the australian left: theory, strategy, practice

maoism in australia

trotskyist trends

towards a revolutionary culture

for socialist consciousness in the unions
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### AUSTRALIAN LEFT REVIEW

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the australian left: theory, strategy, practice

The process of fragmentation and renewal of the left, which in recent years has proceeded apace in Australia as it has throughout the world, has led to the formation of a number of left groups, tendencies and parties. In Australia, these groups and parties have tended to follow an international pattern — that is, they adhere to the programs and policies of some tendency which exists in at least a number of countries, even though they may not formally be linked with an international organisation. There are, of course, specific features of the Australian left, as there are of the left in any country, but the point is that there is a definite pattern to be discerned in the re-formation of the world left, especially in the advanced capitalist states. This pattern of differentiation of the left reflects, by and large, real differences of attitude towards the present social reality and how to change it.

What theoretical differences are there between various left groups, and why do these exist? What are the important differences in strategic perspective, and how is one to assess them? What criteria can be used to evaluate the effectiveness or otherwise of the different strategies? What tactics are used by the various groups in pursuing their stated aims? Is there a gap between the theory and practice of the left? How should the left debate and test its differences?

Theory

The theoretical differences on the left are many and varied, and are often difficult to separate from strategic, tactical and personality differences, all of which are often justified in theoretical or pseudo-theoretical terms. However, there are discernible main areas of disagreement, four of which seem basic:

1) the kind of socialist society aimed for;
2) estimation of the nature of the period we are living in, and the type of critique made of capitalist society;
3) view of the possibilities and dynamics of change and what social forces constitute the main basis for change;
4) the type of theory preferred: open/closed, fundamentalist/innovatory, dogmatic/scientific.

(Many differences listed under 1), 2) and 3) eventually come down to this.)

1) While the various left trends (ranging from the anarchists on one hand to left reformists on the other) are more or less agreed on the broad outlines of the future society we aim to bring about, there are substantial and crucial differences. These centre particularly around the degree of autonomy, democracy, decentralisation and self-management to be aimed for in the period immediately following the seizure of power. While there are some superficial views which see no role for any planning or central management at all, we believe that the tendency on the left is to err in the other direction — to place undue emphasis on the role of central institutions, organisations and parties. But it must be said that the main problem in this area is the lack of any analysis of what the future socialist society might, or should, be like. What most groups have in common, whether they believe in bureaucracy or are against it, workers' control or the party apparatus — all are united in their use of the word "socialism" in an abstract, almost mystical, way.

Socialism, quite rightly, is seen as the answer to the ills of capitalism, but so often that is all it is seen as. There is little attempt to show concretely how the various problems which are insoluble under capitalism would be tackled under socialism. This may seem a minor point but, in fact, it is closely related to the strategies adopted in the fight for socialism. An abstract, far-off conception of socialism tends to foster "great day" strategies which look forward to the inevitable collapse of capitalism, which will just as inevitably be followed by support for the socialist alternative and the socialist revolution. There is no attempt to link specific features of the socialist alternative to the specific problems which people feel under capitalism.

While the CPA still has much to do in the elaboration of a model of the socialist society it stands for, it has gone further in doing this than any other group on the Australian left, and further than most in the world left. This model is there for criticism, discussion and improvement; others should indicate their disagreements or otherwise with it.

2) While virtually everyone on the left sees the present as a period of crisis for capitalism, there are great differences on the nature and degree of the crisis, and what it means. There are those who see any crisis of capitalism simply in economic-structural terms, and some of them see an imminent major economic collapse. Their critique of capitalism tends to confine itself to stating that capitalism cannot organise the economy properly and eventually this will lead to an economic crisis which will only be resolved by instituting a socialist economy. This position sees other aspects of the crisis of capitalist society as peripheral and unimportant, or to be left aside until after the socialist revolution.
As a reaction to this constipated, conservative view, there are those who forget economic-structural factors altogether, concentrating purely on cultural and ideological issues. We argue for the necessity of a total understanding and critique of capitalism, in all its aspects, ranging from economic analysis to the moral and psychological components. We see the crisis of capitalism as expressing itself in all areas. Moreover, the relative importance of any aspect changes with time, so that at one period economic factors may dominate, while at others the economy is relatively unimportant and the crisis of capitalist society takes a cultural, moral or ideological form. Which aspect may bring about the final downfall of capitalism is a matter for speculation, but the important thing for revolutionaries is to analyse and understand all the factors which may contribute. Indeed, it is probably true to say that only the maturing of crises in a whole number of spheres over a period of time, will create the preconditions for revolution.

3) It is in the analysis of the possibilities of change, how change is likely to occur and who is likely to bring it about, that many of the real differences lie. For a start, there are the long-standing reform or revolution arguments, but even within the revolutionary movement there are sharp and bitter theoretical disagreements about these issues.

Traditionally, marxism has seen the working class — all those who have nothing but their labor power — as the main revolutionary force in capitalist society. We see no reason to change that view, so long as we understand the vast changes in the class structure of capitalist society, and see that things are a deal more complicated than the simple picture of industrial workers versus capitalists. We now live under what has been described as neo-capitalism, which has a multitude of features that distinguish it from the capitalism of Marx' or Lenin's day.

One such feature is that the class of all those who sell their labor power in order to live is a highly structured and stratified entity, consisting of various segments and sub-segments. Each of these occupies a slightly different place in the social structure and undergoes different life-experiences, which produce different forms of consciousness. What is needed is an understanding of these forms and their likely evolution. But what we so often get is a retreat to marxist dogma, and the nominating of the industrial working class as the only revolutionary force, while all other sectors are middle class vacillators. Conversely, there are those who equally dogmatically pronounce the working class dead as a force for change, turning their attention to other sections or else to other societies.

We believe that in the conditions of modern capitalism, all sections of the working class must be seen as potential revolutionary forces, but to varying degrees and in different ways (for instance, the membership and leadership of revolutionary parties may tend to come from different sections at different times, and revolutionary consciousness may come to one group of workers sooner than to another). What is needed is analysis of these issues, not a priori assumptions and dogmatic assertion.

4) At the root of many theoretical differences there is the question of what type of theory is preferred. This is often largely a question of personal psychological preferences, but more important there are the wider intellectual and philosophical questions. While it is true that left-wingers in general are highly ideological creatures, particularly when compared with society at large, it is also true that at one extreme ideology becomes almost a mystical religion, while at another a totally empirical anti-theoretical approach is adopted (this is in itself an ideological position of sorts).

Many individuals and groups on the left are, at heart, fundamentalists — there are certain tenets, propositions and beliefs which cannot be questioned whatever the circumstances. While in everyday political activity, such people are often effective (not least because of the appeal of simplistic solutions and slogans) and creative, there usually comes a point where dogma interferes with reasoning and fundamental myths overshadow fundamental principles. There is no group which is completely free from this sort of thing, but some have a worse dose of it than others.

The anti-theoretical extreme is dangerous, and in any case no solution to the problems, but we believe that the most urgent problem presently confronting the left is that of narrow-minded fundamentalism. At a time when there are both the necessity for, and the possibility of, an innovatory approach to marxist theory, there has been a strong resurgence of the dogmatic use of marxism. Even elements of the new left, who only a few years ago scoffed at marxism (quite often making valid criticisms of it) have now joined or formed groups which espouse the narrowest conceptions of Marxis, or Marxism-Leninism, or Maoism or Trotskyism. Needless to say, and here we feel that our own approach is more in keeping with that of the classical marxists, these people, in breadth of vision and imagination have very little in common with their historical heroes, whoever these may be. Such is the case with any mystical approach to theorists and theories. There is need for much more theoretical effort and we hope to continue our work in this area*.

Strategy

Explicitly or implicitly, most of the differences of the left boil down to disagreements about the

* A recent effort Australian Capitalism: Towards A Socialist Critique, by Kirsner and Playford will be reviewed in depth in a subsequent issue.
strategy needed to overthrow capitalism and create a socialist society. And, we would assert, many of these disagreements in turn boil down to arguments about how consciousness changes, i.e. arguments about how the masses are to be won over to, or will come to adopt, the ideas of socialism. The central problem for revolutionaries is how the hold of capitalist ideas and values over the mass of the people can be broken, and the relative importance of objective-structural factors versus subjective-cultural factors in this process.

Numerous strategic positions, either stated or implicit in the practice of various groups, are taken up. In assessing them, we need not only to look at what they think of themselves, but to try and assess, according to certain criteria, the actual meaning of their strategy. To illustrate this point, we can imagine a continuum of strategies ranging from right-wing reformist to ultra-left posturing. While some groups would place themselves at the left end of the political spectrum, we might judge their practice as being in fact reformist. An example is the Labour Press group — Australian representatives of the Healyite tendency in the Trotskyist movement. This group castigates in harsh terms the rest of the revolutionary left, accusing everyone else of being stalinist, revisionist, reformist, anti-working class and unmarxist. One might think from the language of their critique that they represented the genuine and pure marxist revolutionary tradition. Yet, as Denis Frenery's article in this issue indicates, their own strategy suffers from a strong dose of economism and reformism: their main immediate demand is the election of a Labor Government "pledged to socialist policies". Thus a "hard" line in theory may go hand in hand with a "soft" line in practice (and vice versa).

Aside from those who openly advocate a reformist-gradualist strategy, most on the left claim to be genuine revolutionaries who pursue the correct course. Each will criticise other groups for ultra-leftism, sectarianism, revisionism, right-opportunism or conservatism. We would suggest that everyone must judge for themselves the validity of each group's claims, and its criticisms of others. This should be done critically, and with attention not only to what a group says, but to what it does. We put forward here a suggested method by which the left should judge itself. We ask others to state their criteria of judgment, along with their views on the questions here discussed.

If we accept as the crucial problem the breaking of the hold of capitalist ideology, and its replacement by socialist ideas, then the key strategical argument is about how this can be done, and/or how it will come about. Our position, briefly stated, is that great emphasis must be placed on the dissemination and popularisation of the socialist alternative to all aspects of capitalist society. However, this alternative will not be accepted simply by argumentation, debate and discussion (although these are more important than many allow). Its very strength depends to a large degree on the extent to which it links up with the everyday experience of the masses — that is, the extent to which it explains their problems and offers a convincing alternative in such a way that inchoate feelings, thoughts and wishes crystallise and are understood when socialist ideas are put. What is important here is not the strength of socialist ideas in isolation, nor the degree to which people's experience by itself makes them unhappy with the status quo, but rather the dynamic relation between the two.

Without a maturing crisis in the social structure, economic relations, culture, politics and reflections of this in mass psychology and consciousness, there can be very little appeal of a revolutionary alternative. Conversely, without an alternative which is appropriate to the given conditions of the crisis the vast mass of people will not be won over to a position of active opposition to the system, and will certainly not be convinced that they should overthrow the system in favour of something else. Hence the effectiveness of any left strategy must be judged on how well it matches up to the needs of this dynamic.

Firstly, we can make a general point about the difference between reformist, revolutionary and pseudo-revolutionary (ultra-left) strategies. The reformist strategy, in either its conscious or unconscious variants, concedes too much to the existing situation and the low level of mass consciousness. It seeks to get around this by cautious manoeuvring and gradual changes, by patching up the system in "nice" (i.e. acceptable) ways, hoping that in this way, socialism will somehow come about of itself ("socialism by stealth"). Of course, it must be said that either initially or eventually the proponents of reformism do not really believe in socialism at all, but in a reformed capitalism. To this extent, they reinforce and create mass backwardness, even if their initial intention was to overcome that very backwardness.

The ultra-left, insofar as it has a worked-out strategy, proceeds from the assumption that the masses already believe in socialism or can be easily convinced to believe in it. All that holds them back is the treachery of union and party leaders — the main enemies who must be smashed to clear the way for a socialist revolution. Part and parcel of ultra-leftism is to be out of touch with existing conditions. They see massive crises (present or future) for the system where none exist (the Healyites are particularly good at this, yearly predicting an economic crisis of major proportions, heedless of the fact that last year's crisis did not eventuate) and they are usually out of touch with the real moods of the workers. Their ideas and theories are usually simplistic and much of their political argumentation consists of shouting formulas and esoteric slogans, few of which the average worker is likely to under-
stand. Paradoxically, an ultra-leftist in theory is often a reformist in practice, as can be seen from an examination of the practice of maoist trade union officials, or the tactics of the Socialist Labour League (Labour Press).

Lelio Basso, an Italian marxist, suggested some years ago that there are, in fact, common features of reformism and ultra-leftism: "... subordinate reformism and Bolshevik extremism are two faces of the same phenomenon, the dissociation of the final socialist objective from the daily struggle". This suggests a definition of a genuine revolutionary strategy. Such a strategy seeks to:

(a) understand at any given moment the actual mood and level of understanding of the masses, i.e. their state of mind at any point of time;
(b) to analyse and understand the structural features of the system and their likely future evolution;
(c) to work out a model of socialism which caters fully to individual and collective human needs;
(d) to create a state of tension between the accustomed habits and modes of thinking of people and the ideas advanced by revolutionaries. To do this by linking up revolutionary ideas to problems which people see as issues (or to get people to see that there are problems where previously they thought none existed) and by choosing issues which are not easily solved within the system;
(e) to analyse the experience of the movement as it continually tries to put this strategy into practice. That is, to analyse society as a dynamic system, with ourselves as part of that system, not as something static or apart from us and our efforts. This is what a "marxist analysis" surely means.

Taking the foregoing as our criteria, we can assess the worth of strategies put forward by various left groups.*

- The Maoists — CPA (M-L) — the Healyites (Socialist Labour League) and some small revolutionary groups hold ultra-left views about the dynamics of revolution. They have simplistic notions about the realities and dynamics of capitalism, and have little idea of what people think, feel and want.
- The SPA and the ALP left, with the exception of some in the Socialist Left, adopt reformist strategies but sometimes make genuine contributions to left and progressive movements.
- The CPA and the Revolutionary Marxist Tendency of the Fourth International (RMG — supporters of Michael Pablo) are the only groups who lay great stress on self-management under socialism and struggles for workers' control, and people's power at all levels.
- The CPA, the SWL and the RMG have more flexible views about the dynamics of revolution — the SLL, CPA (M-L) and, in a different way, the SPA, all hold simplistic and deterministic views about revolution.
- Only the CPA has fully incorporated into its strategy the Gramscian (and Leninist) notions of the fight against hegemony of capitalist and conservative ideas.
- Various intellectual groupings (e.g. the group around Arena) have done important theoretical work but little if anything in suggesting strategies and actions on the basis of this, and show very little sign of helping to implement their own ideas.
- The CPA (M-L) SLL and SPA all adhere to a fundamentalist, dogmatic version of marxist theory. To a much smaller degree, this also applies to the SWL. All these groups to one extent or another follow overseas "heroes". Internationalism does not mean blindly following an international organisation, but requires first and foremost independent thinking and activity by everyone.
- The SPA, the CPA (M-L) and the pro-Russian opposition in the CPA all adopt models of socialism developed in other conditions and places, which have grave deficiencies and which, in any case, cannot provide an attractive alternative to advanced capitalism. To take only one point, when personal and social liberty are important issues, the appeal of bureaucratic and undemocratic states is hardly likely to be large.
- The CPA has alone put forward in some detail what type of socialism it stands for, although the RMG has developed furthest the theory of self-management.
- The CPA, and to a lesser extent, the SWL-SYA and the CPA (M-L) are the only groups really active in all the important mass political movements: anti-war and anti-racism, women's liberation, etc. Other groups remain outside of these, isolated from the large numbers of uncommitted people who are active in them. Some left groups like to criticise and pronounce from outside about what should be done by these movements (e.g. the RMG during the Moratorium, the Australian Socialist group during the Moratorium and the "Stop the Tours" campaign) but are rarely to be seen actively participating.
- All the trotskyist groups (SWL, SLL, RMG) are isolated from the workers' movement except via the ALP, having no real industrial base of their own.
- By and large, all groups except the CPA adopt a rigid model of the revolutionary party. For the CPA (M-L) and the SPA this is a hangover from the Stalin Era; for the trotskyist groups it seems to have been adopted as an over-reaction to the recognition of Lenin's correctness in his debate with Trotsky on organisation. However all these groups have lost the basic content of the
leninist theory of organisation as a theory of revolution, and see it purely in formal, authoritarian forms.

**Practice**

The test of any revolutionary theory ultimately lies in its ability to interpret, explain and act as a guide for changing, society. Hence, any theory or strategy which is seriously put forward must be submitted by its proponents to critical tests of this ability. This requires, in the first place, that theories be formulated in a concrete, testable form and not couched in oracular terms so that they are capable of any interpretation and re-interpretation or justification after the event. Further, it requires that theories and strategies be tested in practice, which, in turn, requires that proponents of various ideas should act on them, and not simply be carping critics or armchair leftists. This is not a matter of demanding that everyone should do something before they put forward ideas and criticise but of seeing that until differences are in some way tested out they remain in the realm of speculation.

There is, in fact, a certain divorce between theory and practice on the Australian left. This occurs between groups, within groups and within individuals. On the one hand, the activist and theorist functions are too often completely separated in different individuals, and on the other, there is a failure to act according to the theories proposed. A good example of the former occurred at the Socialist Scholars’ Conference held in 1970. There was much hostility between “activists” and “scholars”, each tending to exaggerate the importance of their own work and to belittle the work of the other. There was little recognition of the need for people to be involved in both theoretical and practical work, or of the need for theorists and activists to constructively discuss issues. While a separation of functions is partly inevitable (it is impossible to write a good book while totally immersed in everyday activity and vice versa) it is also true that activists too often get into a routine without thinking about what they’re doing, while radical and socialist scholars can be so isolated from the experiences of the movement that their “theory” loses relevance.

All that said, what individuals and groups on the left do and say in their practice provide the most reliable guide to the real content and orientation of their ideology. Everyone on the left may say they stand for “socialist democracy” and national self-determination, but those who support the suppression of dissent in Eastern Europe and the invasion of Czechoslovakia, lose all credibility for their claims no matter what rationalisations they may invent. When Maoists claim to support all struggles for national liberation and then support the bloody suppression of Bangla Desh, their image becomes a little tarnished, to say the least. When Trotskyists criticise bureaucracy and bureaucratic practices, but behave in bureaucratic ways within their own organisations or in the mass movements, it is hard to see any real guarantee that they would run a socialist state in a non-bureaucratic way. If a revolutionary activist in a trade union claims to be doing more to foster socialist ideas among his members than a left-reformist, but rarely states his socialist ideas in public, acts like any good reformist official, and perhaps even collaborates with right-wing officials, then it is to be doubted that the revolution gains anything much by his election to the position.

