoisie intervenes, the state intervenes (although capitalism at present does not depend mainly on state force to survive; such force is used widely and pervades social life). Reformism, economism, etc., intervene. Cohn-Bendit intervenes: "We could not do all we wanted because there were not enough of us to go round" (p. 74). He can't have it both ways, blaming bad intervention, advice or organisation for failures, and claim that good intervention, advice or organisation cannot help towards success. It is quite true, as Cohn-Bendit says, that the spontaneous energy and initiative of masses at the time of revolutionary upsurge is a marvellous thing, transcending in creative power the best of leaders. But no successful leader of revolution has questioned this. If it were not so genuine revolutions could hardly take

¹¹ See for example A. Davidson Antonio Gramsci: The Man, His Ideas, ALR Publication, Ch. 3.
place. But the process should not be pictured in an idealised way, as though "the masses" are pure and only "leaders" bad, or equate "usual" times with periods of revolutionary upsurge.

There are some in the past and also the present who adopt the view that spontaneously arising struggles around a multitude of partial issues or "immediate demands", far from being a necessary medium through which consciousness may arise and develop, are quite the opposite, and in fact a means by which consciousness is lowered rather than raised. Or put in more modern terms, the struggle around partial issues is seen as the road of integration of the working class. Thus a section of the Socialist Labor Party in the United States gradually dropped all such demands from the program, until by 1900, led by de Leon, they finally "cut out the tapeworm of immediate demands" from the Party's platform and replaced it with one demand only—the unconditional surrender of the ruling class. In view of the general integrative power, now much greater, of the capitalist system, and the experiences of reformism and conservative communism, the warning that is contained in this attitude of the old American socialists should not go unheeded. But until a view of how consciousness develops that is not dependent to a major degree on experiences in life and struggle of the masses of the people is put forward and substantiated one must, I believe, reject such a standpoint and adhere to the position that it is a major task of revolutionaries to actively intervene in the class struggle. The only real question, it seems to me, is how. This certainly bears and is receiving much attention, and I think the following points important.

First, as I outlined in a previous article, the relation between the part and the whole developed in an earlier period of capitalism has become outdated, and not just ineffective in developing consciousness, but positively harmful. A positive contribution is consequently impossible without the development of a model, theory and moral basis for a counter-hegemony appropriate to the world today.

Second, since every immediate demand is by its nature a compromise (and may at any given time be only partially realised, in a further compromise), the place in which the dividing line between permissible and impermissible compromises occurs needs to be reconsidered. I believe this is the only way to pose the question; "for or against compromise" in itself is a non-question which only obscures the real issue. In practice nobody operates

a completely “no compromise” strategy, though postures are often struck to that effect, especially in factional disputations. But the CP documents stress that for quite a period now these lines have been drawn in the wrong place — to the “right”. This applies to the nature of the demands put forward, the reasons given for them (that is, their relation to the critique of capitalism and the envisaged future society), the failure to declare an independent revolutionary position (necessary even if, and perhaps especially if, compromise cannot be avoided), and conservatism in methods of struggle.

Third, tactics. If it is conceded that the practical struggle has some bearing on the development of consciousness, then the frame of mind in which issues and the people involved are approached, and the ways in which the struggles are waged, and their outcome (which will influence future struggles) become important. In fact, in the student movement (see for example “Beginning or End” in the last issue of ALR) the peace movement, the trade unions and in connection with the Labor Party (the “united front”) disputes over tactics have been much to the fore.

It seems to me that from the general considerations outlined above — that in interaction with socialist theory and analysis the practical class struggle plays a vital role in the development of consciousness, and that the bourgeoisie, the state and various other political forces are active in striving to influence the outcome both materially and ideologically in ways they think are favorable to their aims and interests, certain consequences flow concerning organisation.

If the only issues in social transformation and the development of consciousness to that end were theoretical and analytical, problems of politics in general and of revolutionary organisation in particular would appear in a very different light. It could perhaps be said that the development of counter-hegemonic ideas is of such over-riding priority that everything else should be dropped anyway. But this would be to ignore other vital aspects of the process. Just as mass practice gives rise to a degree of consciousness, so consciousness does not develop in isolation from practice (which is not to assert a simple, direct reflection). It was experience with the class interests of the bourgeoisie in Germany in the 1840’s which drove Marx to his study of political economy. If various political forces are active in the practical field, to vacate it would make any planned “return” at a later date still more difficult. And if a consensus is needed on aims it is also needed on tactics, at least to a degree.

These are some of the assumptions in the CP documents.
RECENTLY THERE HAS ARISEN in Italy a movement involving workers in the metal, chemical, cement and building industries, and elsewhere, which has drawn in more than 2,500,000 workers, to speak of the industrial sector alone. In the course of the last month alone, Italian workers engaged in 250 million hours of strike action. All these groupings are acting in unity for a national contract and for the right to negotiate at the level of the enterprise on the main aspects of workers' conditions. The main demands in the national contract are a wage increase of around 20 per cent; the 40-hour working week in five days; and trade union rights.

Apart from its great breadth, the principal characteristic of this movement is its unity. Once the demands were drawn up, the trade union organisations began to work in close unity of action, effecting a striking development of trade union democracy through rank and file consultations which involved millions of workers. This continuous participation of the workers in union decisions is still proceeding through the discussion on the forms of struggle, which are decided in the factories, and will continue throughout the period of the negotiations.

We are negotiating while strike action continues. It is important to underline that the methods of struggle adopted — strikes of a few hours duration each day, often with several work stoppages during the day — are having a big influence on production, while at the same time permitting the workers to earn a part of their wages. This enables them to resist for longer and favors the participation of all workers in the movement. For these reasons, almost everywhere the percentage of workers taking part in strike action is extremely high, and in many enterprises clerical staff and technicians have joined in.

Luciano Lama is secretary of one of the main trade union centres in Italy — Confederazione Generale Italiana di Lavoro. This speech was delivered at the Seventh Congress of the World Federation of Trade Unions held in Budapest, October 17-26, 1969.
To lead such a vast and differentiated movement is no easy thing, but gives rise to many problems. In some enterprises, for example, small groups of an anarcho-syndicalist character — prodded from outside, but not to be confused with the student movement — are seeking to give the actions an extremist character which would rapidly lead us into an impasse. Up to the present, the workers have replied with firmness to these tendencies, which we are struggling against. But further than this, from within the movement itself we have witnessed the daily emergence of tendencies seeking the untimely extension and generalisation of the action, or its sharpening in various ways, which would, if they prevailed, lead to the isolation of certain enterprises or sectors from the rest of the masses.

The trade union organisations are leading the struggles and intervene to correct and guide the action, while involving in the discussions not only the active groupings but the broad masses of workers as well. Thus, the trade union struggle becomes also an important aspect of the development of democracy and participation. In fact, these struggles also have political importance and significance. With their advanced objectives, they seek not only to change the distribution of income, but also the relations between social forces. These struggles are in fact contesting the mechanism of capitalist accumulation and are broadening the class groupings around the working class. By their sacrifices, by hundreds of millions of hours of strike action, the workers are seeking a new weight in society and the enhancement of their influence in the control of economic and social policy. Thus, the trade union confederations are demanding reforms also in matters concerning housing, social security and taxation. General strikes have taken place in scores of towns for these aims, and the CGIL affirms the need for a national general strike before the end of the current month.

I have already said that the predominant characteristic of these struggles is unity. This, naturally, is a unity in action, but it is a very close unity, which brings us closer to trade union unification, an objective for which we strive with the greatest determination. All these programs of demands and forms of struggle are decided upon autonomously by the trade unions, but that takes nothing away from the weight exerted by these struggles on the social and political life of the nation. The autonomy of the trade unions has been revealed once again on this occasion as the essential condition of unity, since workers who are all firmly convinced of the need to win the demands presented and who therefore participate in a massive class struggle are still quite often divided in their political and ideological positions.

It seemed to us it was our duty to present to the Congress a synthesised picture of the successes and the struggles which are at present proceeding in Italy in order to bring forward their characteristic of deep unity, resulting from a correct trade union policy,
but at the same time to indicate their limitations. Actually, while we are fully aware of the political value of these struggles, we are unable to present them superficially as the product of a bloc of monolithic and undifferentiated forces. If we, as has been done in the Report, in analysing these movements in Western Europe, were to come to the conclusion that they pose — and these are the exact words used in the Report — “the question of power, of a genuine democracy, of the socialisation of the means of production, of socialism,” we would be falsifying the presentation of reality, at least as far as our country is concerned.

In our view, what needs to be emphasised is the confluence in these movements of working class forces of diverse political orientations. It must be said that in the general front of workers’ struggle, within the framework of a correct general line, there have emerged anarcho-syndicalist and pan-syndicalist tendencies which deny the value of all political forces. Other, by no means negligible groupings, while they take part in the struggle to improve the conditions of life of the workers and to enhance the class power expressed by the trade unions, nevertheless refuse to the advanced parties of the working class the place that is their right in democratic life.

The advances made should not lead us into making superficial assessments. Today, it is incontestable that the idea of socialism is making headway even if by new paths and diverse forms when compared with those already existing. Moreover, the forces fighting for progressive and democratic solutions are growing, even if these forces are non-socialist. The genuinely anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist character of the process at present under way must be recognised, but here we have a phenomenon of the world situation which should not be interpreted by the World Federation of Trade Unions as an opting for socialism. Taking account of the political diversity which characterises these struggles, the WFTU should evaluate the stimulus which flows from them to the building of progressive and anti-capitalist societies, recognising the right of each national trade union organisation to interpret its own situation freely and autonomously.

While there exists in Italy trade union unity of action and the political will to overcome the obstacles confronting an organic unity of the trade union movement, big problems still remain in the matter of evaluation of the international situation. There is for example unity of opinion on the anti-fascist struggle and on the need to extend solidarity to the workers of Europe oppressed by fascism in Spain, Portugal and Greece; there is a good measure of unity on the question of extending support to the heroic struggle of the Vietnamese people, on the problems of the Middle East and on European security.
We believe that these observations are true not only for our country but also for Western Europe in general. The economic and social phenomena described in the report by Comrade Gensous have in general sharpened class conflicts on questions of full employment, wages, trade union rights, the powers of trade unions to negotiate on questions of the organisation of labor and the orientation of economic policy. Faced with these phenomena, a tendency is appearing in European society — however varied and differentiated this society is — for a broader affirmation of the personality of the worker, for a democracy with a higher content, for new levels of unity and international solidarity.

Not only in Italy and France, but throughout the West, the workers are struggling with increased vigor. And even in those countries where the unions, still bound by old formulas, have remained prisoners of a bureaucratic incrustation which has weakened their fighting character, the workers are struggling and pushing the traditional trade union movement to a genuine review of its methods through self-criticism, and towards self-renewal. The struggles of which the broad masses are the protagonists in Italy, France, Belgium, Great Britain, Spain, and West Germany are based on a great heritage of national trade union achievements, on often splendid traditions of the working class which, despite the diversions which plague it, still represents an important factor influencing the evolution of political, economic and social relations.

There is a constantly deepening awareness of the fact that the main social and economic objectives, the goals of democratic development and peace, can be achieved through the effecting of deep changes in employing-class and governmental policies in the course of mass struggle on the national scale, co-ordinated at the European level. This awareness has inspired the close collaboration which has been established between the CGIL and the CGT. We have achieved significant results in succeeding in establishing ourselves with the European Economic Community and the European Trade Union Organisations as a force which can no longer be ignored. The development of these bilateral relations is at present finding a positive outcome in a new type of relations between the European secretariats of the CGT-CGIL, the WCDL and the ICFTU.

This is the first time that the ICFTU's executive committee has discussed, as it did on October 9 last, the draft of a European trade union program drawn up and put forward by the CGT-CGIL joint committee. Leaving aside the basic position taken up by this body in connection with our propositions, the very fact that the discussion took place represents further progress towards trade union unity on an EEC-wide scale. Under the impetus of the new problems posed for the trade unions by today's reality, meetings and consultations of unionists at the industry-group level are increasing.
The CGIL's whole effort to establish new relations of trade union agreement on a European scale receives worthwhile support from the policy of united action achieved in Italy. This policy, whose results up to the present may be described as remarkable, is the result of a process of self-criticism which has embraced the whole Italian trade union movement, and therefore some of our own methods of the past. This unification process has not weakened the class struggle in Italy but on the contrary has strengthened it, by enhancing the role of the trade union movement in Italian society.