It is a measure of the problems confronting us that all the above examples exist. They can only be overcome by constant criticism and analysis of the behaviour and activity of individuals and organisations (and naturally we include the CPA and its members in this).

**Differences**

Given that there exists on the left substantial differences of theory, strategy and practice, it is valuable to work out a framework within which these can be discussed and debated, if not resolved (which most of them almost certainly will not be).

Firstly, ordinary standards of honesty and fairness in debate should be applied. Any group which practises the dishonest methods of argument which *Labour Press* resorts to is hard to conduct a discussion with, because there isn’t even a common basis for methods of debate.

We would propose that the following principles be observed in debate:

- Honesty and fairness in stating your opponent’s real views.
- Avoid labels as sticks to beat opponents with, unless these are clearly defined. (*Labour Press* for instance calls all communists “Stalinists”, whether they support CPA policies, are opposed to them, or belong to the SPA.)
- Aim to treat everyone according to the same criteria; and not apply one standard to opponents and another to ourselves (or members of our own organisation).
- Refrain from scoring points over trivial or minor issues (e.g. the fact that somebody doesn’t cough their views in accepted marxist jargon) and try always to look at the real content of differences.

For our part, we will try to proceed according to these principles. We will make further critiques of various trends on the left, including appraisals of the CPA. The pages of *ALR* are open to anyone else who wishes to put forward views about theory and strategy or the merits of various groups.
The organised Maoist movement in Australia is going through difficulties. The last twelve months have dented some of their simplistic certainties. Up till then, all seemed very simple to them, the world was divided into pure revolutionaries on the one hand and revisionists and traitors and counter-revolutionaries on the other. There were simple tests to decide which category one belonged to. China supported the oppressed people everywhere and unconditionally. The policies seemed clear, consistent and predictable. At the same time the local Maoists, mainly centred in Melbourne round the Worker Student Alliance and what is left of Ted Hill's Communist Party (ML), gave some of the Chinese policies their own dogmatic interpretation.

The changes in Chinese policies consequently caught them quite unprepared and embarrassed. The events in Ceylon in April 1971, the struggle in Pakistan, and the Nixon visit to China did not fit into the picture that the readers of Vanguard (Ted Hill's paper) and the members of the WSA had been fed on.

Because of the considerable influence of Ted Hill on the outlook and mode of thinking of the organised young Maoists and the "educational" role of Vanguard and similar Hillites publications, it is necessary to say something about the history of this group which puts its own particular imprint on the leading cadres of the WSA.

As a result of the differences and subsequent split between the Soviet Union and China, small groups that proclaimed their adherence to China emerged in a number of established Communist Parties in the early sixties. In Australia such a grouping was formed under the leadership of E. F. Hill, the former Victorian Secretary of the CPA. After a partywide discussion in 1963 as a result of which the policies advocated by E. F. Hill were overwhelmingly rejected by the CPA membership, Ted Hill broke away from the CPA and established a separate organisation named the Communist Party of Australia (Marxist-Leninist). He took about 200 with him out of the CPA.

Essentially this group was and remained confined to Victoria where E. F. Hill's personal and political influence had been greatest. Naturally the group publicly proclaimed its complete adherence to the stated Chinese policies at the time. But in attempting to mechanically apply those policies to the quite different situation in Australia, a relatively advanced capitalist country, the group inevitably blocked any possibility of becoming a viable political force. What made sense in China, just became farcical when it was mechanically transplanted to Australia. From the very beginning no attempt was made to analyse the Australian reality, still less to elaborate any kind of revolutionary strategy for Australia.

In fact E. F. Hill felt no need for such an examination. The group confined itself in the main to proclaiming and re-proclaiming each week in the columns of its paper Vanguard the same old eternal truths about the evils of capitalism and the onset of the economic crisis. Its headline invariably proclaimed that the Australian people were uniting and rising against US imperialism. It was a dull, repetitive and highly general paper, and each week it repeated much of what had been said the week before. It denounced what it called revisionism and went in for a great deal of personal abuse. Because of past personal loyalty to E. F. Hill of some of the Victorian communist trade union officials, this group retained some trade union positions. However its pro-Chinese policies were frequently kept out of trade union activities.

It was characteristic of E. F. Hill that he now dogmatically and unconditionally supported every policy and action of China, just as he had previously equally dogmatically and unconditionally supported every policy and action of the Soviet leadership. As late as 1959, after returning from the 21st Congress of the CPSU he wrote a glowing report about the Soviet Union. In a pamphlet called Builders of Communism he stated: "To me words are not adequate to describe fully the grand picture of the new way of life in the Soviet Union..." "The Communist Party of the Soviet Union leads the Soviet people."

"Everything it does is for the interests and advancement of the Soviet people." "The spirit and enthusiasm of Soviet workers is something that has to be experienced."

Hill, an authoritarian himself, always needed a supreme authority. Shortly after writing the above he simply transferred from one "authority" to another. One who consistently proclaimed Stalin's primitive treatise on Dialectical and Historical Materialism as a masterpiece, who was always attracted by the most dogmatic and uncreative
It is interesting to recall that when this writer returned to Australia at the end of 1956 after a prolonged stay in China, considerably impressed with the Chinese attitudes and methods, Hill strongly denounced "Chinese liberalism" and ridiculed their efforts to critically examine their own concrete situation and their attention to people's ideologies (their views, attitudes, approaches and feelings). The Chinese emphasis on remoulding man conditioned in an exploitative society, were the special target of Hill's sarcastic scorn during the latter fifties.

Hill certainly tolerated no criticism inside the CPA itself and ruled in a rigid authoritarian manner. He played a major part in suppressing any serious discussion on the problems posed by Khrushchov's revelations at the 20th Congress of the CPSU in 1956. It is little wonder that after the split the Hill group maintained a shadowy existence and was subject to growing internal division and jealousies.

Yet, as with some of the young who are attached to the WSA today, the people who followed Ted Hill in 1963 included a number of active and competent people. The reason for that was that the influence of the CPA was tending to decline, it did not face up to the realities in Australia, it did not attempt to elaborate a serious socialist strategy for Australia, rather it continued to base itself on outdated strategic assumptions, which were increasingly felt to be out of line with our experience and needs. It was in face of these difficulties that Hill switched his attachment, rather than face up to the hard, serious and independent work necessary to examine these problems and draw the necessary strategic conclusions from them.

In this Hill was not alone, of course; other CPA leaders at the time were attracted to the Chinese more militant position on a number of questions in dispute between the Russians and the Chinese. But to Hill the alternatives were always attachment to the USSR or China. An independent elaboration of policies and attitudes was outside his frame of reference. In this he was and remains completely at variance with the tradition of both the Russian and the Chinese revolutions. Both Lenin and Mao Tse-tung elaborated their revolutionary strategies as a result of, and only as a result of, an independent analysis of the specific conditions of their own countries.

The people who went with Ted Hill reflected this situation. There were those who were active, militant and impatient, but also dogmatists and bureaucrats. Hill took a large proportion of the full-time Victorian party officials as well as a number of trade union officials with him. Ironically it was the departure of Hill and the big section of the party apparatus that went with him that removed some of the barriers to the subsequent independent development of the CPA.

Meanwhile the new revolutionary upsurge began in the mid-sixties. The growing questioning and rejection of the values of capitalist society by some of the young, was coupled with a disillusionment with the USSR, and the feeling that it had become a conservative force, as, they believed, had the Communist Party of Australia. In this situation the attraction of China as an alternative model of a socialist society grew among the radicalised youth. China seemed to challenge the established authorities, including the USSR, she appeared to place moral considerations ahead of material ones and adopt anti-bureaucratic measures. The Cultural Revolution was seen by many as an attack on entrenched authority and as an attempt to prevent the degeneration of the revolution, to prevent the return "to the capitalist road:"

China appeared as the genuine champion of the oppressed and under-privileged everywhere, opposed to the two super-powers, the USA and the USSR, who were competing but also co-operating in the attempt to control the rest of the world. It seemed that China, unlike the USSR, was not putting its own State interests ahead of the interest of the world revolutionary movement. Internally it promoted communal living and seemed closer to the ideals of an egalitarian society. Many of those who were repelled by the irrationality and hypocrisy of our society were attracted to China as the alternative. Those visiting China were clearly impressed with the advances made and by the enthusiasm they met in the country. The stirring call that "to rebel is justified" struck a chord in the hearts of many a radicalised youth wanting to change society.

It was in this atmosphere that the Maoist youth organisation which grew out of the Monash Labor Club was established. The leading cadres of what became the WSA were closely associated with Ted Hill and the CP (M-L) and absorbed its elitist attitudes and its highly authoritarian structure. At the same time they attracted a number of young radicals, although they were not able to hold many of them.

There were several reasons for this attraction. Firstly, there was the identification with Chippa. Secondly, the activism of the group attracted those who wanted to DO things. Thirdly, they provided simple, easily understood "answers" to complex problems. Simplistic answers have a certain attraction, at least temporarily, for those who are new to the revolutionary movement. You don't have to think, the truth is clear, even "obvious". With this went a strong belief — nourished by the political atmosphere in the universities — that the revolution was round the corner. In the absence of any real contact with the working class masses some of the WSA cadres came to believe that all that stood between the working class and revolution in Australia were a few "revisionist" trade union leaders.

The real harm lies in what the group did to
some of the young people that it attracted to its ranks. It introduced them or rather subjected them to a brand of "Marxism" which is a caricature of Marx and Lenin's views and runs counter to many of Mao Tse-tung's own stated attitudes. These are some of the typical features:

- It trained its members to regard critical thought as being alien to Marxism. Open discussion, a clash of views, was seen as wrong and dangerous. It based itself on Stalin, rather than on Marx and Lenin, who regarded critical thought and free debate as essential to the revolutionary movement and for the future socialist society.

- With this goes an attitude of utter intolerance to other groups and viewpoints inside the revolutionary movement. The group revived the Stalinist precept that the main enemy is the one closest to your own position and that the main blow is to be directed at him (since he is most likely to deceive the masses). Jill Joliffe, who herself grew up politically in this group, notes in retrospect that "the struggle against 'revisionism' loomed larger than 'the struggle against capitalism'." (Socialist Review, Feb. 1972.)

- They have absorbed some of the worst Stalinist traits and attitudes and have even taken some of them further. Believing themselves to be the only true revolutionaries, they regard any means as justified to defeat their political opponents. Truth matters little, arguments are distorted and misrepresented. Their style of work is highly manipulative, anything goes as long as it achieves their purpose.

- Their dogmatism, their blind copying of foreign slogans and forms of struggle and attempting to apply them to quite different situations in Australia — such as the call for the Australian workers to arm themselves and for a People's Army here in our conditions — produces some grotesque results.

- Feature of their dogmatism is the extraordinarily primitive approach. By refusing to discuss, or being unable to discuss, political issues seriously and by reducing student politics to 24-hour slogan shouting, they have created an adverse reaction to politics generally among many students. The reaction to this is often "if this is politics I want nothing of it".

- Because of their primitive attitudes they tend to personalise their politics. They can only focus on individuals (individual enemies) rather on social forces and movements. Hence the individual policeman becomes the main object of attack rather than the institutionalised role of the police force.

- As well as a preoccuption with the individual policeman they have the primitive view that fights with the police will radicalise the victims of police action. This is certainly not always the case, especially if police reaction and over-reaction is artificially induced as a result of such a theory.

- The same simplistic attitude is expressed in the slogans that they advance. It is frequently concerned with smashing something — be it US imperialism, capitalism or even inflation. The trouble with such a slogan is that it appeals only to those already convinced.

In preparation for the April 21 demonstration, Struggle (March 21, '72) informed its readers that "WSA is producing a large number of stickers with various slogans including Smash Inflation on April 21." Since WSA's own political diet is rather meagre, they readily absorb the diet dished out by Vanguard, which revived Stalin's theory of "social fascism". Under the heading: "Labor Reformists and Revisionists are part of Fascism", Vanguard, October 8, 1970, stated:

... the struggle against fascism is primarily the struggle against reformism and revisionism and the bourgeois sacred cows they both support, parliamentarism and orthodox trade unionism.

Long ago Stalin said that social democracy (labor party reformism) was the moderate wing of fascism.

In concentrating their fire exclusively on the exposure of the Number One Enemy, US imperialism, they leave the Australian capitalists out of the line of fire, and often let them get off scot free. The blind copying of a foreign slogan had some amusing consequences, when recently the local Maoists added Japan to the list of enemies after Chou En-lai's statement to this effect.

In the belief that simplistic answers are the whole and sole truth, such people defend the Stalinist terror and physical destruction of tens of thousands of devoted communists and socialists. They sneer at socialist humanism and advocate the suppression of free debate even for fellow socialists in a socialist society. Their model of socialism is as defective as their tactics to achieve it. If their kind of socialism ever comes many socialists will not be alive to participate in it.

Those who have a primitive view of social change and who substitute pseudo-left phraseology for revolutionary activities which reach out to the masses of the people, generally have a corresponding attitude to the kind of socialist society they want. It is usually an elitist attitude which ignores or neglects the mass movement, and which involves manipulation of supporters, substitution of sloganising, empty cliches and abuse or worse for serious discussion of socialist society.

Underlying such attitudes and approaches are certain assumptions about the perspective for social change. They can briefly be summed up as follows:

They believe that the capitalist system in Australia is only maintained by force and suppres-
They believe that making revolution is a simple matter of announcing the "truth" and of presenting the "true slogans" and that by creating confrontation situations (almost irrespective of the issue involved) you can force the system to use force and show its real nature. They think, is the way to open people's eyes and to bring about a revolution in Australia.

An organisation brought up in that intellectual and cultural climate, with its lack of knowledge of Marxism, has found it especially difficult, to adjust to the recent changes in Chinese policies.

The first big thing that really burst on them were the events in Ceylon in April 1971. When the news of the armed uprising reached this country Vanguard on May 13, 1971, on the front page under the heading "Armed Struggle in Ceylon", stated the following:

The people of Ceylon have taken to arms against the great tea plantation owners, against exploitation. There are people who say they should not have done it or their politics were wrong or some other lament. But they did take to arms: they did get mass support. We think it is all fine. No doubt they will find the correct political guidance in the course of protracted struggle. Their efforts to date have revealed the essential capitalist character of the "left" Mrs. Bandaranaike and the revisionist Communists in her cabinet and their efforts have revealed the coalescing of all reactionary forces to put down rebellion by the people.

Unhappily for Vanguard a few days later Chou En-lai joined what Vanguard called the "coalescing of all reactionary forces to put down the rebellion by the people" by his public support for Mrs. Bandaranaike. In a message to her he stated:

Following Chairman Mao Tse-tung's teaching the Chinese people have all along opposed ultra "left" and right opportunism in their protracted revolutionary struggles. We are glad to see that thanks to the efforts of Your Excellency and the Ceylon Government, the chaotic situation created by a handful of persons who style themselves "Guevarists" and into whose ranks foreign spies have sneaked has been brought under control. We believe that as a result of Your Excellency's leadership and co-operation and support of the Ceylonese people these acts of rebellion plotted by reactionaries at home and abroad for the purpose of undermining the interests of the Ceylonese people are bound to fail.

In the interests of friendship between China and Ceylon and in consideration of the needs of the Ceylon Government, the Chinese Government in compliance with the request of the Ceylon Government agrees to provide it with a long-term interest free loan of 150 million rupees convertible foreign exchange. We would like to hear attentively the mean of correcting it — these are the signs of a serious party?"

But not a word appeared in Vanguard — Ceylon simply ceased to exist. Then the events in Pakistan burst upon the local Maoists. Naturally the sympathy of most of the young Maoists was with the people of East Pakistan rather than with the butcher Yahya Khan. Ted Hill had the misfortune to deliver his annual May Day oration at Monash on April 30, 1971. In answer to questions about the struggle in Pakistan, he first claimed that it was an internal matter. Someone asked: "Is not racism in South Africa also an internal matter?" Then Hill changed his position and claimed that he did not know the facts. At this point the majority responded with approving prolonged applause. Pandemonium broke lose as a vote supporting East Bengali workers, peasants and students was overwhelmingly carried by the audience. Whatever Indian motives and designs, the local Maoists found it hard to convince their followers that Yahya Khan ought to be supported or that the "majority" of the population of Pakistan (East Pakistan) could "secede" from the minority (West Pakistan).

The Nixon visit to China and its timing in the midst of the war in Vietnam was the next blow. The local Maoists were totally unprepared for it. For years they had criticised the Russians for their diplomatic dealings with various foreign reactionary leaders. When the leader of Number One Enemy of all mankind, Nixon, was received in China, shook hands with the Chinese leaders, at the time when the war in Vietnam was being escalated, this certainly did not fit into the pattern of thinking and attitudes on which the WSA and its followers had been nourished. In addition many of them felt that Nixon's visit to China enabled him to pose as a man of peace to the American people, and that this inevitably had a negative effect on the anti-war movement in the USA.

It is little wonder that the organised Maoist movement is beset with some problems. The monolithic character of the organisation is being challenged. There are dissident voices and groups in revolt. The real problem for revolutionaries is to provide a viable, crediable revolutionary alternative. What Lenin said about "anarchism often being a sort of punishment for the opportunist sins of the working class movement" applies also to the local Maoists. These young people who are fired with enthusiasm and who want to change society and do it quickly, turn to dead-end solutions, because they are not presented with an acceptable serious revolutionary alternative. Until the CPA is clearly seen to do this, much of this revolutionary enthusiasm and energy will continue to be frustrated and wasted.
trotskyist trends

Denis Freney

Within the Fourth International there are a number of tendencies on both a world scale and locally. Space does not permit a general survey of them all, so I have confined myself to an analysis of the main lines of development, thought and practice of three major Australian Trotskyist groups — the Socialist Youth Alliance (SYA) which is linked with the Socialist Workers' League (SWL); the Labour Press group (the "Healyites"); and the International Group which publishes the monthly International.