This unification process already calls for its prolongation at the international level. The joint statement of the secretariats of the three Italian trade union confederations is only a few days old; the three confederations say in this statement that they have decided to make a radical examination of the questions associated with a trade union policy capable of defending the interests of the workers even on an international scale, and especially of the workers of the "European zone", and to "support in the European trade union organisations to which they belong the holding of an open meeting between these organisations, unfettered by the prejudices which exist between them, in order to check up at this level on the possibilities and the difficulties existing for the achievement of desirable agreements."

At this point, it seems to us appropriate that we should ask ourselves to what extent the international trade union bodies have contributed to this unification process and to the quest for a new type of international trade union relations. The Seventh Congress of the CGIL, held in June last, estimated that the international trade union federations have proved unable to make such a contribution because they are still prisoners — although to different degrees and in different ways — of the logic of splits and the logic of blocs. It must be acknowledged that, with some exceptions, the world trade union movement has been unable to offer adequate political responses and consistent behaviour. Too much red tape still prevents the trade union movement as it exists today from fighting in an effective manner for peace, social progress and the emancipation of the working class.

The WFTU has as its principal task to strive for the achievement of new relationships of co-operation, understanding and unity of action, enabling the trade unions to oppose in an effective manner the international power of capitalism and imperialism. In the view of the CGIL, the accomplishment of this task requires of the WFTU a profound self-transformation, a changing of its role, orientation and structures, and the basing of its initiatives on regional activities. In the commission for the revision of the constitution of the WFTU,
expressing our approval of the new text, we reaffirmed the im-
portance of the involvement of the CGIL within the WFTU. The
WFTU, by accentuating its trade union character, and its autonomy
in relation to parties and governments, should take on new functions
favoring the quest for trade union unity and the development of the
class struggle and united struggles for peace, the re-launching of
the great themes of trade union internationalism without reference
to ideologies or States, the formulation of concrete answers to the
requirements of social transformation, the development of different
regions of the world, the safeguarding of national independence and
sovereignty.

This transformation of the WFTU becomes still more urgent if
one thinks of the events which have lately troubled and still trouble
international trade union life. The events in Czechoslovakia have
had big repercussions in the trade union movement of all countries,
they have given rise to new problems and they have led — even
within the WFTU itself — to profound divergences of opinion of a
general, national and international character. We are all aware of
the fact that the differences on this question are of such scope that
a debate held here on this matter would lead to the shifting of the
whole centre of gravity of the work of the Congress. That we do
not want.

Then again, these diversities of judgment on the Czechoslovak
events can have an influence, even if indirectly, on a number of
concrete aspects of our discussion. As far as we are concerned,
we believe that our judgments, which we consider correct and
which we here re-affirm, even after the most recent events, are an
important source of guidelines for our increasingly coherent trade
union action, for peace, in full respect of the principle of non-
interference, of the independence and national sovereignty of all
peoples, in the spirit of proletarian internationalism.

We do not believe — and recent events confirm this — that the
problems of the consolidation of socialism in a given country, or
its advance in new countries, can be resolved by any other instru-
ments than the direct participation of the masses concerned with
the building of the new society and with the defence of their power.
We know that in the trade union movement there are some who
believe that in a socialist country the trade unions should occupy
the same position as if they were working in a capitalist society. We
are against this conception; the trade unions cannot but take account
of the diversities of structure of the societies in which they are
called upon to act. Everyone knows that in a socialist society the
trade unions have particular tasks to perform.

But even as we emphasise this, we also declare that even after
the ending of exploitation, the trade unions cannot be confused,
through abdication of their role, with the structures of state power. Even in a socialist system, the trade unions must know how to express, and to stimulate, the will and the demands of the masses, even of the non-party masses. Even in a socialist system, a trade union which defends the power of the workers can find itself in disagreement — and this has certainly happened already — on questions of the manner in which technical advances are to be utilised, of wages policy, investments, consumer goods, and so on. There simply is no eternal law for solving these problems, which is valid for all concrete situations. The voice of the trade unions, freely expressed in open discussions, when it finds itself confronted with positions expressing other legitimate interests, can in a more effective manner not only defend the immediate interests of the workers but also make a still greater contribution to the strengthening and development of socialism.

The very character of the WFTU, which embraces trade union movements working in different economic and social systems, demands a diversification of trade union strategies. We appreciate the fact that the reporter has referred to the observations made by us at the General Council meeting in Berlin. On this occasion we remarked that the profound economic, political and social differences between the continents of Asia, Africa and Latin America do not permit us to approach all these different realities by grouping them under the definition of "Third World countries", or developing countries.

The heroic struggle of the Vietnamese people against American imperialism gives the whole Asian workers' and people's movement aspects and characteristics appropriate to this continent. The existence in Africa of two autonomous regional organisations calls for a type of relations and initiatives which must take account of the role of these regional organisations, and of their particular requirements in terms of international connections. In Latin America, the stormy development of mass struggle and of the process of united action which is now under way differs sharply from European experiences.

All this adds to the complexity of the task of analysis of the different realities. Despite the weight of Europe, it must be admitted that the WFTU, as it exists today, has not succeeded in welding politically the liberation movement and the workers' forces of the industrialised countries of Europe. And why? The broad and even effective solidarity actions led by the WFTU have been insufficient to resolve the question, and the problem still remains.

The essential condition for resolving these great problems is to know how to make one's starting point the reality as it exists, and not as one imagines it is, using formulas which no longer apply.
It is schematic, for example, to artificially separate economic and political objectives. By doing this, political aims are seen outside their logical trade union context and we do not succeed in organising in Europe that great anti-imperialist movement which the trade union movement carries latent within itself.

The anti-imperialist line of the trade union movement is valid only if it is universal. From this point of view, to go so far as to ignore in an analysis of the world situation national realities such as those of China and Yugoslavia, even if these countries are either absent or present only in the capacity of observers at our Congress, is a mistake. The workers of these countries represent irreplaceable forces in world action against imperialism.

In this unified, global conception, the region which is homogeneous from the economic and social points of view becomes the source of experience. It is at this level that the national trade union centres affiliated to the WFTU, joined in regional co-ordinating organisations, can take timely autonomous initiatives in relation to other trade union organisations. This means that the trade union character of the WFTU must be realised not only through ensuring liberty of initiative to its International Departments — which by their nature are instruments for the development of trade union united action — but also in forming regional organisations grouping the trade union bodies belonging to the WFTU. This work must be done patiently, it could perhaps take a long time, but it is only in this way that results will be achieved. We wish to mobilise new forces for the support of a policy of peace, we wish to broaden the front of the forces working for security in Europe.