Intercontinental Press (Jan. 24, 1972), which is published by the United States Socialist Workers' Party for the United Secretariat of the Fourth International as a general world-wide weekly information magazine, has a report of the Founding Conference of the Socialist Workers' League, by David Holmes, a member of the League. This report is almost identical with one which has become the organ of the SWL.

The SYA-SWL concept, which they have taken directly from the USFI, is that only the FI — their FI — will provide the basis of the mass revolutionary parties of the future within the structure of the FI. David Holmes, writing in Socialist Review, quotes the Belgian Trotskyist leader Mandel: "... it (the FI) is still only the nucleus of the future mass revolutionary international, of the future general staff of the world revolution..." "The future belongs to Leninism, and that's why it belongs to the Fourth International." The Healyites make the same claims, but of course, they mean their Fourth International.

Both groups adhere to this concept and quote the first line of Trotsky's Transitional Program: "The world political situation as a whole is chiefly characterised by a historical crisis of the leadership of the proletariat." They claim to be the true leadership and it follows that the main emphasis must be on building their leadership — "building the revolutionary party". The party leads the workers, the party takes power. It is a question of the party — the section of the FI — gaining "hegemony" over the youth and working class movement, and this becomes the main task, in fact if not in words.

Spontaneous upsurge of the masses is something to be regarded with suspicion for it may upset the "hegemony" or the attempts to impose that hegemony. Similarly it becomes desirable to impose "democratic centralist" norms on mass movements, solidarity committees and so on to help towards hegemony in them for (their) party.1 The SYA-SWL line really adds up to the "numbers game", to an attempt to centralise all mass or solidarity movements regardless of the harm done to the development of self-action by the majority of militants who, unhappily for SYL-SWL, do not realise that they should fall under the leadership of the party. They claim to be the "hegemony" movement, is in fact to negate the task of building a mass revolutionary party, able to give leadership in time of crisis.

1 "Our whole raison d'être flows from this (building the revolutionary party)". (Second National SYA Conference document, Direct Action No.8, page 11. "Everything we do must be aimed at helping to build such a party". Same document, page 13.)

It is of course true that building a revolutionary mass party is a vital task, but to see that narrowly as promoting the sect's advance over the vital role of the mass (spontaneous) movement, is in fact to negate the task of building a mass revolutionary party, able to give leadership in time of crisis.
stalinist, trotskyist, maoist or what-have-you, SYA-SWL work. Councils. After the revolution power is in the management of all social life by the workers and circumstances: “It is necessary development of workers’ action even in limited movements, to help the workers and students to do precisely that. A revolutionary party must lead by encouraging the masses to take power, not by attempting to gain hegemony.

In all fairness it must be said that in the Transitional Program Trotsky emphasised the development of workers’ action even in limited circumstances: “It is necessary to help the masses in the process of the daily struggle to find the bridge between present demands and the socialist program of the revolution.” It is from this perspective that we differ basically with the SYA-SWL. It is true that the SYA-SWL does raise the question of workers’ control in many of its articles and adopts positions which are ostensibly very close to those of the CPA. The Atlantean bus dispute is an example of this, but the words are contradicted by a concept of revolution which, in practice, stresses not the self-action of the masses but the building of the “revolutionary party”, and the slogan of workers’ control is negated by the way in which the cadres of the SYA-SWL work.

There is also a basic failure to understand how vital the concept of self-management is to any vision of socialism to be propagated among workers and students. The emphasis on centralisation of control in the hands of the “revolutionary party”, before and after the revolution, is the antithesis of the need to stress the self-management of all social life by the workers and students themselves from the grass-roots to the national level, through workers’ and students’ councils. After the revolution power is in the hands of the workers and students directly through these councils, not in the “hands of the Party.” The role of the Party (or parties) is to protect the workers’ power, to seek to help the workers, to work out policies for socialism and to protect workers’ democracy. Dictatorship of the proletariat must mean of the proletariat, not the Party, be it stalinist, trotskyist, maoist or what-have-you, on behalf of the proletariat. Otherwise the rise of bureaucratic dictatorship is inevitable.

From the SYA-SWL concept that they are the one true revolutionary party flows their need for “democratic centralism” interpreted in what can only be described as a brutally bureaucratic manner. Inside the SYA-SWL decisions taken collectively, by caucuses or any higher body, are absolutely binding on the membership, even in relation to the most trifling tactical question in some committee meeting of a solidarity or mass movement.

In a recent example, a woman member of the SYA who arrived late for a Women’s Liberation meeting and thus missed the caucus held before it, was told what line to follow on a minor tactical question. Because, using her own judgment, she did not follow the caucus decision and later refused to recant she was suspended for breaking “democratic centralism”. A number of other SYA members placed themselves under suspension in solidarity with her. It is not insignificant that this woman was a member of the minority tendency in the SWL which presented a separate document to its founding conference in Australia.

This minority, which differed strongly over the failure of the majority to stress the work in the ALP, was treated roughly at the founding conference, its document has not been summarised in any of the press releases (the usual custom in the FI) nor has it been given full internal rights. Instead, it has had one of its leading members suspended for a trivial offence. This rigid “democratic centralism” parallel to that in the CPA in its most stalinist days, flows from the concept of the need for a highly centralised revolutionary party striving for, indeed “in striking distance” of, “hegemony” of the youth and revolutionary movements.

Democratic centralism of course must rest essentially on ideological conviction, on united action on vital issues, with full freedom and even encouragement of militants to interpret the general line in relation to specific conditions and tactical situations. To see this as meaning bloc voting on every issue, every tactical decision that arises is ludicrous, and certainly not leninist.

It may be that in abandoning the Stalinist bureaucratic centralism of the past the CPA has lost too much democratic centralism, particularly on such vital union issues as redundancy and rank and file control, but it is undoubtedly true that, in Australian conditions today, it is better to err in being too democratic than too centralist. Moreover, the pro-stalinist minority of the CPA have much less to complain about regarding their treatment than the SWL minority which was faced with expulsion only a couple of months after the SWL was formed! The minority has now left the SWL-SYA.

The SYA-SWL blindly adapts to Australian conditions the line of the particular Fourth Inter-

2 The SYA-SWL method is not quite so bureaucratic as that practised by its mentor, the SWP in the USA, which, when it attends Moratorium-style meetings and committees in the USA, appoints a floor-leader who makes the decisions on all tactical questions during the meeting. The SWP membership is obliged to vote en bloc.
groups, including other trotskyist groups, are can be seen in the results of its close adherence ways the SYA slavishly follows its US mentors critically, scientifically, and not taken as gospel correct to some extent, but it must be evaluated the SYA assiduously copies from abroad is not re-evaluation is the key to scientific thought. And the SYA must not assume that other trend to cultism. To built a cult of Trotsky was as wrong as building one of Stalin or Mao, or even Lenin or Marx for that matter. It is the hallmark of dogmatism.

This simplicity of thinking, comparable to that of the CPA when the "line" came direct from Stalin and Moscow, has a certain attraction for young people and workers just coming to marxism. No great demands are made on intellectual effort and no problems of "contradictions" are posed. All that is required is to read the latest Militant, Workers' Press, International Press, Peking Review or New Times; the line is there and needs only slight adaption to fit local conditions. It is much more demanding to have to think independently, to examine every situation concretely, scientifically and in detail. In following a "line" there is a certain religious dogmatism and fundamentalism which can be personally satisfying and, like religious dogmas, it all hangs together — the schema is "logical" and everything falls into place.

This desire for a total pattern of thought is a very common phenomenon in all fields of human thought, but it is the negation of the scientific method and is, therefore, anti-marxist. Marxism, if it is anything is always critical, realising that everything is in constant change and that re-evaluation is the key to scientific thought. Trotsky, in a neglected series of writings when he was head of the Red Army (Marxism and Military Affairs), had some excellent things to say on the distortion or limitation of historical materialism and the marxist method:

... it is much easier to possess a passe-partout, that is, a master key that opens all doors and locks, rather than to study ... This is the greatest danger in all attempts to invest the marxist method with such an absolute character ... Marx (did not) intend to replace all other fields of human knowledge by his social-historical theory ... Man must keep cleaning his concepts and terms like a dentist cleans his instruments. But what we need for this is not a Kantian epistemology which takes concepts as being fixed and forever. Terms must be approached historically. But in a history of terms, hypotheses and theories do not replace science itself ...

This does not mean that some of the material the SYA assiduously copies from abroad is not correct to some extent, but it must be evaluated critically, scientifically, and not taken as gospel truth. And the SYA must not assume that other groups, including other trotskyist groups, are completely wrong because they do not follow the line of the SYA's mentor. An illustration of the ways the SYA slavishly follows its US mentors can be seen in the results of its close adherence to the orientation of the SWP in the anti-war movement. Although it had a healthy emphasis on mass action, on building a mass movement, in its attempts to gain hegemony of the Moratorium, it stressed centralism and helped thereby to kill it (at least in Sydney). But it also took a conservative line and opposed any advanced action.

Now the SWP is often quite correct, in my estimation, in opposing the ultra-leftist adventurism in the USA, which scorns the mass movement. But I believe there is a role for minority militant actions such as the occupation of the Sydney Stock Exchange in July, 1970, within the framework of the mass mobilisation, if such militancy is aimed at informing, strengthening and making more radical the mass movement. Yet SYA conservatism was even more evident in the anti-Springbok demonstrations last year. Again, the SYA has been opposed to draft resistance, and particularly non-compliance, as a method of fighting conscription and the war. Their line is that the struggle should take place within the army. This overlooks the vast difference between the US army, a mass conscripted force, and the few conscripts in the Australian army. Of course work inside the army is necessary, but there is little evidence that much progress has been made, and where it has it has been a result of the draft resistance movement outside the army.

Having taken to heart the opportunistic compromise reached by the SWP and the "Europeans" of the USFI on the attitude to the anti-war movement (in countries with troops in Vietnam a broad movement around a single issue demand of "withdraw all troops now" is correct, while "solidarity with the NLF" is correct for countries not directly involved there, which leaves the way open for the SWA to follow its orientation of a mass, single-issue movement, and the Europeans theirs of solidarity actions) the SYA is turning increasingly to maximum demands around issues such as Papua-New Guinea, Bangladesh and Palestine, which they estimate cannot become mass issues, while they maintain the broad mass movements like Black liberation and Vietnam still must have single issue demands. Sometimes they are correct but what is totally wrong is the way in which they reach their conclusions. They use a rule of thumb method applied without concrete and detailed examination of the facts. As well, most of the SYA cadres are beset by an infantile dogmatism which prevents them from understanding correctly even the SWP line on issues such as Bangladesh.

The fundamentalist simplicity of its line is first among a number of reasons for the SYA-SWL's relative progress among youth. Its apparent schematic cohesiveness and "correctness" provides the means for a strong measure of dedication and even fanaticism which permits a strong organisational structure with a firm, even bureaucratic, discipline, which most accept, and thus a lot of hard work, reminiscent of the CPA in its stalinist
period. Hard work and dedication (not fanaticism) are necessary, but they must be built on consciousness, intellectual independence and critical thinking. The CPA has much to do before all its members display comparable dedication to day to day revolutionary work, but this will only be achieved by developing a world outlook based on critical and truly dialectical thinking and development of self-action rather than re-imposition of dogmatism and following a line handed down from overseas.

The smaller Labour Press group, the Healyites, are quite a different kettle of fish to the SYA. Although it too stresses "building the Party" to the detriment of self-management and mass self-action, and has a bureaucratic definition of democratic centralism as well as blindly adapting the line of its mentors, the British "Healyites," it is far more opportunistic and unscrupulous in its political methods than the SYA. The SYA-SWL will distort the position of the CPA when it feels it needs to differentiate, particularly when their line is close to ours, but it does not go in for the bare-faced lying, distortions and half-truths of the Labour Press group.3

The politics of Gerry Healy, based on a dogmatic and simplistic interpretation of Trotsky and of marxism, have swung from an extreme "eentrism" into the British Labour Party working with Bevan, to a totally independent orientation of building his party into an alternative to the Labour Party. At present he follows a confused mixture of both. His main slogan, advanced even as a solution to the Irish crisis, is "election of a Labour Government on Socialist Policies", and it is this line that his disciples in Australia around Labour Press, follow.

This is thoroughly opportunistic for by placing emphasis on elections it confirms the masses' electoral illusions, but it further deludes them into believing in the possibility that such a Labor Government would legislate in socialism. The main emphasis should be in the independent, class, extra-parliamentary action of the masses, not on "waiting for Godot", or Whitlam or Cairns or even Gerry Healy to legislate the answers. To advocate a strike with such a slogan is negative, confusing and certain to breed illusions, frustration and ultimate defeat.

Recently Healy has advanced the demand for a general strike called by the TUC to topple the Tory government, and a similar line has been pushed here from time to time by Labour Press. Now this is not as bad as the electoralism of the first slogan and in given conditions could be correct, but such a general strike would be akin to naked class war opening up possibilities of a pre-revolutionary situation, and to advance it as the solution to a governmental problem of replacing the Tories by Labor is wrong. In any case it is not enough for the ACTU or the TUC to "call" a general strike, such a strike would have to be based upon a suitable situation and the consciousness and desires of the rank and file workers.

The local Healyites combine their generalised and demagogic calls for "general strike" with a deep hostility to the initiatives, largely flowing from the work of CPA militants, for sit-ins, work-ins and so on, as a response to redundancy and the bosses' power to sack. This work-in response, in fact, falls into a long marxist tradition although it has a new aspect in the present crisis and is and must be put in a framework of self-management.

For the Healyites even workers' control is subordinated to the main slogan "elect a Labor Government on socialist principles". It is difficult for them to deny the validity of workers' control, given the prominent place it occupies in Trotsky's Transitional Program, but they seek always to deprecate it and accuse the CPA of using it to divert attention from the struggle to . . . elect a Labor Government on socialist policies!

Despite their assertion of orthodoxy, when their factional interests demand it, the Healyites can deny Trotsky's position on any question. Their stand on Black Power and Black Nationalism is a good example of this and one relevant to the rising black movement in Australia. In his fight with the SWP — they are mortal enemies now — Healy attacked the SWP for its "uncritical" support of "Black Nationalism", and the Healyites even went to the extreme of supporting the reactionary teachers' strike in the USA last year against black community control of schools. Their demagogic worker-orientation led them to the premise that Black Nationalism is reactionary and bourgeois and that teachers are workers and their strike was, therefore, progressive.4

This conclusion is based on the distortion of Lenin's policy on the national question by the handful of American Healyites. They have out-Luxemburged Rosa Luxemburg on the national question. Because Lenin, in his dispute with her stated that "the right of self-determination can only mean the right of secession", the Healyites assume that any demands for anything less than self-determination, such as autonomy, are wrong; it must be secession or assimilation. This is a total distortion. Lenin always stood for autonomy and spoke of it as a "general and universal principle", something taken for granted. Trotsky, too, during his exile wrote a great deal about the negro question and stressed the right to self-determination and autonomy — black community control

3 See the correspondence in Direct Action on their distortion of the CPA position on Bangladesh. (Direct Action, January 17, 1972 for original article and Direct Action, February 7, 1972 for my reply.) A further reply for D.A. has been published, but my correction to an outright lie in that reply has not been published.

4 See the article "Black Nationalism and Marxist Theory" by Graham Bradley in Labour Press, February 8, 1972. Also note my report on the Brisbane Action Conference on Racism in Tribune which deals with the Healyites and their rejection by Black militants.
of its own affairs. Therefore, the American Healyites have to openly condemn Trotsky.

Faithfully following Healy, the Australian Healyites reject any separate demands for Australian Blacks, seeing them only as a sub-section of the working class, and the solution to their problems as the same old one . . . "election of a Labor Government on socialist policies" with the Blacks joining the unions and the ALP.

This group has its own brand of "entrism" which first of all involves their cadres using nom-de-plumes when writing in Labour Press, although paradoxically they sell it openly where they can be identified, although it is not the leaders who expose themselves in this way. They are able to make large first sales of Labour Press to workers who, initially, are deluded into thinking they are buying an ALP paper. Second sales are much more difficult once the buyers realised they have been "conned".

Their emphasis on allegiance to the "Working Class" and their demand that everyone must subordinate themselves to it has led to an idealisation of the working class and the categorisation of students, for example, as bourgeois or petty bourgeois, rather than relating them to the social role they have as workers-in-training. They fail to grasp the importance of such social strata and remain content with the "big bang" theory of an impending depression. Their thinking is still in terms of the thirties and their reliance on an imminent depression adds an ultra-left aspect to their opportunism on the ALP and electoralism. They are waiting for the Big Crash and now that the most serious recession for thirty years has hit, it is assumed that THIS IS IT and that other concepts such as alienation, self-management, etc., have been proved wrong and all that is necessary is to wait for the depression to deepen. The Healyites are not alone in holding this view. Now there are no signs at present of the recession deepening into an all-out depression and, moreover, there are few indications that depressions are automatically favourable to revolutionary upsurge.

What is much more likely is that any continuation and worsening of the recession will shake up the lasting conservatism and sense of security of the majority of workers and open the way for the penetration of ideas of workers' control, self-management and a revolutionary approach to life-style. And it will be women workers, young workers and black workers who will take the consciousness of the need for a new life-style, which has developed largely outside the organised working class, into it.

The Healyites, therefore perform a grave disservice by stressing in demagogic terms "elect a Labor Government" and advocating a general strike to achieve this goal while in practice opposing workers' control and self-management and denigrating such things as the emergent rejection of consumer capitalism and authoritarianism, by the youth, women's liberation and black power.

There must be a struggle against unemployment and other current social ills, but this should be carried on in a way which raises the question of power — workers' control, self-management, questioning of the bosses' power to sack — rather than in the traditional ways which are based on the concept of those who substitute themselves for the class — the ACTU and the ALP — taking action alone. The answer is for workers to take action now, asserting their power in the workshops and in society and to demand union and ALP support for such action.

Space prevents further analysis of the Healyites' position except to refer the reader to my views of their dogmatic and philosophically idealist interpretation of dialectical materialism in my letter to Labour Press on January 25, 1972.

The International Group is composed of the oldest trotskyist cadres in Australia and it still bears a strong antipathy to the CPA carried over from the past. Today they grudgingly admit in principle the CPA's rejection of stalinism but very seldom are any of the actual changes and progressive stances given acknowledgment.

The main difference in concrete policy between the International Group and the CPA revolves around the attitude towards the ALP. The International Group denies any real future for the CPA, or any other independent revolutionary party, in Australian conditions, The ALP, according to their thinking, is the mass party, and flowing from this is the denial that the Moratorium and the Anti-Apartheid campaigns or any other big extra-parliamentary protest campaigns are mass campaigns. They are only seen as having worth in relation to the degree they are under the aegis of the ALP or how they affect the ALP. They are seen as "vanguard" actions, not mass actions. As they are vanguard actions they are betrayed if they have anything less than solidarity slogans, because for them it is not a question of mobilising the masses, but the vanguard. This concept can be seriously questioned on a factual basis, not to say theoretically.

The 100,000 who marched in Melbourne can only be classified as a mass, but their answer to this is that the numbers were so large because Cairns and the ALP took part in the action. On the other hand where a "solidarity" movement got 3,000 in the Adelaide streets in the last few Moratoriums, they attribute this to special conditions (Labor Government, active student movement, liberal traditions) it was a vanguard action. Curiously, the Sydney effort to get masses onto the streets (and we only managed 20,000 at the peak) is condemned because supposedly the solidarity slogans would have achieved the same. Given the entrist orientation the logical thing to have done, surely, would have been to try to imitate the Melbourne example and attempt
to win ALP patronage for the Sydney Moratorium!

The other major difference concerns entrism. The Australian theory of entrism, which originated in the International Group and was their interpretation of a more general policy internationally, starts from the fact that the ALP is the workers' mass party. Workers do not change their allegiance simply when the reformist party "exposes" itself, but rather stay with it while looking to a leftwing in it, or they turn to bourgeois or even fascist parties, depending on socio-economic conditions. Workers do not and have not turned to a minority revolutionary party.

From that conclusion is drawn that independent revolutionary parties have no prospects unless they seek to develop a revolutionary leftwing within the mass ALP. Hence the crucial thing for those who support entrism is work inside the ALP to build a revolutionary wing there of such magnitude that it would either be impossible to expel it, or that if it could be expelled then it would take a large mass base with it.

I have many objections to this scheme, but the main one is that it does not look concretely at the new type of revolutionary crisis exemplified by France in May 1968, that it neglects the importance of independent revolutionary work in the unions with the raising of consciousness and activism specifically around workers' control and self-management and that it practically reduces the whole struggle to one within the ALP electorally-orientated party framework. As well, it fails to recognise that it is not a question of building an alternative Party to "take power", but of the masses themselves taking power in factories, schools and universities. Development of dual power situations is the only alternative to reformism: in a crisis workers and students begin to occupy and then run their institutions. Only then does any revolutionary element have the hope of giving leadership to the masses to enable them, themselves, to take over full power. Though the importance of building a revolutionary left in the ALP is not denied, the crucial question is the development of dual power. This implies a major orientation towards unions and factories and the corresponding institutions of people such as students, as well as raising the consciousness of the totality of the revolution including women's liberation and black power as it fits into a self-managed socialist society. Experience in Australia has shown that entrism in the ALP by revolutionaries generally means a gradual but very definite political degeneration into ALP reformism. This applies, with very few exceptions, to all brands of entrism.

Despite these shortcomings International is the most positive of the Trotskyist groups in Australia and many of the critiques and actions of its cadres are worthy of study and praise. Moreover, there are hopeful signs of its overcoming at least to some extent its oldtime sectarianism in relation to the CPA. Its healthy stress on self-management is particularly good.

It is difficult not to be sectarian in relation to sectarians, and although much of this article has been critical it should not be misunderstood as a blanket rejection of "trotskyism" or the different trotskyist groups. United action is possible on a whole series of issues and, of course, has been carried out. Nor are our differences with them necessarily more important than our agreement or possibility of agreement, so our criticism must always be seen in perspective.

We should not see the CPA as the embodiment of all wisdom and as the one and only revolutionary party. The CPA has emerged from its stalinist period but many of the old ideas remain. Not only has stalinism to be overcome but a total strategy and even a philosophy has to be worked out to tackle the complexities and newness of the modern world. This includes a constant re-evaluation and critique of marxism past and present in all its forms and interpretations. However, we can say that the CPA is, as a whole, further along the road of really working out a new strategy and a new philosophical approach to the changing world today than any other group in this country.
towards
a
revolutionary culture

Lyn Donaldson

In Australia there is a peculiar division between politics, economics, life, work and culture. Strangely enough, this phenomenon is also to be observed in most socialist or leftist thinking. You would imagine that people who consciously strive for political and social revolution would also strive for the integration and change of the arts. But this is not so. The high degree of specialization of function in industrial society is the cause. Role demarcation marked the end of pre-literate society just as the destruction of such demarcation underlies communism with the vision of men and women able to escape the regimentation of the assembly line and to live a whole and varied existence. The strength of capitalism lies in its increasing divisions of functions, tending to make the individual a sum of a number of partial relationships within his/her workplace, home and recreational organization rather than a fully integrated person.

One of the most incredible divisions of function is the setting aside of "Culture" as a separate and tangible industry. The end process of the separation of art from life is the "festival of arts" — expensive, unsuccessful pretences to restore the organic unity that links culture and life in primitive society. Patronised by professionals only, their most serious implication lies in that they lead to a lack of community.

In Australia and, more typically in America, adherents of neither capitalist thought nor of Marxism or leftist belief have sought to correct the division between politics and culture. Rather the exponents of the counter-culture have been and continue to be the most articulate. The counter-culture is basically directed against the postponement of pleasure and respect for hard work; specialization of function or role demarcation; positivist, logical and rational patterns of thought, and the achievement-oriented and competitive capitalist society. Protestantism, authoritarianism and sexual uprightness and repression, restrictive morality and severe restraint on gratification of pleasure in the name of duty, responsibility and decency are characteristic of the Australian, American and most western industrial societies. Positivist thought, which upholds reasonableness, civility and rational dialogue is directed towards supposed objectivity and supposed lack of bias.

An analysis of the culture of the modern industrial state shows the situation as it existed in America and Australia up until a few years ago:

In the expanding, productive economy of the first half of this century, where the material benefits of alienated labor still appeared as a reward for a life well lived, the traditional mechanisms of repression could and did suffice to keep most people in line. The family and the church, the pressures exerted by the small towns or ethnic community were the primary instruments through which the values of hard work, self-sacrifice and sexual repression became the values by which people lived. And even though men and women were dependent on a job they hated, trapped into early marriage by personal insecurity, by denial of birth control and abortion, and by fear of sex, even though they were preparing for a future that never came, still it all didn’t seem so bad. After all, your kids went to the school you could never go to; you had the car your parents couldn’t afford; your wife didn’t show the crow’s feet your mother had, and most important of all, however badly paid, what you did for a living still seemed worth doing. So it was only at rare moments that the ideology of repression — the ideology of you can’t beat the system, security is more important than fulfillment, sex is dirty, people who demand too much end up with nothing or worse — suddenly seemed to deny everything you ever really wanted . . . (Leviathan, Volume 1, No. 8).

The counter-culture rejects not only the policies of the capitalist establishment, but also the whole spectrum of bureaucratic, technological society, of puritan, specialised, positivist, linear values that the Establishment shares with the "Old Left". Against these it claims to pose, a vision of man, and woman, free from repression and the idolatry.
of material goods, communal in his/her orientation, non-linear in his/her thought processes, and sensual rather than intellectual in his/her outlook. Manifestations of the counter-culture are rejection of style of dress, use of drugs such as pot, communal living, music and sexual liberation. There is, however, a characteristic fascination with speed and the cult of violence, reactions to frustrations which could lead possibly to unconscious human wastage. There is a strange contrast between the personal dislike of violence that characterizes new cultural attitudes and the glorification of collective violence.

Theodore Roszak, combining this new view of society and the manifestation of a new sensibility termed them the counter-culture, of which he says:

This so rapidly rejects the mainstream assumptions of western society that it is scarcely recognizable to many as a culture at all . . . What the young are up to is nothing less than a reorganization of the prevailing state of personal and social consciousness. For a culture that has a long-standing, entrenched commitment to an egocentric and intellectual mode of consciousness, the young are moving towards a sense of identity that is communal and non-intellective . . . (Page 12, “Youth and the Great Refusal” in M. Brown’s The Politics and Anti-politics of the Young, p.12).

There is no deep analysis of the existing social and political climate, nor of the traditional political Australian situation on the part of the counter-culturalists. They assert the primacy of individual or self-liberation over social liberation, but see the former as necessarily conducive to social liberation. Many counter-culturalists laud uncritically all forms of oppositional culture, but some of them merely reproduce, in different styles and rhetoric, essential bourgeois values. To take the example of the musical Hair, which is on the doing-your-own-thing kick, it is nothing more than a reassertion of the bourgeois dichotomy between the individual and the state. Bourgeois culture is not a static but a dynamic thing, actively incorporating into itself all unspecific and compromised attacks upon it. The manifestations of new dress, music, sexual attitudes and drugs are assimilated into the prevailing bourgeois ethos, capitalism accepts them as economically feasible propositions. Just at the bourgeois system can tolerate alternative power bases, such as unions and leftist political parties which don’t threaten their position as a ruling class, the bourgeois culture can tolerate counter-cultures which operate as de facto alternative culture. But the bourgeois could not tolerate it if the counter-culture was transformed into revolutionary culture.

The capitalist Establishment, the Old Left and the Counter-culture all make the mistake of the severance of politics and culture. Yet, to the latter, culture is the way to salvation and politics is seen as a syndrome of power, organisation, violence and state coercion and repression. The mistake of separating the cultural and political revolutions is perhaps worse on the part of the counter-culturalists than of the socialists as the counter-culturalists are basing their change on a phenomenon which is characteristic only of members of the bourgeoisie.

Enjoyment of, and participation in the arts, that is, culture, is boxed, wrapped, commercialised and put away for the workers’ leisure time. Counter-culture talks of the quality of cultural life and categorically rejects the quantity and more importantly equality of man and leisure time.

It has been the specific contribution of the counter-culture to emphasise the relationship and unity between the political and cultural revolutions mainly by posing its rejection of organized politics to the Marxists. Despite antagonistic polemics between the culture-revolutionaries and the political-revolutionaries it is inevitable that their coalition will provide a triumphant assault on the capitalist bourgeois society.

It is to be hoped that the essential unity of the political and cultural revolution in Australia will produce a society in which the wholeness of man is attained by his equality, his assertion of humanitarian beliefs and actions above and beyond the present materialistic values.

ALR Occasional Pamphlet No. 4
TWO VIEWS ON DUBCEK
Inside and outside accounts of the "Prague Spring" and the invasion by 'Moravus'
translated from the article in Listy No. 6, Nov. 1971
PRICE: 40 cents, posted
Union education in Australia is comparatively new. There is not a great deal of accumulated experience. So far there are intermittent schools and lectures and very little in the way of unionists embarking on extended study projects. This limited activity is proving very popular among union memberships and it is growing steadily. In February this year by far the biggest and best school yet was held in Canberra. It was organised and conducted jointly by the Australian Council of Trade Unions, Australian Council of Salaried and Professional Associations and the Council of Commonwealth Public Service Organisations. As well, response to the unions-sponsored correspondence courses, based in South Australia, has been excellent and shows the undoubtedly keen desire of unionists to improve their education.

This activity raises the problem, as does all work in unions, of whether we are further integrating the unions into and strengthening the capitalist system or whether we are challenging the very ideas, values and concepts upon which the system relies so much for its continued existence. It is dawning on a lot of people of varying political shades that unions offer a convenient, organised way of having their ideas about society discussed. What is staggering is that there has been so little formal union education in the past. This no doubt stems from the pragmatic, anti-intellectual, anti-ideas tradition for which we are renowned.

It has been a major weakness that revolutionaries have not prosecuted the ideological struggle in an organised way within the workers' movement to anything like its potential. So much is left to chance. Left-wing union journals or papers may and often do carry articles on some aspects of socialism, but it is seldom material that is closely related to the members' experience on the job.

A conscious official will sometimes raise issues of socialism or the Vietnam war during the course of or at the end of a dispute, but while this is of some value, it does not assume much prominence coming tacked on the end of a particular issue. Communist Party branches have held classes and produced bulletins over many years and this kind of work needs to improve enormously, but nevertheless it is still external and not accepted as an integral part of the job in the way the union is. Thus we fail to get anything like the ideological and political result that the rest of our union activity ought to bring.

If we are serious about the development of a rank and file workers' movement that has potential to challenge the power base of society, then it will be necessary that large numbers of stewards and members be armed with the knowledge, expertise and above all the critical faculty that will enable them to come to grips with the complex problems that modern society throws up. In short, what is needed are workers in factories, offices and sites who have abilities, similar to those of the revolutionary students, which will enable them to argue and analyse, and who can apply those abilities at the job level.

It sounds a tall order, but it is certainly possible. What is needed is an organised education program, closely linked to the job, which is primarily oriented towards people educating and liberating themselves. In most big workplaces it really only needs a handful of capable rank and file leaders.
who are good organisers and who know what they
talking about to transform the whole place
an active aware workforce. With that kind
of thinking, I believe that a good education pro-
gram could change the whole movement in a few
years into self-acting, democratic structures, con-
trolled properly by the membership, which would
pose a serious threat to capitalism.

When Michael Barratt-Brown was in Australia
recently, he said that the most important single
factor in the development of the British shop
stewards' and workers' control movement has been
the education program carried out by the Extra-
mural Department of the Sheffield University
where he is on the staff. There are eight full-time
lecturers and a number who lecture part-time.
Their salaries are paid by the Government and
their only job is to conduct courses for trade
union activists. It is important to note that the
British establishment is somewhat hoist on its
own petard, because people took its liberal
rhetoric about everyone deserving educational
opportunities literally and it has been forced to
finance the department and to pay the wages of
students undertaking the day release courses.

The main criteria used in accepting students for
enrolment in the courses is that they be reasonably
active in their union or on the job. Most applicants
who show that they realise that studying is solid
work and not just a day off are enrolled. This is
normally done with the agreement of the union
involved and the employer. Students come off the
job for one day a week for 24 weeks a year over
a three years' period.

The course extends from dealing with the
development of expertise in normal day to day
union functions such as meetings, negotiations,
public speaking, organisation and so on in the
first year through to general economic and poli-
tical theory in third year when students come to
grips with philosophies, concepts of imperialism
and so on. If they wish to continue their studies,
students are credited with the first year of a
degree course.

Between three and four hundred are enrolled
every year and approximately 75 per cent of them
remain union activists. Some go on to teaching
and other vocations and a few are bought off by
the boss. I believe that 75 per cent is an excellent
return on effort and it means that there are now
large numbers of activists in Britain, articulate,
capable and critical, who are posing real challenges
to both bosses and union bureaucracies. It is
interesting to note that some union leaderships
as well as bosses are not enthusiastic about the
program, but attempts to stop or to modify them
have been strongly rebuffed by rank and file
action.

Students are not simply taught marxism, but,
for example, in the second and third years they set
up a contest between Marx and Keynes and
in this way they come to understand capitalist
economic theory better. Then, armed with such
knowledge they can make considered, conscious
judgements and most opt for Marx, as could be
expected, when the arguments are developed.

During the recent miners' strike in Britain, the
Sheffield University Extra-mural Department was
strongly attacked by employers and government
as being the chief cause of industrial unrest.
To date, most of the students have come from
government industries and there is yet to be a
big breakthrough in the private sector.

Some difficulty has been experienced in winning
acceptance within the union movement for certain
important and necessary features, such as intel-
llectual freedom and criticism and the need for
bold challenging ideas rather than those flowing
from a particular political party or simply left
adventurist concepts. In my view, a scheme such
as this is a very real and concrete ideological
offensive which does not just leave things to
chance.

Experience of our work over about three years
in the Amalgamated Engineering Union in Vic-
toria shows some of these weaknesses as well as
a number of positive features. Anti-intellectualism
still runs deep in our union movement, although
I think things have improved. Nevertheless there
is still suspicion of intellectuals, especially when
they raise criticisms of the movement for these are
seen as an attack rather than an attempt to
seriously analyse problems. Our experience has
been that nearly all academics, when asked to
lecture at a school, prove eager to give assistance
and most have been excellent. Naturally, not all
the people we have had have been of high calibre,
but in the main the lecturers have developed
challenging new thinking and broken new ground
for the students involved. In spite of all this
there is still a fear of deep thought and re-exam-
ination of past experiences, and the desire to go
on doing things in the same old way is strong.

Such attitudes unconsciously show a lack of
confidence in the rank and file's ability to come
up with the answers unless they are getting "the
line". It is one thing to go to the rank and file
when large stoppages or big shop stewards' meet-
ings are needed; it is quite another to have the
faith and understanding that the rank and file,
given the right encouragement, can understand
problems and take action of their own volition.
We generally have union officials to lecture on
specifically union matters such as negotiations,
and it is interesting that when first asked, most
officials have questioned whether they have any-
thing to offer.

In the main they do a good job and their
accumulated experience of many struggles and
strike situations becomes invaluable when dis-
cussion and questions get under way. One of the
areas which as yet has received little attention
is a thorough re-examination of particular strikes
and campaigns. In other words, case histories. On
the few occasions where this has been attempted it has proved extremely interesting and provided that this is tackled critically and fearlessly, it may prove to be one of the best educative methods.

As an aside, it should be noted that there is far too little information and exchange of experiences about particular struggles. The Tribune and other left papers will cover a strike or action in a general way and raise the more important features and unique aspects, but union journals and news-letters need to deal more often with the particular steps that led up to the action so that activists on other jobs can get a clearer picture of the way it developed and its weaknesses and strong points in order to be able to use that experience to perhaps raise a similar demand themselves or to follow a similar tactic or strategy.

One criticism that has been raised about our education program is that we are trying to make the union do what a revolutionary party should be undertaking, that is, political education. I believe that this criticism is ill-founded because it seems logical that we should seize every opportunity for politicalisation, no matter from what quarter it comes. A union, by its very nature, brings together people who are, or can be, in the heat of the class struggles, struggles which often open up the way for a greater degree of political and radical thought than is usual.