Our opinions differ in a number of respects from those expressed in the Report. Account should be taken of this fact. Before leaving, we discussed our participation in this Congress in our Executive Committee and we received a unanimous mandate for the line we have expressed here. We cannot however pass over the fact that the socialist comrades — an important part of the CGIL — decided not to take part in the Congress, saying that they did not believe our points of view could receive any favorable reception here.

It ought to be clear that when we call for a transformation of the WFTU we do it not in order to weaken the organisation but to give to it that capacity for initiative and efficacy of action which would allow it to exercise real leadership over a great mass movement and not merely to express positions on this or that issue. The future of the WFTU — and even more, that of the other international organisations — depends in our view on its capacity to transform itself, to adapt itself to the new reality of a changing world.
ANY ATTEMPT TO DEVELOP deep going socialist change in Australia will be impossible without a working class and trade union movement well educated in revolutionary, marxist concepts of society. In fact, I believe, the crisis besetting the union movement from top to bottom is basically ideological. Given that as the basis of the problem, the marxists and conscious left in the unions have to devise a long range strategy for revolutionising the movement. This means setting about the job of educating union members to give them the potential of being able to see the contradictions in society. However, before we race off to take Marx, Lenin and Gramsci to the workshop, we need to have an understanding of just what we are trying to achieve.

It would be a truism to say that an educated and aware union membership would be capable of many things: the development of
workers' control programs, militant action on political questions, a conscious widespread democracy in opposition to bureaucratic trends, and above all, the kind of political understanding which could lead to the defeat of capitalism itself. Left wing worker education, which stemmed from the Communist Party and organisations like the Victorian Labor College has so far proved largely ineffective. The Communist Party has had an important position in the unions but has failed in or virtually ignored the task of extending its influence ideologically. It has essentially been issue- or action-oriented. On the other hand the Labor College has perhaps been the opposite. It has been largely divorced from action and rank and file workers, with its emphasis and influence mainly on a few union officials.

The very important lesson for us from these experiences is that ideological work should go deep amongst the rank and file and be closely linked up with the action which is taking place. In particular, at least till recently, there was not so much the effort to get unionists to think deeply about problems as to accept ready made slogans and solutions which entailed little analysis and little participation in their working out. What is required is a whole new generation of leaders unhobbled by economism, with a fundamental understanding of society, combined with a dynamism and ability to organise and bring revolutionary theory to the working people. This would be in sharp contrast to the great majority of present union leaders, and education work directed towards rank and file leaders should have this perspective.

Perry Anderson in his essay in _The Incompatibles_ explains very clearly the inherent shortcomings of unionism, as did Lenin and Marx before him. He is here examining the present British Trade Union set up and how it has not yet extended very far beyond the traditional economism. He says that unions will not supplant political parties as instruments of social change, although in their situation vis a vis a Labor Government the traditional economic demands will have more of an immediate political dimension. He goes on to pose the question, "Will the unions sponsor a new political party as it once sponsored the Labor Party?"

The important point for us is to thoroughly understand the inherent shortcomings of unionism in order to work to overcome them. We have a somewhat different set of conditions from Britain and therefore can probably come to conclusions slightly different from Anderson's. For example, unionism is far more widespread and influential in Australia and, among other things, at long last we have a leadership developing which shows signs of being able to transcend the old barriers of economism. In fact, probably our biggest difference with Perry Anderson would be that unions will
become more political because of the political and social questions they take up as a result of economic issues. It is likely that given effective influence and leadership unions will more closely identify with radical political parties or will demand more radical programs from existing political parties. But unions, even radicalised unions, cannot substitute for a political party since their interests are sectional and they involve in their ranks people of vastly different levels of understanding, commitment and activity. Nevertheless if unions move to embrace wider and more fundamental political issues in society they will influence the future development of the political organisations of the left and play a greater role in activity for radical social change.

The job for us then is through the agency of unions, to see that any such political movement is socialist in content and not a further integration in the system. Greater attention is now being paid to the task of educating members as part of the activity of trade unions. However, there are two rather clearly defined philosophies emerging in relation to education work. One is designed to mould a more efficient movement with a better public image, etc., which can wrest more of the spoils within the so-called pluralist society. The other is the revolutionary concept designed to explain society in all its contradictions and immorality, and point to the alternatives.

The renewed interest in the Victorian Labor College and the development of the Trade Union Education and Research Centre in Sydney are important in this respect. Unfortunately, the T.U.E. & R.C. and its magazine Modern Unionist tends towards the first concept and at this stage contains little that is revolutionary, and could even have the opposite effect. If we produce, as a result of education, reformist oriented leaders, all we will have are unions which will more effectively fit into the corporate capitalist set up. To be effective the revolutionary concept of education must be at the centre of our thinking all the time.

Such widespread education at a factory or workplace level is a rather formidable task. Nevertheless, an analysis of union structures and activities brings it more into perspective. For instance, the major unions and associations, even considering only their biggest work places, have direct contact with many thousands of workers, most of whom at the present time are left to their own devices on things other than wages and conditions. It is not too difficult to organise speakers, classes and cultural activities regularly of a lunch time, and if well done would definitely evoke a response. Such activities should be coupled with central lectures and schools ranging from a day up to three or six months, where we get people off the job.
What we should aim to develop is an approach by shop stewards and activists such that the potential for real self-action on the widest range of questions becomes possible. This means curricula and programs consciously aimed at exposing the monopoly, class nature of our society so that such views win through on the strength of argument.

Such an education program must aim its work at the grass roots and should take into account the following four points, particularly the first:

1. Subjects aimed to develop deeper insights into society — philosophy, economics, history, etc.
2. Topical political and social subjects, which in fact are a concrete expression of No. 1, for example, censorship, Vietnam, conscription, Aborigines etc.
3. Cultural programs and topics to help widen the interests and extend horizons.
4. Subjects such as public speaking, administration, etc., to lay a better organisational basis for a revolutionary consciousness.

If this kind of activity is to be effective, money will need to be spent. Some unions espousing progressive ideals are sitting on many thousands of dollars and are frightened to use them. Even a small levy on members can raise a lot of money as in the AEU in Victoria for example, where a general purpose 50 cent levy has meant that the education activity will have a substantial sum at its disposal. In particular, as this work develops it will be necessary to provide full time organisers or education officers. Their role must be that of carrying the ideological struggle right into the factories, and to be effective they would need to be free from the every day grind and machinery role of a normal organiser. They would sit down with shop committees to help plan programs, supply speakers, find out the needs and to actually lecture themselves.