If the members accept, as they now do, the union's right to run schools and classes, surely we would be failing in our work as revolutionaries if we do not set out to take that education beyond the mere bread and butter union issues. The important thing is that the ideas developed should be ideas which lead to a questioning of capitalist values; it is a secondary matter that they are not emanating directly from a revolutionary party. This is not to suggest that a party is not necessary but to point to the need for revolutionaries to work more effectively within the unions and to make the most of every opportunity that arises.

This raises the related criticism that some of the material we set for study is too advanced and leftist in character. While it is certainly true that some of our subjects could be better arranged and titled, I do not feel that it is leftist to discuss ideas of people like Marx and Gramsci, for instance, that are relevant to an understanding of a particular subject — economics, politics. It is one thing to try to take people into advanced actions for which they are not ready, but it is quite another to advance radical and revolutionary ideas in the course of legitimate study and inquiry. In fact, it is precisely that which can and will lead to consciously understood advanced actions.

Our experience is that at some stage during nearly all our day schools there is discussion about socialism. Often this arises spontaneously, because almost any subject we tackle can lead to questioning of the capitalist system if it is done in a challeng-
**economic notes**

**Kelvin Rowley**

**An Embarrassment of Riches**

AS MANY commentators predicted, the failure of the McMahon government to revalue the Australian dollar against sterling last December has exacerbated the problems of an increasingly unwanted foreign capital inflow. (See David Evans' "Notes on the Economy", *ALR* Nos. 33 and 34). Even the Deputy Prime Minister, Doug Anthony, for a long time one of Canberra's most enthusiastic champions of foreign investment, has recently expressed concern at the current scale of foreign investment in Australia.

Capital inflow reached a record level of $836 million in the second half of 1971. Because of the devaluation of the Australian dollar against our major trading partners last December, overseas investors have a chance to snap up Australian assets on the cheap.

Some figures recently published by the Reserve Bank give some indication of where this flood of foreign capital is going. Here is their breakdown of the figures for 1970-71:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Investment Type</th>
<th>(Million)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Direct investment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) loans</td>
<td>799</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) others</td>
<td>190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>989</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portfolio investment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) loans</td>
<td>424</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) others</td>
<td>174</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>598</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,586</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Direct investment refers to investment in companies which are predominantly foreign-owned, while portfolio investment is investment in companies which are predominantly Australian-owned. The category of "other" investment covers the acquisition of assets such as shares, debentures, convertible notes, joint ventures and real estate.

What is most striking about these figures is the extent to which loans predominated in both the fields of direct and portfolio investment. It seems clear that foreign investment is largely taking the form of lending money to companies operating in Australia (whether these companies are locally owned or subsidiaries of overseas companies) rather than the direct purchase of real assets in the country.

Much of this borrowing has been carried out through the medium of the foreign merchant bankers who have moved into Australia in a big way from the middle 1960s. Initially, they came to service their multi-national clients who were operating in Australia, but they soon found that Australian companies also provided an attractive market — especially during the mining boom of 1969-70. "Walk into any big hotel in Sydney nowadays", wrote the financial editor of the *Australian* last year, "and chances are you will rub shoulders with an American banker" (Peter Bugler, *Australian*, June 1, 1971). American banks, such as the Bank of America, the Bankers Trust Company, the Chase Manhattan Bank and the First National City Bank are predominant in this movement, but it also involves powerful British and Japanese banks as well. According to M. W. Acheson IV, assistant vice-president and deputy representative of the Bankers Trust Company, who wrote a three-part article on "The Foreign Bank Invasion" for the *Australian Financial Review* (28, 29 and 30 July, 1971), a total of 95 foreign banking institutions have opened up shop in Australia over recent years. Between them, they represent total assets exceeding $500,000 million — over 80 times the assets of the local banking system.

The basic area in which these banks are operating is in arranging large-scale credit for big companies. Not only are they providing stiff competition for the local banks, they are seriously affecting the external balance of the Australian economy. In the absence of a sensible exchange rate policy, they are reducing the Treasury's control over monetary conditions within the Australian economy.

The Federal Government is able to exercise a good deal of influence on the activities of the local trading banks through the Reserve Bank. But no such controls cover the foreign merchant banks. Further, the foreign exchange reserves of the trading banks is limited, and when they wished to engage in overseas transactions, they formerly had to purchase foreign exchange from the Reserve Bank. The merchant bankers have ready access to the American, Japanese and European money markets, and can also sell foreign exchange to Australian entrepreneurs. Over the past year or so, they have been bringing money into Australia in a big way, providing a high rate of general liquidity in the Australian economy, and boosting Australia's exchange reserves.

"For the first time in 20 years", wrote Maximilian Walsh last May, "we are threatened with an embarrassment of riches in our foreign reserves". If the capital inflow continued, he warned, "the economy is going to have liquidity running out its ears". (Australian Financial Review, 20 May, 1971). The capital inflow has continued at a high rate, as we have seen, and both of Walsh's predictions have in fact been confirmed.

Kelvin Rowley is an economics student at Melbourne University. David Evans will return to Economic Notes in the next issue.
The increase in Australia’s reserves in recent years is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>June (S million)</th>
<th>December (S million)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1968</td>
<td>1.277</td>
<td>1.298</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>1.420</td>
<td>1.410</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>1.538</td>
<td>1.456</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>2.280</td>
<td>2.726</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It should not be thought that because a balance of payments deficit has been the traditional concern of Australian governments, this mounting surplus must reflect the growing strength of the Australian economy. What it means is that we have been stockpiling US dollars — and that’s quite a different matter. The government was unable to handle the political pressure from the agricultural, mining and protectionist manufacturing interests against a revaluation of the dollar (see “Notes on the Economy”, ALR No. 34), and as a consequence, our foreign exchange reserves are now enough to embarrass even Scrooge McDuck.

This inflow of foreign money has greatly boosted the level of liquidity in the Australian economy. Especially since the economy is currently slack, this has created something of a glut of money. One business journalist has recently described the situation in these terms:

Banks and finance houses and their advertising agencies are combining in an unprecedented effort to lend you money. The business community, one of the prime targets of the campaign, is proving difficult to tempt to the party, even though most finance institutions are ripe for pretty well any viable proposition. (Jon Powlis, National Times, 28 February-4 March 1972).

He then quoted an anonymous merchant banker as follows:

We are well supplied with money but we are finding it difficult to place our money in industry. The banks are anxious to lend, with their new found freedom, and the opportunities for employing funds at the moment are, frankly, thin.

By early March, there was a record $1,008 million held by the authorised dealers in the short-term money market. This is essentially money that has been “parked” there by capitalists who can find no other use for it at the moment, and is thus a good index of the surplus liquidity in the economy. All that money, and they can think of nothing to do with it.

Unemployment

Without doubt the Treasury men are looking around for some politicians with a better image to peddle their line that a bit more unemployment will do the economy some good. They have had more success in achieving their objective of higher unemployment than their now terrified and demoralised political “bosses” would like.

According to the statistics released by the Department of Labor, there were 115,000 persons (or 2.06% of the workforce) unemployed in Australia in February 1972. Actual unemployment fell by 15,000 (12%) from the January figures, but this does not indicate any real improvement in the situation (although of course the government did try to make much out of it). The labour market is usually inundated with school-leavers in November-December, and many of them do not get settled into a job until after Christmas. Because of this, unemployment figures usually register a decline of about 20% from January to February, and it is in relation to this figure that the real significance of the 12% decline this year becomes evident.

Because of the disturbing influence of such seasonal factors as the regular entry of school-leavers into the labour market, we need to look at seasonally-adjusted data if we are to get a clear view of the movement of the economy. In seasonally adjusted figures, unemployment rose from 1.6% of the workforce in January to 1.76% in February. Although this figure is not high in comparison with countries such as England or the US, it is the highest in Australia since the “credit-squeeze” recession of 1961.

It is not only a matter of more people hunting for jobs. The situation appears yet more grave when we look at the supply of jobs. In February, the figure for unfilled vacancies, after allowing for seasonal adjustments, fell by 8.3% from 34,269 to 31,426. This means that there is a growing number of people chasing a diminishing number of jobs — the “unemployment gap” is continuing to widen.

From this, it is clear that the latest figures fit pretty neatly into a picture of a generally worsening situation.

Further, it must be borne in mind that there have been a number of factors at work to cushion the effect of the recession on the official unemployment figures. The first is that women — who comprise about a third of the workforce — are always greatly under-represented in unemployment figures because when they are sacked, most do not register as unemployed, but just go back to
housework. The second factor is that many employers have reduced their labour inputs not (at this stage) by sacking workers, but by cutting back on overtime. Finally, there has been a sharp cut in the migrant intake, and a rise in emigration from Australia.

There has been much ado in the papers about unemployment among university graduates. But, as Tom Roper has pointed out (Review, 8-14 January, 1972), the problems faced by university graduates are minor compared to those of under-privileged secondary school leavers entering the market for unskilled work. When he finally does get a job the university graduate will enjoy middle-class affluence, but the secondary school leaver can only look forward to getting a job that is rotten and under-paid anyway. Nevertheless, graduate unemployment is a significant indication of the seriousness of the current recession. Like their counterparts on the managerial ‘scrap-heap’ at present, this privileged group is having a small taste of what is more common fare for other classes.

This may be related to the problem of ‘structural’ unemployment, to which Tony Thomas has recently drawn attention in an article in the Melbourne Age (18 March, 1972). "Slump", or cyclical, unemployment is due simply to the fluctuations of the business cycle, whereas structural unemployment is more permanent in character. It exists in a situation where employers are hunting for staff and workers are hunting for jobs, and neither can get what they want because the workers do not have the skills required by the bosses, or are living in the wrong place. This type of unemployment is endemic in the US among poorly educated youth, among older workers who are unable to re-adapt to changing skill requirements, and among negroes generally; it is widespread through both the depressed rural areas and the city ghettos. Structural unemployment in Australia would seem to affect mainly migrant workers. Tony Thomas cites a survey of unemployment by the Department of Labor in July 1969 which estimated that 46% of current unemployment (then a puny 52,000) was structural, being due to factors such as language problems, lack of qualifications or experience, and lack of opportunity for acquired skills. This figure of 46% is probably a peak figure, for subsequent rises in unemployment are due largely to cyclical factors. But even if the cyclical situation improves, it should be borne in mind that thousands of people in Australia are hunting for jobs that they can’t get.

To turn attention back to current cyclical unemployment, can we expect the situation to improve over the coming months? Certainly, the present trend is for things to get worse, but we cannot answer this question by looking at the unemployment figures themselves; we must look behind them to the reasons why employers offer jobs.

Examining first the figures for total new investment, we see that apart from a pause in the December quarter of 1969, there was a steady growth until 1971. At this point, the figures became harder to interpret. The stagnation in the June quarter and the decline in the December quarter could turn out to be nothing more substantial than temporary set-backs to sustained growth. On the other hand, the figure of $865 million in the September quarter could turn out to be the peak before a more sustained downturn. Plausibility is given to the second of these interpretations by recent surveys of industrial trends. A survey carried out by the ACMA-Bank of New South Wales last September found that "Manufacturers’ outlook for planned capital expenditures over the next twelve months is the most pessimistic since 1961." A similar survey in March this year gave more bizarre results. Manufacturers were more optimistic, but mainly on the grounds that things had gotten so bad in recent months that in the coming period they could only improve. But this improvement in morale, if that is what it can be called, was not translated into specific intentions. Industrialists are sitting quiet and doing nothing until the expected upturn arrives — but of course, it will not come until everybody is waiting for someone else to make the first move. On the basis of these surveys it seems a fair conclusion that the September figure represents a peak, and that the decline in aggregate investment will continue over the next few months.

Turning now to the sectoral data in the above table, we see that over these three years, the strongest growing field of investment have been the mining industry and those under the heading of “other” industries, a group including primary industry, housing, retailing, and the service industries. Both peak in the September quarter of 1971 and decline in the December quarter. This accounts for the parallel movement of the aggregate figures. Although closely tied to mining, investment in the extractive and refining indus-

### Stagnating Investment

One of the main reasons for the current bout of unemployment is the stagnation of investment in manufacturing industry. The following table shows quarterly, seasonally-adjusted figures for new capital expenditure by private business in Australia:

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tries has risen more sluggishly, and stagnation set in earlier, from the first quarter last year. Between them these sectors account for nearly all the growth of investment over the past three years. By far the most outstanding feature of this table is the fact that the level of investment in manufacturing industry has hardly risen over the whole period. And it is this manufacturing sector which is primarily responsible for providing employment to Australian wage-earners.

We have seen that the capitalists are not short of money — indeed the economy is overflowing with excess liquidity to the order of $1,000 million. The stagnation of investment must therefore be due to a lack of profitable outlets for this money. This is confirmed by what we know of the composition of such investment as has taken place. In the March quarter of last year, the last period in which aggregate investment was still rising strongly, new equipment accounted for only 7% of the increase. The most important component was new buildings (28.4%). Thus it seems that the capitalists, finding little opportunity for productive investments, have been taking advantage of the easy money to provide themselves with swank new office-buildings and the like. This provides employment in the building industry, but also accounts for the tightening of the labour market in the manufacturing sector. The office-building boom has also been an important contributor to inflationary pressures in the economy.

Why have manufacturers not been investing in new capital equipment? On this question, the AGMA-Bank of NSW surveys referred to above are illuminating. Since they began in 1964, they have been asking manufacturers: "Are you working at satisfactorily full level of operation?" This is by no means a precise question, but it does provide a rough indication of the degree of excess capacity in Australian industry. From when the survey began, the proportion of respondents who answered "yes" to this question has averaged around 50%, with a spread from 64% (in December 1964) to 41% (in September 1966). In March 1971, things were about normal: (53%), but thereafter the rot set in. In June the figure was down to 45%, and by September it had dropped to 38%, the lowest figure on record. But it has not stopped there, and in March this year it was down to 34%. This means that at present about two-thirds of Australian manufacturers are operating with excess capacity. Here we have a good reason for the low investment in new equipment — what capitalist would install new plant when he can't employ what he already has?

Of those respondents to the question who were in such a position, 78% nominated lack of new orders as the chief constraint on output. Thus it seems that previous investment during boom times has expanded industrial capacity more than enough to meet existing demand, and a situation of over-production exists.

At this point we must distinguish between two different groups of capitalists: those who produce capital goods, goods employed in production by other capitalists; and those who produce consumer goods. Since the market for the first group is represented by the demand for investment goods, and we have seen that this demand has been low over the past year, we would expect to see companies in such industries making particularly heavy weather over the past twelve months or so, and this does seem to be the case. For instance, the directors of BHP have recently reported that new orders for steel fell from an average of 46,000 tons weekly in the first half of 1971 to 34,000 tons in the second half of the year. By the December quarter, the figure was down to an average of 26,000 tons per week. In an attempt to boost sagging profits, BHP has raised its prices three times since last June (contributing thereby, it should be noted, to inflationary pressures in the economy).

Cutbacks in output and employment in this sector of the economy have important repercussions on the general employment situation and on consumer income, thereby further undermining the demand for consumer goods and pushing the economy as a hole further into recession. The slow growth of consumer demand, and the increase in savings by the mass of the population, about which much has been written in recent months, is as much an effect of the deteriorating economic climate as it is a cause. The financial editor of the Sydney Morning Herald put his finger on the nub of the problem recently when he introduced a report on stagnating retail sales and rising savings with the following comment:

Statistical evidence is mounting that nagging worries over inflation and job security caused the Australian consumer to button up his pocket in 1971. (Sydney Morning Herald, 25 January 1972).

It seems that people have been putting off buying that new house, that new car, or that new TV set, making do with what they have for a while longer, and keeping some money in the bank for security, in case things go wrong — and who can blame them, for the prospects are indeed gloomy.

The budget was right, the economy wrong

It is now almost universally agreed that the government's budget last August was disastrous. It depressed the economy at a time when it was already sliding into recession. Yet the government, despite its recent measures, has not been willing to admit this, perhaps because it feels confessions of gross incompetence would not help its electoral prospects. But their defences of it have become more feeble and more ludicrous. Thus we find Billy McMahon arguing as follows in his TV interview of March 6th:

If you look at the Budget strategy as such, I don't think you could say it was wrong. In fact it was right. But it was predicated on the assumption that demand would grow, particularly in the consumption area, and that assumption didn't turn out to be correct.
job control in theory and practice

by 'Turbot Street' 1

Reprinted from THE MOVEMENT, Vol. 1, No. 8, (August 1920)

The following article, which is reprinted from The Movement, the journal of the Workers' School of Social Science, Brisbane, has a definite intrinsic value apart from any historical significance it may have. An intriguing point about the article is who wrote it. In order to suggest an answer and perhaps, thereby, enhance the article's significance, it is necessary to examine some of the history of the Workers' School of Social Science.

The WSSS was one of three similar institutions set up in Australia between 1917 and 1919, modelled on the Central Labour College which had its origins in the revolt at Ruskin College, Oxford, in 1909; the other two were the Victorian Labor College and the Labor College of New South Wales, in both of which W. P. Earsman, a principal founder of the Communist Party, played an instrumental role. In the case of the WSSS (and the name suggests this), an additional example may have been the Rand School of Social Science, New York, especially as an American journalist, Spencer Brodney, who worked on the Brisbane Daily Standard, was the first secretary of the WSSS, and its main inspiration.2

The idea of a Labor College in Brisbane had developed at the end of 1918, partly due to the formation of a Socialist League after a visit by R. S. Ross. Three people who were later prominent in the WSSS—Norman Freeberg (later Freehill), Ed. Turner and J. B. (Jack) Miles, were all associated with the Socialist League from its beginning. The WSSS, which was set up in a similar way to the Labor Colleges in the other

1 Turbot Street, Brisbane, was the location of the old Trades Hall in that city.
2 J. B. Miles, Interview, Jan. 12, 1965.
J. B. Miles was the general secretary of the Communist Party from 1931 until 1948, i.e. during the period of the Party's greatest political impact on Australian life. He was born in 1888 in the southern Scottish town of Hawick, the son of a building worker (probably a bricklayer), who became a builder on his own account. After a board school education in Edinburgh, and minor boys' jobs, J. B. Miles became an apprentice stonemason. He spent only two or three years cutting stone and then joined his father briefly as a bricklayer on cottage work in the English north-east town of Middlesborough. Miles left the family at 17-18 years and went to Consett, County Durham, where he worked first as a bricklayer, then in the town's steelworks.

An interest in socialism was first aroused by his father whom Miles described as a 'socialist-of-a-kind'. The son belonged to the Newcastle Socialist Society and the Consett Independent Labour Party before migrating to Australia in 1913, although he had not been really active in either organisation. At this stage his socialism was of the Clarion, Labour Leader variety. He certainly had no systematic knowledge of marxist ideas — either theoretical or tactical.

J. B. Miles' subsequent development is quite remarkable. Apart from an initial brief introduction to the Brisbane political scene on first landing (through Consett acquaintances who met him at the boat), he spent the next five years cut off from Brisbane's social and political life. In his own words, until 1918 he was confused about the war, which presumably means that he didn't whole-heartedly oppose it. In 1918, in order to find a better place to live, he moved closer to the city. He found employment (previously in his own words he had been odd-jobbing as he couldn't get a start in his trade) in a workshop of a Brisbane River shipyard, which enabled him to join the Amalgamated Society of Engineers. From there he went into the Cannon Hill meat works and the Amalgamated Meat Industry Employees' Union, which had the character of an industrial union. At about the same time there was the beginning of some clarity about the war through attendance at an anti-war meeting addressed by a visiting interstate pacifist speaker. Soon after he became an original member of the Queensland Socialist Party, started through the stimulus given by the visit of the prominent Victorian socialist figure (an ex-Queenslander), R. S. Ross.

In the Socialist League, Miles first read Marx and Engels' Communist Manifesto. The WSSS followed. Miles had obvious latent capacities which now showed themselves. From a student in the school, he quickly became a teacher, administrator and organiser. When Peter Simonoff, the Soviet Consul for Australia, and a person closely associated with the steps taken in September-October 1920 to launch a Communist party, visited Brisbane soon after the foundation of the Communist Party in Sydney, Miles was one of those invited to become Brisbane members of the new party. He was not the first secretary; J. S. Cahill held the position initially but Miles took his place in the second half of 1921. However, after he reported unfavourably on the so-called 'Trades Hall' or 'Sussex Street' party, in September he had to resign, his place being taken by one-time Wobbly and ASP general secretary J. W. (Jack) Roche.

In spite of this, when the Brisbane branch collapsed in 1921-2, it was Miles who reorganised it and he appeared at the 1922 Annual Conference (with Roche as his co-delegate). Part of the explanation for this rehabilitation probably lies in Miles' drive in organising the Queensland side of the 1921-2 Russian famine relief finance-raising in which he worked through the New South Wales Labor Council, whose secretary was, of course, J. S. Garden, a key figure in the Sussex Street party. It is all the more remarkable when the acrimony of eighteen months before is considered, that at the conference Miles played a very important part, ranking with Carl Baker and H. L. (Harry) Denford. He presented the report of a commission of country and interstate delegates on the dispute between the Sydney branch (which had been expelled) and the Central Executive, which was adopted with only one dissentient (probably S. G. Stettler, the expelled Sydney branch secretary), and thereupon assumed the role of conference chairman.

Miles proved himself in the various vicissitudes of the party from 1922 to 1929. In 1928, after several years as an active trade unionist (after 1924 as a stonemason again) and communist spokesman (especially during the 1927 Queensland strike), he became the general secretary of the Communist Party of Australia, a position he held until 1948.

6 When I interviewed Miles in 1965, I was completely unaware of the existence of the journal or the articles, hence did not seek to clarify the identity of 'Turbot Street'.
land rail strike), he first worked full-time for the party in connection with the forthcoming Queensland State election. This was the occasion of the 'Queensland Resolution' which became the crux of one of the most important inner-party debates in the party's history; and in the final resolution of the struggle, eventually, in 1931, Miles became one of the national leaders of the Communist Party.12

The article reprinted here can largely stand on its own but a few comments may help towards a greater understanding. Miles, writing on the eve of the formation of the Communist Party, is dealing with what has been most commonly referred to as 'workers' control'. It is almost certain that, at the time of writing, he had not had access to the various theses of the Third International's Second Congress which were really the first elaborated treatment of the Bolshevik doctrine of the party and Bolshevik tactics to reach Australia.13

Prior to the publication of the Comintern theses in 1920 and 1921, the main strategy of militant workers had been revolutionary industrial unionism and the tactic (slogan) which came to be the most succinct expression of this strategy was 'job control'. In the extremely fluid ideological and organisational situation, particularly in 1918 and 1919, this concept seemed to express the revolutionary position.

This is not the place to attempt a full exploration of the subtleties of the question, but for the most definite supporters of 'job control', it assumed the character of both tactic and strategy. For M. (Mick) Sawtell, who wrote the most refined treatment of the subject, it meant everything up to and including the full exercise of working class power in society, i.e. more or less a synonym for socialism.14 Sometimes the term 'workers' control' was used in this way, too, but, as today, often a distinction was made. Here Miles conceptualises 'workers' control of industry' — 'workers' control' — more or less in the way the idea 'self-management' is used often today, while 'job control' means what is often termed 'workers' control' today — control of the conditions of employment through job meetings, job action, job (or shop) committees, etc.15 Sawtell expressed an attitude which became common after the 'Big Strike' of 1917, when he contrasted the virtues of 'job control' with 'starvation' strikes (long, extended strikes).16 Miles is obviously dealing with this point at the beginning of the article.

Apart from this, the most outstanding feature of Miles' article is how fluently he finds his way into the subject, warning against theoretical and practical over-simplification. Perhaps he underestimates the scope of job (workers') control in one or two places, but he sees difficulties in pushing the idea too far. Otherwise, the remark he makes about the differences between Russian developments and the likely course of events in more industrialised countries is highly suggestive, written as it was in the middle of 1920. But finally he stresses the great educational value of the tactic in creating a feeling of self-reliance and independence in workers fighting for a new state of society — the beginning of a socio-political hegemonic class consciousness.

Roger Coates.

THE ultimate objective of the workers is to take control of and carry on industry themselves.

This statement has been made a thousand times. What the workers want to know is how it is to be done. For a long time the favored weapon has been the strike. But the workers have found it a weapon that more frequently injures themselves. For that reason the gospel of job control is finding an increasing number of advocates. Job control is a sounder line of action because it points in the same direction as the ultimate objective, the ownership and control of industry by the workers.

But the idea of job control has also to be translated into concrete and practical propositions. Its possibilities have to be fully explored, and its manifold difficulties overcome.

Let us suppose that the workers do institute job control wherever possible, that they set up shop committees and all the rest of the necessary machinery. What, then, will lie in the power of the workers? They will be able to resist speeding-up, prevent overtime, and generally secure redress for the many grievances which arise out of working conditions imposed by employers.

Yet, there will still remain a wide gulf between such achievement and the ultimate objective of the complete control of industry. Job control, as understood today, is a far smaller thing than control of industry. Consider a large factory, for example, one producing boots. The workers on the job may control the job in so far as their own conditions are concerned; but they have no control over the factory as an element in the industrial life of the community. They are not in a position to estimate the productivity of the plant or to regulate the output. The owner does that. He conducts the factory as seems fit to him in the light of market conditions. At one time, when trade is good, he demands a large output; and when the market becomes over-supplied, he dismisses workers or even closes down the factory. The workers have no control over these actions. The one fact of power to dispense

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12 Davidson, Communist Party, pp. 48-53.
13 International Socialist, Sept. 25, Oct. 2, Oct. 9, 1920. State and Revolution, and other material had been published earlier but dealt with different matters.
14 M. Sawtell, Job Control, (Melbourne, 1919), passim.
16 Sawtell, Job Control, p. 12.
with labor, when, according to the employer, it is not wanted, is enough to show the limitations of job control.

Let us say in passing that these limitations must not be urged as an argument against job control. Job control should be developed as far as it can, but the workers must also look beyond to the bigger thing — control of industry itself.

One of the greatest obstacles in the way of securing control over industry is the attitude of the comparatively small but very important class of workers who do not regard themselves as workers, but as members of the ruling class. These are the professional workers, the men of education, who do the more highly specialised work of a technical or administrative character. Most of them, while the servants of corporate or individual employers, enjoy a very considerable amount of job control and personal freedom, besides much higher incomes which permits them to live comfortable and easy lives. The average manager of an industrial establishment can, so long as he shows the necessary amount of profit, do his work in his own way and largely in his own time. The real control of an industry, as distinct from the financial overlordship, rests for the most part in the hands of managers, organisers, and technical experts of all kinds; and it is against them directly that the workers have to carry on their struggle. If they threw in their lot with the workers, decided to co-operate with the workers, the establishment of industrial democracy would be a very simple matter. But it is most unlikely that the managerial and technical controllers of industry will desert the capitalist class, so long as there is a capitalist class.

Although this is a problem for which there is no ready solution, the facts as stated should arouse the workers to learn how to become capable of assuming the technical and administrative functions in industry. In some cases the acquisition of the requisite special training may be out of the question, but there are many industries and branches of industries in which the workers should be able to prepare themselves as organisers and administrators.

What happened in Russia is instructive, for that is the one country where so far the issue came to a head. There, it will be remembered, the professional and educated classes resisted the taking over of industry by the workers. The "intelligentsia", as they were called, went on strike and did all in their power to sabotage the new system of industrial control. Many of them had to be bribed by enormous salaries, and only with great difficulty were the workers able to secure their co-operation. The Russian solution is not of very much value as an example to other countries where industry is more highly developed and where the professional workers consequently constitute a far more numerous and more influential class.

When we have to consider that the workers not only have arrayed against them the professional class, but also the whole army of parasitic retainers of the capitalist class, and further, the apathetic, "bonehead", and even treacherous elements in the working class, it will be seen that job control can have only limited results.

The line of reasoning we have followed would seem to lead to a very discouraging conclusion. But other facts must also be taken into consideration, and the greatest of these is that the capitalist system is doomed to break down as the result of its own inherent defects. The machinery of capitalist production can no longer do the work it is called on to do. When the collapse comes, those who do the actual work of industry will have to take control, and in this connection the workers will mean all whose labor is productive or necessary to production, including the professional workers. Because of the latter's preconceived ideas there will be trouble and confusion, but the whole basis of production having been changed, they will in time come to co-operate with all the other workers. For example, the engineer who directs operations will find that he has to co-operate with the men formerly under his orders, because there will no longer be a capitalist whom he serves.

For the workers themselves, the idea of job control has enormous value in teaching them self-reliance and independence, not only of the capitalist rulers and their salaried subordinates, but also of union officials. The new conception of industrial organisation involves the practice of the workers on the job dealing with grievances and difficulties that arise there instead of relying upon the union officials to come along and settle matters. From this standpoint job control has the greatest possible value in the education of the workers, just as in a more general sense the whole group of ideas we call industrial democracy is part of the necessary preparation of the workers for the new social order. The theory of job control is valuable as part of the education of the workers, even if its practice, while capitalism prevails, is restricted in the manner we have indicated. The more fully the minds of the workers are seized of the necessity of industrial democracy, the better able will they be to step in when the time comes for them to take control of industry and prevent the breakdown of capitalism from becoming the breakdown of civilisation.

The human race is passing from one stage of social evolution to another. Like all periods of transition, the time is full of doubts and perplexities, troubles and difficulties, but we must be of good cheer and seek to march along the paths of progress and freedom. Job control is undoubtedly one of the roads to emancipation. Do not let us miscalculate how far it will lead, but also let us be quite decided that we shall go as far as it does lead.
J.D. Bernal
Jack Legge

WHEN John Desmond Bernal died on September 15, 1971, the peoples of the world lost a great communist scientist, whose enormous gifts had been applied unreservedly on their behalf throughout his whole adult life. He was, in a way, a modern Francis Bacon. But while Bacon analysed science at the service of youthful capitalism, Bernal saw it as the tool of socialist man.

He was born in Ireland, at Nenagh, county Tipperary, in the period when the imperialist powers had first divided the world, and grew up when they were trying to re-divide it in World War I. The writer of his obituary in the Times recalls that during the Easter Rebellion in 1916 he saw the burning of a big country house near his home and the finest streets in Dublin "in smoking ashes". An undergraduate at Cambridge when the young Soviet Union was fighting for its life against the interventionists, Bernal matured scientifically and politically during the world economic crisis, the rise of fascism, the Spanish civil war and the second world war. Of Bernal, the scientist, I like Dorothy Crowfoot Hodgkin's remarks on his sixtieth birthday:

"... But then he grew up in a very hard school. At the Royal Institution, he was given space to work in, but had to make his own X-ray tubes and cameras. His first rotating crystal camera, used to solve the structure of graphite, was made from bits of brass pipe, mounted on an alarm clock, with the film held in position with bicycle clips. There is a strong crystallographers' tradition that the Bernal Chart was drawn with the assistance of bootlaces. But we still use the Bernal Chart and our newest rotation cameras embody many features he designed. He has the kind of insight that initiates major technical advances. Simply by looking at X-ray photographs of vitamin D and ergosterol and correlating the effects he saw with the crystal optics he deduced that the molecules were lattice shaped and the then accepted sterol structure must be wrong. And by watching pepsin crystals drying under a microscope, he realised that they lost order when removed from their mother liquor - and then showed that they retained order if he mounted them for X-ray analysis, wet, in fine walled capillary tubes."

His observations on the way in which order can be maintained in protein crystals underpinned our present ability to penetrate into the behaviour of proteins in the living cell. Bernal never received Nobel prizes but his pupils did, and I have watched one of them learning to grow large crystals of these frightening complex molecules for X-ray examinations.

Initially a Catholic, Bernal was for a time both Catholic and Marxist. But judging from his first book, The World, the Flesh and the Devil, published in 1929, he was then as much a humanist and rationalist as a Marxist. The critical change probably occurred in 1931 at the Second International Congress of the History of Science and Technology. Bernal wrote:

"The appearance of the Soviet delegation... made it... the most important meeting of ideas that has occurred since the Revolution. What we know about the Russian experiment is derived from incomplete or mendacious accounts in the Press and the reports of more or less unqualified travellers; of the ideas which are the driving force behind it we know little or nothing. Here for the first time an authoritative and representative body, executives and scientists, Bukharin, Joffe, Vavilov, Hessen, Rahmstein and Colman, Zavadovsky and Mitkевич, prepared to expound and debate their conception of the universe and their schemes of action with the bourgeois intelligents of the West.

But there was no debate. One young English undergraduate, David Guest, later to die fighting for the Spanish Republic, vigorously supported the Russian views. Bernal commented that:

"Their appeal to the dialectic, to the writings of Marx and Engels, instead of impressing their audience, disposed them not to listen to the arguments which followed, with the feeling that anything so ungentlemanly and doctrinaire had best be politely ignored."

Bernal now set himself to rectify this situation, and in 1939 one of his greatest works was published, The Social Function of Science. It is, even today, a mine of information about the entanglement of science with the capitalist establishments of the period. The book is a monument not only to the capacity of an encyclopaedic mind for hard work but also to Bernal's ability to attract, organise and maintain the loyalty of many who helped him in his work. If Marx was the intellectual grandfather - whether recognised as such or not - of the many scientists who now press for a socially responsible science, Bernal was their intellectual father.

The Social Function of Science was reprinted four times during the war and again in 1946 - and was translated into Japanese, Arabic and a number of European Languages. The book came in for some criticism. This was not unexpected, since the last four pages laid down the "party line" in everything except a tear-off membership form.

Some was justified. My own copy contains marginal annotations by one of the most distinguished of the exports which Hitler managed to send to this country. Bernal never produced a second edition of the Social Function, but, once the war was over, started on what may be his most important work, Science in History, in which he patiently accepted, developed or rebutted such helpful comment. I will return to this later.

Most of the ill-directed criticism was swept away by the developments of the second world war. The practice of the allied nations showed that the J. D. Bernals were often of far more use than the more conservative of his peace-time critics. When war broke out Bernal resigned from about sixty committees on which he was a participant or a name, and devoted himself first to the protection of British civilians against bombing, and later to combined operations and to the securing of a successful landing on the European coast when the second front was opened.

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In the latter phase of the war Bernal was the personal scientific advisor to Mountbatten, on Combined Operations, and in this period visited Africa, India and Burma. C. P. Snow tells of one of his problems:

... Late in 1943, Bernal wanted an extra assistant. Not unnaturally, he asked for a former colleague, who had collaborated with him before the war. This man had to be extracted from another wartime job. Extraction agreed to; then inexplicable delay. Furious voice of Lord Mountbatten (Bernal wasn't above invoking his supreme employer): Why hadn't the man arrived, Bernal needed him, every day's delay was an intolerable waste ... Inquiries rushed to a security branch. Prevarications. More prevarication.

Final explanation: "Yes, we had to hold up this man's transfer."

"Why?"

"Well, before the war he was associated with a notorious communist."

"Who?"

"J. D. Bernal."

Before the invasion of Normandy, Bernal was involved in the geological preparations for the landing so that proper maps could be drawn up. He insisted on landing on D-Day supposedly in order to check the correctness of his calculations.

But the Allied victories did not usher in a new world fit for heroes. The cold war, with its attendant nuclear blackmail, had begun before the hot war ended. Bernal reacted to this new challenge by throwing his weight behind Joliot-Curie in founding the World Federation of Scientific Workers in 1946. He wrote, on its 20th anniversary:

... the W.F.S.W. had, as its main object, to preserve science from being used for warfare and to help mankind to use it productively. In the intervening twenty years, the importance of science has changed enormously, but not its direction. Although the Federation was founded after, and largely because of, the experiences of the Second World War, despite all its efforts, science is more closely bound to war preparations now than it was then. Since the war, far more money and human effort have been devoted to scientific war preparations than during the war itself. Indeed, we can now say that one half of the efforts of science are devoted to war preparations directly, and nearly three-quarters indirectly. The dominant feature of the period has been the development of the danger of nuclear warfare, and in spite of all national and international efforts to abolish this, or to diminish its incidence, the danger has continued to grow, to produce a situation of "over-kill" in which the very existence of the human race is threatened. Not only have atomic weapons themselves been developed, but also their means of delivery, particularly by the substitution of the rocket for the aeroplane. The Rocket Age has led directly to the Space Age, to satellites and planetary exploration. Thus, under the stimulus of war preparations there has been a new, fantastically accurate, fantastically wasteful and fantastically profitable development of physical science ...