There is an important role in this work for academics. I am sure that many who are experts on particular subjects would be pleased to spend a little time in factories or workplaces during lunch times. The use of tape recorded lectures for unionists to listen to over lunch would also be of great value. Recent experiences in the Victorian AEU branch indicate the potential. When the incident at the Williamstown Court over conscription objector Laurie Carmichael Jnr. broke and involved most of the union leadership, many factories were in opposition to such deep involvement in political action. As a result, the officials had to go out into the shops and argue for the policy and action which took place. This was the first really conscious and concentrated effort to argue the Vietnam and con-
scription question in a mass way in the factories, apart from some printed propaganda, sporadic meetings and conferences of mainly convinced people.

The result to date has been excellent, and some factories which initially expressed opposition changed their position to one of support when confronted with reasoned and convincing argument. The point here is that the results have been good despite the fact that insufficient ground work was done over a considerable period. However, if there had been a long period of consistent attention in the factories including lectures, classes and other activities, no doubt many more would have been prepared to stop work and protest.

On the cultural side, the experience with La Mama Theatre during the first week of December was outstanding. They performed during lunch times at the gates of several large factories. In all cases the attendance was excellent, and although there was some doubt and cynicism initially, the performers got the audience very interested, and when they finished discussed the whole thing with them. Their politics were hard hitting and succeeded in getting a message across which would otherwise take far longer. In fact, it can probably be summed up by the comment of a worker at the Newport Railways Workshop, "Christ! That's just what life is like." It has been a good experiment and will be repeated in a much bigger way in the coming year. This street theatre is an excellent example of the potential for ideological and cultural activity.

A further example was the day of lectures held last August when 37 shop stewards booked off the job by their fellow workers, attended. They listened to lectures on Labor history, union organisation and so on. All expressed keen desire for further such activities. The value was shown particularly in the fact that the last hour or so was spent in discussing the ways and means for the AEU to be a stronger force for socialism. The program for the coming year will contain several of these days, each devoted to one specific topic. The important point is that to reach the necessary level on these political questions it is insufficient to rely solely on the experiences of working class actions. Conscious efforts have to be made to take this to higher levels and education plays a part in this.

This brings us to the all important point of whether we view the industrial working class as potentially revolutionary or rely only on the intellectual culture of the more highly skilled technicians, scientists, students, etc., for change. Whilst it is true to say that large sections of the working class are politically apathetic and seem
to have found their place in and made their peace with the system, this is none the less in the main an unconscious position. This is contrasted to large sections of the middle class who consciously argue that their place is in the private enterprise system.

Experience is tending to show that given revolutionary leadership in struggle and confronted with well thought out and reasoned arguments, most workers will come down on the progressive side of many political and social questions. More and more action is now being taken around wider issues which often call into question our very system and cannot be bought off with a mere couple of dollars a week increase. This year we have seen the penal clauses defied, concern and action on town planning, pollution. Even the Federal election result has a significant feature in that it is probably the first big swing to the ALP which wasn't the result of a major economic crisis or problem, or a national crisis such as during the second world war. It tended to show that the Australian people are capable of taking a conscious, reasoned view of society's problems. This of course is very far from a revolutionary position, but in this instance it is the process and not the end result which is important. The fact that a deeper thinking electorate seemed to emerge means that there is a basis for the kind of education talked about here.

The potential for workers' control programs and action will certainly be enhanced by an effective education program. In comparison with students who have raised the concept of student power, largely due to the very kind of education they have received, few workers have had the advantage of education which can assist the questioning of society. It is surely obvious that a thoroughgoing revolutionary approach based on enlightened leadership at job level will be necessary for any development in the field of workers' control. Our overall aim could well be summed up in the slogan, "From Self Action to Self Management" through action and education.

Many cynics say that we won't get change until the worker has a "pinched gut". In fact, the working people, because their economic position in an absolute sense is improving, are now being confronted by much deeper problems which are far more revolutionary in content because they are at odds with the system while most economic demands can be bought off. However, the extent to which that revolutionary potential develops is contingent on widespread union education linked up with action and revolutionary perspectives, and it can probably be said that those who do not pay a great deal of attention to making such a program an integral part of future tasks will bear a heavy responsibility of rendering very dim the prospect of the development of a revolutionary working class.
IT IS SURELY a sign of the times, and one that gives ground for the greatest satisfaction, that a major Australian political figure should be occupying himself with serious and sympathetic study of the revolutionary history of an Asian society. One has only to reckon the improbability of such a thing happening 20 or 30 years ago to measure something of the shift in the centre of gravity of Australian political life which has taken place over those years and is continuing at an accelerated rate.

Already Dr. J. F. Cairns' latest book*, has been greeted with howls of rage by such spokesmen for the far Right as Mr. Geoffrey Fairbairn and the leaders of the D.L.P. Indeed, the editors of the DLP journal Focus thought they were carrying off a political masterstroke when they published on the front page of a recent issue a photograph of Mr. Whitlam and Dr. Cairns together at the launching of the book in Melbourne before Xmas. The mere fact that the Labor Leader associated himself with the occasion was seen by these pundits as new and particularly telling evidence that the Labor Party is still, as for so many years past, going to the dogs.

For his part, Mr. Fairbairn, in a review in the Sydney Morning Herald, took violent exception to Dr. Cairns' closely argued point that the Vietnamese liberation forces only resorted to armed struggle after systematic repression by the Diem regime had


Malcolm Salmon spent several years in Vietnam; he is foreign editor of Tribune.
rendered peaceful political forms of action impossible. It is essential to the case of such men as Mr. Fairbairn, who never say boo about such things as B-52 saturation raids on the South Vietnam countryside or the massacre at My Lai, to hold that the "communists" are always and everywhere the initiators of violence. But such reactions really serve only as negative confirmation of the significance of Cairns' work.

The Eagle and the Lotus moves at several levels. It provides first of all a bird's eye view of the history of French intervention in Vietnam. One could wish that Dr. Cairns had found a slightly less grand formulation than "Western Intervention in Vietnam 1847-1968" for his sub-title, since he devotes only 27 pages to the entire period of French colonisation up to Vietnam's August revolution of 1945. The section on United States intervention in the post-Geneva period is, understandably perhaps, much more substantial. Indeed, the 60-odd pages of the chapter (The Unwinnable War) on the course of the conflict from 1962 to 1968 could probably have done with some pruning. It is here particularly that the mass of material at the author's disposal seems to get away from him to some extent, and here that he could lose all but the most determined of readers.