At the height of the Cold War, Bernal was voted off the Council of the British Association for the advancement of Science for upholding his view that about three-quarters of current science was supported because of its military implications — a view which few would challenge now. He was active in the defence of the Rosenbergs, pointing out that a key item in the evidence against them — their supposed revelation of the cavity effect to Soviet spies — no more than described a patented nineteenth century American discovery on explosives known and used in the Soviet Union and was thus in no sense a secret.

With the death of Joliot-Curie in the late 1950's, Bernal was elected Chairman of the World Council of Peace and became deeply involved in its many efforts to resolve local conflicts and diminish global threats. He also brought his formidable planning capacity to bear on these problems in writing *World Without War*. In this, he considered in some detail the way in which arms expenditure starred the world of the investment needed for its economic development. Making reasonable estimates from the growth rates of the Soviet Union and the Chinese Peoples' Republic, he produced a series of forecasts, matching possible development against various reductions in arms expenditures. The most optimistic of these show economic returns on a world scale far exceeding any losses to the arms industry in a few decades. The United Nations report, appearing some years later, showed that massive economic dislocation and unemployment resulting from cutting arms expenditure had been grossly overestimated.

The World Federation of Scientific Workers rated the application of science to the improvement of living standards as of almost the same importance as its struggle to prevent the perversion of science in war. A decade after its formation it had gained representation in a number of underdeveloped countries and in 1959 held a symposium in Warsaw which Bernal edited as *Science for a Developing World*. At a 1965 conference, in Budapest, he stated:

We, the Federation, were right in what we hoped for, but completely wrong in our expectation of achieving it. Scarcely were we elected to serve mankind, to make mankind to use science in a completely disinterested way, . . . Where we went wrong, I now consider, was in imagining that the disinterestedness of those ... The expected aid, scientific and educational as much as industrial, was not nearly as large as was expected and, secondly, it was far from being disinterested in many cases . . .

We must recognise that we are witnessing a new counter-offensive of colonialism which inevitably affects science. This shows itself not merely in the appearance of what has been called neo-colonialism, in which the old features of colonialism are continued under new names and with the active assistance of the伞, the world of perpetual interests . . . Where we went wrong, I now consider, was in imagining that the disinterestedness of those who drew up the principles embodied in the Charter would be matched by the activities of those charged with assistance to science in the developing countries. The expected aid, scientific and educational as much as industrial, was not nearly as large as was expected and, secondly, it was far from being disinterested in many cases . . .

As important, if not more important from the point of view of science, has been the development in the last five years of large scientific concerns, mainly United States dominated, over the whole world ... the empires of oil, minerals and transport, mainly air transport. In fact, the political, military and economic aspects are all closely linked . . .

He went on to discuss the brain drain from the underdeveloped countries, the Trojan Horse character of some types of scientific aid, the fact that multinational research programs in the
wealthier countries may have already proceeded so far that “developing countries are effectively cut off from any participation in the advance of these sciences.” He ended by expressing his confidence that the Federation would be able to help, while insuring:

... in the words of our Charter “Complete separation of any such schemes from economic and political control by a foreign power”. This is not just a political or even a scientific question, it is a question of personal and collective morality. It raises the question of how far the enthusiasm of the newly liberated peoples can be mobilised to take them through the grave difficulties that are involved in raising intellectual and cultural standards in their countries up to those of the rest of the world within as short a time as possible. There is an enormous, and it has even been suggested a growing, gap to be filled, but the enthusiasm of these newly liberated peoples should be able to fill it.

At the W.F.S.W. Symposium on “Young Scientific Workers and Contemporary Society,” held in July 1971, Narendra Singh recalled the inspiration which most of those in the Indian scientific workers’ movement had drawn from Bernal’s work. Bernal had not been able to attend this conference in person, since some time before he had suffered a stroke which had left him partially paralysed, with his speech gravely impaired. But with the devoted help of his friends he continued his work.

A new book on The Origin of Life appeared, and he was able to prepare a new introduction to the third edition of his Science in History, which appeared in 1969. The first edition, appearing in 1954, was in a way an answer to some of the criticisms made that his earlier Marxism had one-sidedly emphasised the influence of society on science:

... but in the controversy the earlier view of the direct impact of science on society had been overshadowed. It was my purpose to emphasise once more to what extent the advance of natural science had helped to determine that of society itself...

This book represents a first attempt to put down in order some of the lessons of the past. It is not, nor is it intended to be, another history of science, though it must needs set out again much of that history and refer to more. Its aim is to bring out the influence of science upon other aspects, whether direct or indirect, through its effect on economic changes, or through its influence on the ideas of the ruling classes of the day or of those who are striving to supplant them.

A note of sadness, however, appears in his last, 1968, preface that is absent in earlier ones; and one not due to his age or infirmity:

In particular, the great gap between the developed and the underdeveloped world, far from closing, is widening rapidly. While science is playing a larger and larger part in the advanced industrial countries, it is stagnant or even receding in those parts of the world which contain the bulk of its population. The effect of this is to bring about for the first time the possibility that humanity will extinguish itself by war or famine. Science, as it is now being used, contributes to making such a horrifying prospect not only possible but almost certain, and up till now there has been little evidence of factors which will cause this process to reverse. The vast prospect of nemesis, however imminent, has caused little alarm, and produced virtually no efforts to deal with it. It would seem that there is a universal tacit conspiracy to avoid thinking about it by those responsible for creating a situation in the advanced countries, and the victims’ complaints are met with indifference and repression.

The great adventure of science seems, very sadly, to lead to such an end as negates all its original promise through the ages.

Although he ends the preface with a familiar call on the peoples of the world “to ensure that this new knowledge is used in the interests of human wellbeing”, I think his muted pessimism is significant. It is likely that it reflected the continued failure of the two largest Socialist Countries to resolve their differences. In the text of Science in History as revised in 1965, he discussed Lenin and his writings (p. 1170):

They have, however, been liable at different times to different interpretations, such as those at present in dispute between the Soviet Union and the Peoples’ Republic of China. Lenin, himself had always proved in practice to be a man capable of determination and also of compromise, according to the circumstances. What he would have done in the present circumstances, is naturally impossible to predict in any scientific way. We may be reasonably sure, however, that he would have found a way to unite the differing factions around his life’s task of establishing and defending socialism.

We can recall here that Ho Chi Minh, in his last testament, also recognised the paramount need for those two great countries to stand together.

It may well be that Bernal’s partisan loyalty to builders of socialism in any country cautioned him against any action which might have made their task more difficult. As did Joliot-Curie, he was forced to recognise through personal contact and from the twentieth Congress of the CPSU and from the events in Hungary in 1956, that the lot of many Soviet specialists had been an impossible one. Both Joliot and Bernal behaved, at times with a circumspection in their public utterances that reflected their own belief that the evolution of Soviet Society would one day lead to the Soviet scientists being properly trusted by the Kremlin. With the Sino-Soviet dispute developing, Bernal had to preside at meetings of the World Council for Peace and of the World Federation for Scientific Workers at which bitter disputes raged. The name Bernal became a dirty word in some Chinese circles. While Bernal must certainly have felt this, he did not respond in kind, but only in the spirit of the passages I have quoted.

Bernal is now dead, we are left with his writings and his example. It is hard to see how one with his talents could have served the useful peoples of the world in any better way than he did. Many of his scientific colleagues, while appreciating his devotion to peace and plenty, felt that the time he spent on trying to secure these was a loss to science that could be ill spared. When Bernal was reproached for this, he would reply, in the words of the great scientist Langevin, who joined the Communist Party of France during the resistance:

“The scientific work that I can do can be done and will be done by others, but unless the political work is done there will be no science at all.”
Marxism and Anarchism

Mr. Giles-Peters' reply to my article "Marxism and Anarchism" raises a plethora of issues, which hinge one upon the other. At this point in time I intend only to reply to his main objections as it was my original plan to write a series of articles on Marx and Proudhon, Marx and Bakunin and Marx and Sorel which will cover the other points at issue between us.

Mr. Giles-Peters states that Stirner is not representative of anarchism; that he was "St. Max" only to Marx; and that only a handful of anarchists follow him today. Marx's differences with Stirner, which my article dwelt on, do not therefore show what distinguishes Marxism from anarchism. According to Mr. Peters what I should have studied was the thought of Bakunin, Malatesta and Kropotkin, who belonged to the "historical anarchist movement", as then I would have noticed that these anarchists were not anti-social egoists but dedicated to collectivist socialism, and very little different from Marxists.

His main objection is thus broken down into two related propositions: 1) Stirner was not a typical anarchist and Bakunin was; 2) Bakunin, who was a typical anarchist, was a historical materialist like Marx. The political conclusion is that anarchism and Marxism are basically the same and that my assertion that Marxism is partly an anti-anarchism is wrong.

To support these two propositions, which, for the moment, we will assume he believes, he indicates generally correctly that Stirner was forgotten by both Marxists and anarchists after Marx left his German Ideology to the "gnawing criticism of the mice"; (Stirner was only rediscovered by Kropotkin years after Marx' death); that even then he had only a handful of so-called anarchist followers; and that his "Hobbesian" union of egoists was quite different from the society which the archetypical anarchist Bakunin advanced and he adduces various quotations from Bakunin to show that the Russian believed that man was a "social animal" and a revolt against society would be "just as impossible as a revolt against nature..." which contradict those of Stirner, to show both that Stirner's views should not be imputed to other philosophical anarchists and that Bakunin was neither an idealist, nor an egoist, but a historical materialist like Marx.

All these statements are true, though Mr. Giles-Peters has missed the implications of some of his own quotations, but they do not show what he suggests they show because they do not constitute an adequate mode of proof for a Marxist, though they may for a positivist.

We do not have to refer to Laing to realise that the adage "all that glitters is not gold" applies to human beings as much as to material substances. This old adage was one of the main starting points of Marx in all his analyses; indeed the core of what he took from Hegel can be summed up in the proposition that those who investigate should realise that things are not only what they seem. I refer readers to the opening chapters of Capital, 1. Two hinged notions flow from the methodological distinction, omnipresent in Marx, between essence and appearance. The first I covered in the article but I will repeat it here. An investigator who wishes to know the meaning of any work should 1) read it for what is implicit in it as well as what is explicit in it; that is, the discovery of what an author means (as distinct from what he intends) is a construction of his real attitudes from what he reveals unintentionally on the face of his argument. (What he really stands for is not necessarily what he says he stands for) and 2) the practical meaning of a personal philosophy is discovered by seeing how appropriate it is to the world of reality, or verified in the ongoing praxis which is historical materialism. The second notion involves exposition. An expositor of ideas, either of his own or of someone else, should bear in mind that it is what an object is which matters, not what people think it is; and that it is what men do which counts, not what they think they do; and that it is what men stand for, not what labels they put on themselves which matter.

So for Marx and for all other Marxists, and I will show, in practice even for Mr. Giles-Peters himself, though he may not be conscious of it, it is not what Stirner and Bakunin say which establishes their difference, nor is it what Bakunin says which establishes his beliefs, but what is implicit in what they say and do both philosophically and practically as well as what is explicit which matters. Starting from this position it is clear that Bakunin and Stirner have similar views, and Marx and Bakunin do have opposing views.

To avoid recapitulation of my article I will merely state that while Stirner claimed that the way to happiness was through an absolute egoism, Marx indicated by his reading that commitment to these ideas, and for Marx ideas could always become practical forces, would result in nothing but the attainment of their opposite. Stirner's proposals are merely an "ideology", that is a system whose components were mutually contradictory, given the context, and which were inadequate to their object, that of liberation from social inequity.

As Marxists the only question we need ask ourselves is whether Marx, making a similar reading of Bakunin's theory and practice as he had of Stirner, would reach the conclusion that Bakunin too was advancing an "ideology" with similar deleterious effects. If we can answer in the affirmative then we have established that there is no difference practically between Bakunin and Stirner, and that Bakunin was no historical materialist. Then it does not matter practically what we call them, anarchists or not. The nomenclature depends on the angle of vision: Stirner was called an irrationalist and the precursor of Nietzsche by the Nazis. For

1 The force of this point I am making and others I make later about the difference between Marxism and Bakunin's materialism can be gathered from a reading of Rodolfo Mondolfo's "Il concetto di necessità nel materialismo storico", Rivista di filosofia, IV, 1912, pp.55-74 where he writes inter alia "Words have often turned men away from the correct understanding of historical materialism" [two things developed the 'fatalist' interpretation]. "One came from the conviction that the doctrine had its foundations and presupposition in materialism". "The name historical materialism is not the least responsible for similar misunderstanding. Croce rightly lamented once that this term materialism, which need not be used in this case, gives rise to many misunderstandings and could be usefully replaced by the 'realist concept of history'. "The philosophy from which the doctrine originates, is the voluntarism of praxis which Marx and Engels derived from Feuerbach." It is a pity that the work of Labriola and Mondolfo is not more widely known in Anglo-Saxon countries as they (especially Mondolfo) anticipated much of Lukacs' arguments more than fifteen years before he wrote.

2 I do not wish to become involved in an argument about the distinction Marx makes between analysis and exposition in Capital. 1 assert that the distinction can be reconciled with his pronouncement.

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To come to Bakunin, and to foreshadow the content of a future article. Mr. Giles-Peters cannot deny that Marx loathed Bakunin and that the feeling was mutual, though in Bakunin’s case it had overtones of anti-Semitism. Mr. Giles-Peters may sometimes say that Marx’s views on private property is aimed at anything above all by anarchist writers like Woodcock and by Arthur Lehning, that this was because Bakunin was having more success than Marx in the First International and was aggrieved and that the main fact this was a quarrel over the mode of organisation. He implies, however, that it did not involve philosophical differences. Unluckily we do not have works like the German Ideology and the Poverty of Philosophy to which I can simply refer him to show that he is wrong. But Marx’s letters and the Bakunin Archiv show clearly that he is wrong. Marx cursed frequently about the anarchist “children’s primer”, with its contradictions and his delegate to the anarchist conference at Geneva, after pleading to that gathering not to fall for nationalism and finding them adamant, published his address as “My Pearl before the Congress of Geneva”. Marx and his followers found Bakunin theoretically crude.

This is not surprising. Unless we assume that Marx no longer read people as he had in 1845, an assumption which Capital contradicts, then he could not have helped noticing that despite Bakunin’s intellectual deference and attempt to ape Marx’ opinions he was a crude materialist. In Bakunin’s writing against Marx crude materialism comes out clearly. One of Mr. Giles-Peters’ quotations shows most clearly the contradictions of their position. Bakunin’s reference to man as a “social animal” is an indicative lapse of the pen for ‘social being’. Marx most certainly did not believe that men were social animals.3 It was this sort of error which led to crude materialism and thus to determinism, from whose position Marx sought to escape in his critique of Feuerbachian materialism and Stirner. And since crude materialism is merely the reversal of idealism, logically he is in the same position as Stirner.

No marxist reading of Bakunin can make him a historical materialist. Mr. Giles-Peters has not made his point for Marx by counterposing to Stirner and to Marx what Bakunin said. Moreover, since the “marxist” reading is how people in fact read, Giles-Peters shows that in practice he does not believe that he has made his point by such a juxtaposition, though he pretends to theoretically. He himself observed Marx’ common-sense rules of reading implicitly as well as explicitly when he tried to work out my purpose and the logic of my positions from my article. In his practice, which reveals his real standpoint (what he acts upon) he does not believe in taking people at their face value. I am sure that he will agree in comradely fashion that neither can be easily inferred from a single article, and that he would not like me to discover in him a crudely political purpose from his one reply.

Like all articles mine is political, though this admission should be understood in the Crocian sense. Two political points I am making are these, first, marxists must always beware of surface affinities between doctrines. For example, when Mr. Giles-Peters writes that there is an obvious affinity between the marxist belief that “the end of class society is the end of the state . . .” and that of the anarchists, we reject not be confused. Nor should we be taken in by notions like “Marx started from a criticism of the State as embodied Freedom or Reason in the abstract and proceeded to a criticism of the State as a supra-social mediator of social interests”. There are many self-styled socialists, or men who claim that they adhere to socialist principles. What marxists must be concerned with is to look beyond these appearances and ask where these men will end by the logic of their beliefs. Moreover, where there are affinities, as there were between the anarchist’s conclusion and Marx’ starting point there are often kept in mind not only the category of opposites but the category of the distinct. The second inference which I make from my conclusions that marxism is an anti-anarchism is that anarchists should be converted to marxism. Since I believe, as is patent from my article, that the truth or falsity of any proposition can only be proven in praxis, man’s real life activity (retrospectively in history, and prospectively in political action) I believe socialists must unite and work with anarchists so that the latter can discover in a real fashion that they will not make social happiness by tempting society to start any abstract Ideal of destruction. We can only transcend what is, do not away with it.

Private Property and Utopia

Doug Kirsner is to be congratulated on his analysis of “cultural” versus “structural” factors in the strategy of dissent and ultimate revolution (“Spirit of Utopia”, ALR No. 34). Many of us are sick and tired of being told by so-called “revolutionaries” that what Marx “really meant” when he advocated the abolition of private property was the “abolition of the private ownership of the means of production”. Doug’s statement brings a breath of clean air into the subject.

Where, however, one may take issue with Doug is in the evaluation of the immediate applicability of “cultural” objectives. People”, he says, “are generally wedded to (the values of the system). Indeed, those of us who have advocated a direct attack on the values of consumerism as an immediate strategy have often been accused of pushing a “middle class” or “intellectual” approach.

I will try to show that the very reverse is true. The starting point of those who favour the conservative approach to the consensus on consumerism is that the acquisition of private property is largely a response to the generated wants of the system, rather than a fulfilment of actual needs. On the surface, there is much to support this view. The proliferation of advertising, the campaigns of indoctrination by the mass media, and countless tracts by worthy economists all stress the importance of the “generated” market.