But the essential points are strongly made in these sections of the book — the continuity of the Vietnamese independence struggle from the earliest days of the French incursion into Vietnam until the present, the indigenous character of the movement both to Vietnam as a whole in the past, and to South rather than to North Vietnam in today's circumstances.

Dr. Cairns' close study of American sources is of extreme value, enabling him to analyse with great penetration the mainsprings of American policy at the given stages — the fateful 1962 shift from the long-standing American appraisal of the Vietnam situation as a civil war situation to the "external aggression" thesis, the overriding necessity of saving the Saigon regime from overthrow which lay behind the escalation of the war (introduction of US combat troops, launching of the bombing of North Vietnam) in 1965, and the decision taken in the latter half of 1967 that a military victory was beyond reach. The author emphasises that the Tet offensive of early 1968 confirmed rather than precipitated this decision.

In my view, Dr. Cairns' study of the Vietnam war becomes controversial only when it is a question of analysing the contending political forces in South Vietnamese society. The "eagle" of his title is, of course, Western interference in the life of the Vietnamese nation over the past 120 years. His
“lotus” may be described as the native civilisation of Vietnam, but, more particularly, it is that “third force” in Vietnamese political life which stands between those who are waging the armed liberation struggle and those who have made themselves the agents of foreign intervention in Vietnamese society.

It is the “third force” that Dr. Cairns would like to see as decisive in Vietnamese affairs. It is my view that through political sympathy and association (especially with such “third force” leaders as the Buddhist bonze Thich Nhat Hanh, who visited Australia some time ago and whose ideas have influenced Dr. Cairns strongly) the author tends to overdraw the significance of this force, and its possible role had there not been massive US military intervention in Vietnam.

I would be the last to deny the role that the “third force” is certain to play in the inevitable eventual political settlement in South Vietnam. Any student of the statements of the National Liberation Front and the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam knows that they share such an approach. One has only to mention the importance attached by them to the recently formed National Alliance of Democratic and Peace-loving Forces, which probably represents the most Left elements of South Vietnam’s “third force” and which, surprisingly, is not mentioned by Dr. Cairns, and the attention they give to the “third force” political exiles from South Vietnam living in such places as Paris and Bangkok, to realise this. On the other side, the fearful, repressive attitude adopted by the Thieu regime in Saigon to any manifestation of third force initiative reflects the same reality.

But the “third force” role will be played in a context basically determined by the course of the struggle between the liberation forces and the invaders and those Vietnamese who have thrown in their lot with them. Its action will in effect merely set the seal upon a situation which is already basically formed. I suppose it can be said with some degree of validity that all political struggle, whether within a political party or in society at large, is designed to win the support of “third forces” — those who inhabit the “middle ground” of politics, the “uncommitted”, the “centre”, the “swinging voters”, and so on. The South Vietnamese political scene is no exception to this rule. But to reason from this ground that the third force is a decisive force is surely to put the cart before the horse. For such a force can only be “decisive” post festum, as Karl Marx was fond of saying — after the event, after the military and political centention of the opposing forces has established the outlines of the new political balance.
All this is not to deny some power of independent initiative to the third force — the examples of third force, mainly Buddhist, action in Hue, Saigon and Da Nang cited by Dr. Cairns did precipitate change, but only in circumstances substantially predetermined for it by the actions of the chief actors in the Vietnamese drama. So, no doubt, it will be in the future as well. Third force leaders like General Duong Van Minh will never play a really decisive role in a nation which has already produced its Ho Chi Minh and Vo Nguyen Giap.

It must be said that Dr. Cairns expresses extreme doubt as to whether his third force will in fact prevail in South Vietnam. He says (p. 195): “Does such a third force (rejecting the NLF but also opposing present Saigon policies) exist in South Vietnam? There can be no doubt that South Vietnam did possess such a third force but American policy has weakened and reduced it. . .”

His main complaint against the Americans, in terms of Vietnamese political life, is precisely that their brutal intervention “weakened and reduced” the third force. His doubt about the future of this force is not surprising because a good part of the book is devoted to an elaboration of the depth and breadth of the struggle of the NLF, in which the role of the Vietnamese communists is, generally speaking highly appraised.

In a certain sense he answers many of his own arguments when he says (p 209): “It (communism) was, in fact, more appropriate to the needs of Vietnam than any other doctrine and in respect to the struggle for national independence and economic and political reform the communists in Vietnam had the best record”. Dr. Cairns’ discussion of the Vietnamese communists’ role, and their maintenance of an independent stance (“their own soul”) in the disputes dividing the world communist movement, is particularly perceptive.

But here again, his account of the flexible and creative way in which they have behaved in this context takes much of the sting out of his repeated warnings (p. 198) of the dangers posed by “dogmatic and relentless communists” in the Vietnam of the future. But the book has a wider canvas than Vietnam. Dr. Cairns is also concerned with the problem of revolutionary war in general. In this context he sees Vietnam (correctly I think) as at the same time unique and in the highest degree typical.

He firmly underlines the primacy of politics in revolutionary war and the fact that for success revolutionary combatants must be firmly rooted in the social context in which they fight. Both conditions he sees as fully applying in the struggle in South Vietnam.
One of the most valuable aspects of the book is its emphasis on the need for structural changes in the countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America. He writes (p. 218):

Economic development is not primarily an economic process. It is a political and social process which leads to economic results ... Land reform is needed in economically under-developed countries; lower rents are needed, and lower interest charges, and higher wages. Are land owners likely to lead a campaign for land distribution and for the lowering of rents? Are money lenders likely to lead a campaign for lower interest charges? Are employers likely to lead a campaign for higher wages? Hence, economic development becomes associated with taking from one class and giving to another ...

The book also contains an extensive discussion of United States policy up to and including the Nixon Doctrine for new forms of intervention in Asia, a critical appraisal of the developing Soviet presence in the region, and a discussion of the future course of Australian foreign policy.

In this last connection he emphasises, once again, as he did with force in his earlier work, Living With Asia, the essential connection between any movement towards an independent foreign policy and internal change within Australia. Such remarks as "we can help social progress elsewhere only if we have some of it in America and Australia" (p. 237), are taking on the quality of vintage Cairns. And again: . . . we must free ourselves from conventional submissiveness in foreign policy — we must cease to be military camp followers — if we are to have a chance of building a better society in Australia" (Introduction, p. xi).

He deals severely with the secretive operation by which a succession of Liberal governments have integrated Australia, through allowing the establishment of US bases on our soil, in the US nuclear system (with no safeguarding anti-ballistic missile), and makes the most forthright call I have yet seen from his pen for a "Fortress Australia" approach to questions of national defence.

It is hardly to be expected that one of Australia's hardest-working politicians should find time to produce a full-length study of any given subject without signs of haste and pressure creeping into the text now and again. This certainly happens with The Eagle and the Lotus. But when all is said, it remains a thoughtful and humane contribution to the Australian discussion of Vietnam and international relations in general. It is a worthy continuation of its author's years-long effort to expose the crime committed in our name through the Vietnam intervention, and to change the line of Australian foreign policy in the direction of national independence and peace.

THOSE who read this book expecting to find the life story of Wilfred Burchett are in for a disappointment. At least I was. Much of the South East Asia material has been dealt with before in Burchett's other books; the only substantially new material is the account of his early life in Australia which has not been written up before.

In his preface Burchett recognises that Passport is not an autobiography, for it is confined to focus on his early life in Australia, and his experiences in South East Asia and adjacent areas. But his life span has taken in more than Australia and South East Asia. It has encompassed the world. The canvas, he writes, is too broad and he has other things to do. So he has written this book instead of writing his memoirs.

Passport is divided into three parts, dealing with the early Australian years, the South East Asia experiences, and the experience of exile as a result of the refusal of the Australian Government to grant him a passport following the mysterious disappearance of his original.

The first section deals with Burchett as a youth in the Depression. One reviewer (Robert Duffield, The Australian 13/12/69), has written that Burchett "began adult life as a bricklayer (and) still writes like one". If this is meant to imply that Burchett is a lousy writer then it is groundless and surely based on personal jealousy. For Burchett must be the envy of thousands of journalists and commentators across the world; he is the best known journalistic commentator on events in South East Asia. A fine effort on the part of a man who, as a journalist is entirely self taught having received no formal journalistic training.

Going back to his ability as a writer, the first section of Passport contains some fine testimonies to his skill. Some of his description of the Australian country-side in Chapter One reveal a fine sensitivity and acute observational powers.

However, he is to be faulted for his caricatures of people met during the Depression years. The first Communist he meets is referred to simply as "Greyhead"; other people receive tags like "The Gay Young Couple", two exploiters of Depression farm labour are referred to as the "Cow Cocky" and "the Boss". This shorthand method enables Burchett to deal with these characters in an impersonal way. It does not require effort on his part to understand these characters as human beings and thus put them down on paper in a way that will make them live for the reader. Rather what we are getting is a straight narrative with a few symbolic characters here and there. The style is that of a pamphlet and not a serious autobiography. Though this monotone is broken when Burchett deals with the unemployed riding the rails, heading for the fruit growing Irrigation Area. This episode does come to life and for a while the spirit of the men is captured.

What Burchett is trying to do with his symbolic characters is to describe the process by which he became a Communist. But he doesn't succeed. He tries to locate it in his personal sense of injustice and the fact that
he experienced “exploitation” during the thirties. However, he shows that it goes deeper than this, that behind his evolution to Communism was a whole new world of ideas, books, journals, and discussions in small town intellectual circles with guest addresses now and then from visiting lecturers. Much of this is only hinted at. Indeed it might be a mistake to refer to Burchett as a Communist for as Duffield has pointed out, nowhere in the book does he say when, or even if, he became a Communist. I make these comments because it is these sorts of details and experiences that one seeks and expects in an attempt at autobiography.

As I noted earlier much of the South East Asian material has appeared before and Burchett here and there slips into quoting or drawing from his other publications. Autoplagiarism is his term for this. However, the chapters on brainwashing, germ warfare, and Vietnam contain new and vital material gathered in very recent times. He successfully counters the allegations against him that he helped the north Koreans brainwash their United Nations prisoners (on the basis of these allegations the Australian Government is withholding his passport). His account of the United States employing germ warfare during the Korean conflict is forceful and the integrity of Burchett as a man and journalist built up through the book comes to the fore so that we believe him in spite (and perhaps because of) official U.S. denials to the contrary. Burchett’s insights into the Vietnam War and his comments on Nixon’s strategy of “steering the war into a new phase” marked by the refusal to pull out all U.S. troops and the creation of a “protracted war”, are of paramount importance to us in Australia. So too is his faith in the revolutionary peoples of Vietnam to fight, against their aggressors, until they have won a final and total victory.

The final section deals with the question of Burchett’s passport. There are only 16 pages devoted to this. On this issue the Australian Government is shown to be foolish, incompetent and extremely reactionary, mainly through the words of the late Harold Holt who was the Minister for Immigration initially responsible for withholding the document. In Australia Burchett’s case has been taken up since 1955 by the Australian Council for Civil Liberties, and the Australian Journalists Association whilst across the world a host of prominent people have petitioned the Australian Government to restore his passport (this petition together with a sample of signatories forms the book’s Appendix). Quoting a Melbourne Age editorial on the passport issue Burchett concludes; “It is this country’s reputation, not Mr. Burchett’s, which is now at stake”.

Burchett is a journalist of a rare breed. He does not owe allegiance to any newspaper, contract, nor editor. His first duty is to humanity. He illustrates this by asking us to envisage “a child being beaten to pulp by a bully. A reporter who rushes to record the scene with camera and tape-recorder might succeed as a journalist, but he fails as a human being. His first responsibility is to rescue the child”. Further, Burchett’s concept of his role as a reporter “is not just to record history but to help shape it in the right direction”. It is these attitudes that have led Wilfred Burchett to carve a niche for himself in contemporary history. He will be remembered, referred to, and talked about long after he is dead, long after many of the petty men who have hounded and reviled him are forgotten. And with such a man it will be a pity if he does not leave us with something more than Passport.

R. J. Cahill
AUSTRALIANS TEND to regard themselves as committed to education despite the rather insignificant amount of money the authorities spend on it. And this is supposed to be a prosperous country. They also see education as the palliative for most collective and individual ills in the community, and look to it as the source of prestige and respect. In the recent Federal elections education again became a vital issue. Therefore an examination of Australia's commitment to education is both timely and valuable. Society, Schools and Progress in Australia is one of a series published by Pergamon Press. It is an attempt to make this examination. But it is only partially successful because one short book cannot be all things to all men. Professor Partridge has tried to satisfy not only the educationist but also the student of sociology, of government and politics, and even the lay reader just interested in the educational fate of his children.