What is ignored by this analysis is the nature of consumption and of the consumer. There is now an almost total split of the market into two sectors. One is the sector of generated consumption, served by the means outlined above, and aimed, in the main, at the small section of the population which is really affluent. There can be no doubt that this sector exists. It is made up not only of the upper stratum of the industrial, commercial and political bureaucracy, but, more importantly, contains many wage and salary earners who have no family responsibility. There is also the group of people who live in families with multiple incomes. Thus, for instance, almost the entire entertainment industry is now geared to this sector, as a study of prices for entertainment will show.

This affluent section, certainly, is wedded to the bourgeois ethos. However, the offspring of the older members of this section, many of whom are tertiary students, are often totally disinherited with the shallowness generated by consumerism, and turn against it in varying degrees. The consciousness generated in this group is based on moral or ethical grounds. One may safely assume that it places a great deal of consciousness at this level which leads to the assumption that the rejection of private property at this moment is limited to a “middle class” or “intellectual” basis.

3 See EPM passim; compare Bakunin’s writings in Arthur Lehning, Bakunin Archiv (Brill, Leiden, 1968-70, 3 Vols.).
Now let us look at the other, numerically far larger section of consumers. There is no doubt that this section is also largely manipulated by commercial pressures. However, it will readily be seen that, where the level of income is low, choice is limited to the make of item (such as which car) rather than the type of item (swimming pool versus boat). An analysis of where spending of this sector goes will show that a small number of items, in fact only two (car and house) are predominant in the family budget after food and essential clothing has been paid for. Spending on cars accounts, if memory serves me right, for four fifths of total hire purchase commitments. Spending on housing (most of which is in the form of paying off a privately owned house) runs, in most cases, at about one third of the family income.

The question now arises, how far are these expenditures — plus other items like refrigerators — generated wants rather than real needs? One does not need a statistical analysis to arrive at the conclusion that the only house most families can afford to live in is one which is owned by them (or the bank). The fact that they “own” the house generally forces them to travel vast distances to work. Absence of public transport often forces them to go to work by car. Present styles of shopping force them to stock food in a refrigerator. And so the list goes on. Thus, ownership of property is forced by circumstances, and is the result of real needs rather than generated wants. The point is — and it is not a novel point — that the generated wants of yesterday become the needs of today. What is not so widely appreciated is that, as soon as a want becomes a need, a totally different relationship arises. Thus, although property which is desired does represent a burden, it is a burden much more gladly borne than property which is forced on you.

An additional, very important aspect often ignored is the cost of servicing such property. There is insurance, rates and maintenance for the house. In the case of the so-called consumer durables (such as cars) one of their main features to the user is that they are not durable, and require continuous costly service. The fact that all car repairs and spares are now available on hire purchase shows the problems involved, and the trauma now involved when you need a car battery and can’t afford it is real only to the person who has to depend on his private transport to go to work.

It is only those with an abundant income who can afford to “enjoy” their property. It therefore seems to me that it is the idea that private property is a pleasant thing which is a “middle class” or “intellectual” preoccupation. “Revolutionaries” who feel that an aversion to property is “utopia” which it will take years to generate are therefore out of touch with reality. Those of us who talk to workers of all political lines will know if they have tried, that when the question of the domination of people by their property is brought up in discussion, you frequently strike an instant response. Far from being “utopia” therefore, opposition to private property should form a major feature of opposition to the system as a whole. What is more, as Doug implies, to limit the “raising of consciousness” around issues like wage increases is to a certain extent counterproductive, as it confines criticism to the level of bourgeois values. How such “consciousness” will ultimately lead to a position of opposition to the values of the system is difficult to see. It is even harder to see how we are to attract those elements already basically in dissent with some of the values of the system by offering them a pure diet of reformist “transitional demands”. We thus lag far behind politically unorganised young people who are already living an alternative lifestyle.

Therefore, while agreeing with Doug Kirsner, it seems that instead of considering Utopia as a reality only for revolutionaries, it should and can be made an immediate starting point for political action.

Gerry Harant

Information sought

Mr. H. Roth, Auckland University Librarian and a Labour Historian, is seeking information about L. Marks, a delegate to the Communist International who claimed to represent the CPNZ at the Second Congress.

Would any reader who knows anything about Marks please write to Mr. Roth at the University Library, University of Auckland, Auckland, New Zealand.

Following The Destruction of Aboriginal Society, Charles Rowley's Outcasts in White Australia and The Remote Aborigines have recently been published to complete the trilogy. They deal with the growth of the part- (and full-) blood as well as part-Aboriginal communities in settled and "colonial" Australia respectively — their social history, government policy, the various effects of white prejudice, the conditions of wages and housing, demography, the most important issues such as land rights, and suggestions for ways in which Aboriginal development might occur.

These books were written in 1967, following research done in 1964-65. Since then, much of their content has declined in relevance. This is especially the case with his history of the then recent developments in the Aboriginal movement; his collection of statistics on housing, wages and conditions, and the move to the capital cities; and his thorough summation of the research.

But this defect is more than compensated by his history of Aborigines from late last century — the reasons behind government policy; Aboriginal reactions to forced institutionalisation and white prejudice; and the effects of these, and of protests, on government policy in a changing world situation. There are also histories of various fringe settlements and reserves — for example, of Griffith, Bega, Kalgoorlie, Palm Island and Cunneenonggun, interspersed with attempts to reach a theoretical synthesis, and to recommend possible policies for these places, and in general.

In regard to social theory, Rowley attempts to combine a number of disparate streams. Goffman's work on institutions, Lewis' on the culture of poverty, Beckett's on remote Aborigines as retainers of the old Australian frontier traditions are combined with his own research on the changing patterns of white prejudice to Aborigines in the context of "white Australia". Rowley also attempts to compare Aboriginal reactions with the experiences of other colonised people and even with "more normal" Australian expressions of alienation, such as traffic offences.

This synthesis is better for its suggestibility than its coherence. Unfortunately, Rowley doesn't attempt to substantiate it by analysing and comparing the differences between the areas he researches. There is also a neglect of the importance of traditional Aboriginal social structures and customs at different times and places, and of the diachronic elements of white family, class, religious and political ideology and structure. For example, some mention is made of overt white prejudice changing from a concern over miscegenation to one over hygiene and real estate values, but not of the causes and concomitant changes of this variation. And a liberal concern with governments as a possible force for change seems to have caused Rowley to gloss over just how different pressure groups have (and continue to) influenced various governments and departments.

One chapter that deserves mention is that on Townsville and Palm Island in the book The Remote Aborigines. The choice of this area of northern Queensland is relevant in that Townsville is considered to be in a "settled region" and where "the whole pattern of its relationship with Palm Island belongs to the frontier past". This relationship, as on other reserves, is due to the very restrictive nature of the Queensland discriminatory Act. Mention is made of the circumstances around which Palm Island was settled; its use as a penal colony to which "troublemakers" were sent; the attempts to escape from the island; the ill-fated strike in 1957 resulting in seven islanders being taken to Townsville handcuffed and so on. All very interesting and revealing.

Furthermore, Rowley examines closely the relationship of a number of Aboriginal advancement organisations. For example, the formation of the government-supported OPAL organisation was as a direct consequence of the so-called communist influence on the Queensland State Council for the Advancement of Aborigines. The former group concerned mainly with charitable functions was closely associated with the government, whereas the latter, more concerned with basic social change, had trade union links. In all, this chapter is probably one of the more detailed studies attempted.

Rowley's work as a piece of analysis from a historical perspective and, in particular, his derivation of the current situation in various areas, has been painstakingly worked on; however, his proposals for possible change lack a certain necessary diversity. Although acknowledging the traditional aspect of Aboriginal society, he sees very little place for its development as a possible alternative. Instead, emphasis on economic assistance through government aid, the formation of Aboriginal companies, appear to be the central points of possible future policy. The emergence of a number of all-Aboriginal organisations in recent years, and their emphasis on cultural identity underlines the importance of the need for an alternative life style.

To his credit, however, Rowley states that future policy must be based on Aboriginal initiative — quite rightly, he sees past government policies as being paternalistic and, as such, positively harmful. Then again, Rowley's over-emphasis on the good will of the government points to a certain degree of unjustified optimism. Governments make decisions, not on the basis of "justice" but rather on less altruistic grounds. Recent judgments on the land rights issue, despite intense protestations by pressure groups, indicate how concerned the government is with "justice". Furthermore, a notable omission has been made in that the policies of the major political parties and the interests of various pressure groups have not been examined. What policy changes might be expected (on paper at least) under a Labor Government, or what effect does the Country Party (under pressure from the graziers) have on the coalition in regard to the question of Aboriginal land ownership?

BRIAN ACKLAN

GEORGE PICK

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ILBARANA, by Donald Stuart.
Georgian House, Melbourne, $3.50

In considering the problems that confront the Aborigine in Australia today, the reader in search of a balanced picture of all the problem areas is faced with a great amount of material, some of it of the highest degree of relevance, some of it somewhat informative, and a great part of it of no more significance than inheres in the domestic junk that seeks to exploit the black image, usually for the profit of importers of goods Made in Japan.

Of the material in the first mentioned category most is set forth by academics. Anthropologists and sociologists have recorded vast amounts of data; surveys of physical health have been made; education and housing, work opportunities and social status, the Law in its attitudes to blacks and to whites... all have come under the regard of trained and concerned investigators... and the result has been in words, pages, volumes, quite bulky. To their credit, the various writers of this kind of material have given the general reader, as well as the specialised reader trained in one or other of the disciplines concerned, an insight into many areas of aboriginal life that would otherwise have remained in undisturbed gloom.

The great amount of material in the second category is face to face with us in almost every city bookshop. With good photography, in bindings of the highest quality, on glossy paper, but with the sparsest text, this material is meant for display on the coffee table, for occasional browsing, and is the source of much falsely based satisfaction among those whites who feel vaguely guilty about "our" "natives".

The third category needs no introduction further than to say its value is Woolworthian, Colesian, and its message a blatant downgrading of the Aborigine. A fourth category though it is small in bulk, and though it reaches a very restricted readership, consists of the outpourings of Federal and State departments charged with regulating the lives of Aborigines. These Government brochures, pamphlets, books, periodicals and other communications, can be taken as pro-Government propaganda, having no real relevance.

Beyond all these writings there is a trickle, pitifully small as yet... but growing... of poems, stories, and factual material, from people of Aboriginal descent. It is important material and will become more important.

Anyone considering the Aborigine of today should look carefully at the Aborigine of yesterday. In the time-scale of mass movements of humans from continent to continent, and the extinction of cultures by other more forceful cultures. Yesterday in Australia ended with the arrival of the first Europeans, five strange men with five strange beasts. The last page is a scenario, at the close of Yesterday, for all that has happened Today, the long bleak Today of 1770-1972.

All Australians old enough to read adult literature should read Ilbarana's life story. Particularly it should be read by those persons of Aboriginal descent who have been conned by our fiercely competitive callous rat-race culture into a belief in the lie of Aboriginal inferiority. This book must be placed in a category of its own.

Lyndall Hadow


The Manufacture of Madness is written by a noted American psychiatrist whose outlook resembles in some important respects those of the "anti-psychiatrists", R. D. Laing and David Cooper. Szasz's most well-known book is also his first, The Myth of Mental Illness.

In the book under review, Szasz's main thesis is that so-called "mentally ill" people today serve the same social function as did witches during the inquisition — they validate the community standards and authorities by being invalidated as evil. There is no doubt as to the existence of people who were characterised by others as witches. However, there were, in fact, no people who communed with the Devil (who, as we now know, himself never existed). Analogously, although people called "mentally ill" or "insane" do exist, it is not true that the people so designated are in fact mentally ill. Psychiatric historians, Szasz says, have regarded the "witches" as insane people with delusions. Szasz describes the "witches" as ordinary, innocent people who were oppressed by inquisitors who often thought of themselves as saving the "witches'" souls. They were doing the witches a favour by torturing confessions out of them and then allowing them to be burnt at the stake, for they would now be able to live in heaven.

Szasz views the contemporary hospitalisation of "mentally ill" people against their will by well-intentioned psychiatrists as similar to this. Society has always had scapegoats whose function was to bear away the sins of society with them, thus relieving the rest of the people of the burden of their wrong-doings, and therefore, of course, of the moral responsibility for their actions. "We are good Christians," the inquisitors might have said, "Just look how many fallen souls we have saved — even though these witches might not thank us for it in this world". Replace "witches" with for the beauty of this poetic prose; but behind the skilled brushwork is a firmly, quite definitely limned depiction of a way of life in which children, in their vulnerable infancy and childhood, are the responsibility of the whole community, a way of life in which every man grows to full stature, in which no man has any opportunity to exploit any other man. To the mind of one raised in the rat-race of today's capitalistic Australia, there is a quality of socialism to be seen in the culture of the original people of this continent. Perhaps the poverty of the material life led to this by denying to the individual the chance to stand alone against his fellow men in a land that demanded co-operation at all levels as the price of survival. Whatever the origin of the socio-economic system, it was such as to allow every individual the full realisation of his potential, and Stuart weaves this thread strongly among the other threads of his story.

In the closing chapter we are shown from the viewpoint of the desert dwellers the imminent arrival of the first Europeans, five strange men with five strange beasts. The last page is a scenario, at the close of Yesterday, for all that has happened Today, the long bleak Today of 1770-1972.
"Mentally ill" or "crazy" people and we have, according to Szasz, the modern situation of institutional psychiatry. "Look how sane and righteous we are," says the proponents of involuntary mental hospitalisation or certification. "We are helping people who are so sick that they refuse to admit the depths of their illness. They don't want to be helped, but we are acting in their long-term best interests, not to mention those of society.'

We might summarise Szasz's view here by slightly altering Voltaire's famous remark about God: "If witches/mentally ill people do not exist, it is necessary to invent them." To remain a smoothly functioning whole, societies until now have designated certain members as unfit and deserving of "treatment". The groups most vulnerable to categorisation as insane are those who markedly deviate from the accepted norms of society, e.g. homosexuals, communists — even masturbators! No matter that quite a few people — perhaps the vast majority — fall under one or more of these headings. This simply enhances the field of power of what Szasz entitles the Mental Health Movement under the aegis of the Therapeutic State. There are twice as many people incarcerated in US mental hospitals as there are in that country's overcrowded prisons. These people, according to Szasz, are victims to the violence engendered through the myth of mental illness. Even though there are groups of people stigmatised as sick, any one individual can earn the label and suffer consequences ranging from being strangely regarded by friends and employers through to being committed to an institution.

The book abounds in illustrations of stigmatisation and scapegoating from inquisitors and witches to psychiatrists and inmates. Unfortunately, many of the comparisons between witchcraft and mental illness where psychiatrists are the inquisitors, patients the witches, and mental illness is witchcraft, are stated rather than argued. Many things which share some characteristics with other things can be made to appear identical with them through selecting certain characteristics and rejecting others which might conflict with the identity.

Of course, if mental illness is like witchcraft in all important respects, then we should be well rid of mental hospitals together with the rest of institutional psychiatry. But the point is: is it? Does Szasz do any more than assert the similarity?

There may be many called "mentally ill" who are not. Many people are certainly scapegoated by their families or society itself into commitment to mental hospitals. As in any profession, there are good psychiatrists and bad ones. Unhappily, a goodly number of them are bad ones who are unenlightened about anything other than dosages of psychotropic drugs. The majority of mental institutions often harm their patients through maltreatment or the creation of greater problems than the patient had in the first place. But this in itself does not imply the abolition of institutional psychiatry. We must realise that, in this society, many people are greatly hurt from birth, and this produces in some a situation where they are a danger both to themselves and to others. They are not in command of themselves. Their perceptions and values are perverted by an inhuman environment. Unfortunately, I see mental hospitals with much of the associated paraphernalia as necessary in this society in trying to mend in part the harm done to so many people. Naturally, institutional psychiatry can do with an enormous amount of reform, but its abolition would be counter-productive.

Many educated, middle class Laing and Cooper reading schizophrenics may be hurt by the process of institutional psychiatry. But there are many people in this society who need good institutional help. There are many whose capacity for insight into their own condition has been annulled by their past.

What we need is a society which does not create the conditions where mental institutions are a necessity. It is not institutional psychiatry or the Mental Health Movement which is to blame for the sorry state of affairs many mental patients and others find themselves in. To say the fault lies elsewhere is a lack of consideration very many people who would be dead or far more miserable outside an institution — even though they would not believe this. Symptomatically, Szasz constantly invokes John Stuart Mill to support his contenions that people always ought to be left alone. What he neglects to mention is Mill's insistence that the ability of rational choice is denied to savages, children and the insane.

To say that there are no insane, and to act upon it would do inestimable harm to many real people. Certainly, the origins of madness rest with the social setting, but to allow that this inhuman society exists with all its psychocultural insanities, and at the same time to deny its mad­dening effects on many from birth through socialising agencies beginning with the family, is to deny many people some relief from an otherwise unbearable existence. Szasz does not make the link-up of "mental illness" with social structure, and I suspect that if he did, he would have to admit that the society does such great violence to many people that they are left in no shape to help themselves.

By no means do I wish to say that the present system of institutional psychiatry — whether in the US or Australia is adequate to the needs of patients. To say that vast transformations are necessary is understatement. This includes redefinitions of mental illness as much as enlightenment of psychiatrists and nurses, the abolition of shock treatment and the improvement of hospital conditions. Hospitals must cease to be instruments of social oppression and, instead, become havens from the pressures of family and society. Patients should not be treated as sub-human. Mere non-conformity and unconventionality must be defined out of the vague concept of mental illness. Where non-conformity ends and insanity begins is a question that concerns us all, particularly radicals who are those most likely to be branded by the state authorities and mass media as "mentally sick". But the problem is not solved by denying its existence as Szasz does.

There is a great multitude of injustices in the institutional psychiatry system. But there is no black and white picture: either you support it wholly as established psychiatric practice does, or you oppose everything it stands for, as Szasz does. It is not necessary for radicals to take Szasz's position and throw the baby out with the bath water. Of course, it is rather easy for many radicals, along with Laing in The Politics of Experience, to declare the insane sane and the sane insane because it provides a simple and iconoclastic solution (just like "Smash the State").

The problems involved in mental illness will not be solved through the abolition of the term and concomitant practices. It can be resolved only through the arduous work of dealing with people as they are and not as we would like to think they are.

DOUGLAS KIRNER