The book attempts too much and therefore only skims the surface. The writer looks at historical influences, organisation, schools and society, higher education, technical and adult education, teachers and growth. The approach follows a pattern set by comparativists. It is readable, very interesting and also challenging. Every reader should gain something from Partridge's explanation although it may only serve as an introduction to his area of interest; the overseas reader would get an understanding of the broad characteristics of Australia's educational arrangements and policies, and have suggested for him the major disagreements in Australian education. The local educationist would get a clear summary of an expert's opinions on the matter, and the lay reader could see his children in the educational perspective.

The book is a good regional study even if it is restricted to set topics so that comparisons with other systems are possible, but it needs to present more of the assumptions underlying the Australian system. But then, even if the publishers had made 200 more pages available, it may be difficult to include any philosophical basis which is unique to Australia. We rely so much on the imported variations, or alternatively on a pragmatic approach, Education should reflect the society out of which it grows and, as Partridge suggests, the new and developing Australian society may force a unique educational philosophy to appear as a guide for future policies, and make our present haphazard approach even more unacceptable than it is now. Up to the present such a philosophy is not apparent, and if the Victorian Teachers' Tribunal is a typical example, it will be missing for some time. Many Victorian teachers believe the Tribunal has taken the role of educational policy making out of the hands of the professionals. The community trains and pays experts like Professor Partridge to apply their knowledge and skills to the problem but governments too often ignore their advice and choose the more convenient course.

The book's greatest strength is related to its greatest weakness. The weakness of course is almost inevitable. We are living in times of incredible and rapid change in education and such a book is unfortunately out of date even before it is published. The amazing growth of the Colleges of Advanced Education at the expense of the universities is examined but the events of the past few months, the time in which trends have crystallized, could not be dis-
cussed. This comment may be made about many books in the field but it does support the view that the publishers should produce a second and revised edition soon. But the book's greatest strength compensates for this weakness. Professor Partridge explores the controversies which always rage in education, and while doing this he gives some indication of the lines of future development. His perception and understanding are in evidence here. The centralist tendencies of the federal government are criticised, not because they are centralist but because the government's actions are frequently capricious, unpredictable and overbearing. These circumstances undoubtedly frustrate the professional educational planner. State primary schools may only get a national flag or teachers colleges in 6 states a mere 60 million dollars over 6 years, but almost at a whim the flood of money may be theirs next. The money is needed but inconsistent changes in policy are not.

It is odd that this book has been placed between covers which are garish and similar to a child's textbook. The material between the covers makes a valuable contribution to education generally and Australian educational writing specifically. This is despite the problems Professor Partridge had in identifying his readers, and in trying to find an Australian philosophy of education.

R. & J.B.


THIS is the final volume in the first complete edition of Lawson's verse. It contains all the verse he wrote during the last thirteen years of his life. As in the two previous volumes, Professor Roderick provides alternative readings, showing the various revisions Lawson made, as well as a section of notes on relevant background material.

The verse of the last period of Lawson's life has generally been regarded as very much the work of a man in his decline. Lawson himself perhaps felt this, too, for of the verse in the 1918 edition of his Selected Poems, some seventy per cent belonged originally to the pre-1900 period. Angus and Robertson's, who had been Lawson's publishers from the time of his second book (In the Days When the World Was Wide, 1896), realised the greatly inferior nature of most of Lawson's later work also, for they declined to publish some of the later volumes, though George Robertson was an unfailingly generous benefactor to the increasingly destitute and down-at-heel Lawson.

Professor Roderick goes to some pains in his Introduction to develop a new argument concerning the achievement of some of this later Lawson, "Lawson was saved from poetic death," he says, "by the outbreak of war against the Central Powers. This event, accompanied as it was by an intense propaganda campaign on both sides, aroused him from his torpor. It awakened echoes of his youthful enthusiasm for the purging fires of war. Lawson had always praised war as the maker of nations, peace as the canker that rotted the national frame, and he welcomed the holocaust of 1914-18 as the fulfilment of his prophecies."

He goes on to suggest that, though much of Lawson's verse at this time was undeniably jingoistic, he was also a force for humanitarianism and sanity, pointing out "that the death of decent men on either side brought sorrow to people somewhere." "For a while," Roderick concludes, "he felt he was once more the folk voice of Australia."
Though this argument does throw some light on the extent to which Lawson needed some strong external stimulus to keep his poetic fires burning, it does little to redeem those fires themselves. Roderick supports his argument by quoting this couplet, as evidence of Lawson's seeing "the devastation of European society with the eye of a poet."

Take an old Bulgarian widow who has lost her little store,

Who has lost her sons in battle, paint her face, and call it "War".

But surely the opposite point applies. The lines are little more than a rhythmical formula, filled out with sentiment and an easy pathos. Put them up against any one of Wilfred Owen's poems and their essentially maudlin character is the most immediately obvious thing.

Of course, Owen experienced World War I and Lawson did not, despite his attempts to enlist. Lawson's war poems were only his imaginative concept of what the war was like, a concept largely influenced by official propaganda. And at this stage of his life Lawson was almost incapable of the sustained effort and concentration needed if his imagination was to produce anything more than sentimental or jingoistic doggerel.

This volume, while completing what will undoubtedly be the standard edition of Lawson's verse for many years to come, is nonetheless a sad memorial. Lawson, like his contemporary, Steele Rudd, lived too long, and the values and attitudes of his earliest work, for which he is most justly remembered, degenerated into the postures and easy conventions of the decade before his death.

LEON CANTRELL
CHINA’S
REVOLUTION
20 YEARS AFTER

To mark the twentieth anniversary of one of the great social events of this century, the Chinese Revolution, Australian Left Review organised a symposium in Sydney at the end of September 1969.

Papers were read by Prof. C. P. FitzGerald, recognised world authority on China; Bruce McFarlane, an economist who visited China in 1968; Colin Mackerras, who taught in China during 1964-66 and Eric Aarons, an editor of Australian Left Review who spent the years 1951-54 in China.

The papers presented were:

Prof. C. P. FitzGerald European, American and Australian Attitudes to the Chinese Revolution
Colin Mackerras The Ethical Content of the Chinese Revolution
Bruce McFarlane Chinese Economy and Technology after 20 Years of Socialism
Eric Aarons Aspects of Chinese Politics Today
