Two Years of Escalation
Issues in Labor Conflict
Socialism: The New Base
Aborigines Struggle: a New Stage
AUSTRALIAN LEFT REVIEW is a marxist journal of information, analysis and discussion on economics, politics, trade unionism, history, philosophy, science and art, for the promotion of socialist ideas.

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BOOK REVIEWS
INDUSTRIALLY, 1966 drew to a close with the Qantas pilots' strike, which had implications far beyond the pilots' undoubted victory. The dispute had its farcical elements. Mr. McMahon, already a slightly ridiculous figure, played the buffoon attempting a role as man of destiny. On November 29 he solemnly warned: "... the Government would not allow pilots ... to act with contemptuous disregard of ... the community at large. However, to give the pilots an opportunity to act responsibly and avoid being caught up in processes that will otherwise follow, I appeal to them to return to work without delay."

When this appeal was ignored, McMahon retired from the fray, not to be heard from again. Bury started in the same vein, but soon became more sober.

The press—the "liberal" *Australian* the worst—discovered "a majority of a radical minority who took the trouble to vote", the possibility of a "breakaway movement", young irresponsibles stampeding the older men, a small group holding the community to ransom, defying arbitration and the law of the land, recklessly destroying the industry, etc., etc. A plot was even discovered for amalgamation of all airline unionists, controlled by a sinister pilots' union "boss".

The papers controlled by those egalitarian press millionaires, Sir Warwick Fairfax and Rupert Murdoch, wept copiously at the thought of the gross inequalities of the "proletariat" on $8,000 a year penalised by "capitalist" pilots. They were far more worried than the proletariat. The affected "public", which flies overseas for business and/or pleasure, was not amused. Since many come from the Establishment, this had some influence when it became obvious that the pilots could neither be cajoled, bribed nor stood over.

Obvious lessons will be drawn by all unionists. Arbitration is not necessary even to register victories; it is an obstacle to winning the gains that industrial strength and action can win, tending always to award the bare minimum increases (as already shown in the level of over-award payments won by militant industrial workers and their unions).

1967 will certainly be a year of industrial action. Arbitration's crisis is unresolved. The basic wage decision and the interim
metal trades margins award only postponed the flood of wage demands inevitable early this year, while the employers plan an offensive against over-award payments and for their "total wage" concept.

The sustained stagnation of consumer demand is a clear sign of labor's reduced portion of the social product. There is pent-up resentment and pressure which will not be held down, despite all the machinations of the influential "tame cat" faction in the trade unions—even given the threatened aid of an AWU block vote at ACTU Congresses. In the long run, the trade union movement must express its members' demands in action.

THE QANTAS STRIKE posed other and deeper issues. An Australian editorial (17/12/66) revealed a major one: "... the idea of a top-to-bottom investigation of the Qantas management virtually demands that the Pilots' Federation takes over the running of the airline; a dangerous precedent, to say the least."

This explains the seemingly suicidal stubbornness of Qantas management, initially fully backed by the Government.

The pilots presumed to demand a say in control of management, which capitalism simply cannot easily concede. Such economic democracy strikes at the "right" of capital to hire and fire, to decide upon technical change, allocation of investment and price policies without consultation or consideration of its employees, the national interest or effects upon the people as consumers.

The basic democratic demand for workers' participation in control will more and more arise in industrial actions. It should accompany the struggle for nationalisation of the monopolies, conceivably even preceding it. Reaction to the pilots' strike reveals how deeply the rulers fear such basic reforms.

Another evidence of this fear is imminent repudiation of Askin's solemn electoral promise to institute a NSW Education Commission, with Teachers' Federation representation. Pretext for this repudiation is alleged "left control" of the Federation, putting the Liberals in the position of exercising an authoritarian veto of the teachers' democratic vote, after their disastrous semi-official excursion into interference in the Federation elections. But the union leadership's political complexion is secondary. The main consideration is maintenance of the bureaucratic principle, avoidance of any control by employees of policy and administration, even in a service that in fact depends largely upon the teachers for its administration.
THE NSW TEACHERS' FEDERATION is denied a say in policy decisions precisely because it advances and campaigns for a radical solution to the problems posed by the "education explosion". The NSW Government has only a piecemeal policy of patching up the most immediate problems.

The education crisis is nationwide, and affects all three levels. The university crisis is reflected in recent increases in fees and reduction in governments' subsidies. The most immediate effects are upon expansion of university teaching and facilities, and opportunities for post-graduate work.

Restriction of post-graduate and research opportunities poses a big question of national concern. Is it the Establishment's deliberate policy to depend more and more upon United States, Japanese and other foreign technology, to avoid the cost of independent scientific research and technological development? This certainly fits in with the virtual abandonment to foreign investors of whole sectors of the economy, and to the general posture of embarrassing servility to American policies. And it is not necessarily refuted by the undoubted excellence of much Australian scientific work, already heavily dependent upon US finance, and providing a scientific cream to be skimmed off by foreign institutions, as required.

A far-reaching social consequence of the whole education policy is the emergence of a new elitism. Enough has been written already about IQ tests, and the tiny percentage of university entrants from the working class. Not quite enough is perhaps understood of the elitism inherent in the growing inequality of opportunity for higher secondary and tertiary education, compounded by increasing expenditure of taxpayers' money for the private schools.

However opportunist his political motives in wooing the Catholic vote, Sir Robert Menzies also proceeded from an ideological conviction, expressed in a 1963 talk at his old school, Wesley. He lauded the fact that the Great Public Schools had managed to survive . . . 'Fifteen years ago . . . I thought we would find ourselves practising that dreadful civic vice of uniformity which we have such a passion for in Australia. Individuality is the essence of our ideas for Public Schools. This business of daring to be wise, and setting out to develop intellectual integrity is something that can be achieved by a great school and lost by a bad one' (SMH, 26/2/63).

These views are, almost verbatim, identical with those expressed by the Argus more than half a century ago:

"Is it, then, a thing to be wondered at that even in a new city like Melbourne most of our leading men in business and in professional life are men who were college-bred? But let us imagine a State where there are no
colleges like the English public schools, but where all things are under the bureaucracy of the Central Education Department . . . we cannot govern India and . . . build up a great Australia with machine-made men. . . . There is something in college breeding which cannot be got in any other way . . . rescue our colleges from the maw of the machine . . ." (quoted in *Sources of Australian History*, ed. M. Clark, p. 584).

More and more public money is going to non-Catholic private schools attended almost exclusively by children of the very rich or the well-to-do.

And why not? Holt's new Federal Cabinet, as Menzies' before it, is made up of men whose outlook was formed in these exclusive schools. Of the 16 Cabinet Ministers who gave details of their secondary education in "Who's Who", no fewer than 11 attended nine private schools (all non-Catholic). The King's and Geelong Grammar lead with two Ministers each; Wesley is now down to one, but still boasts the Prime Minister. (In 1965, 1.8 million school children attended public schools, 476,000 went to Roman Catholic Schools, and all other private schools enrolled only 104,000).

THE UNKINDEST CUT of the Qantas strike was the display of industrial militancy from such high-paid, well-educated and trained members of the "new class" that is supposed to have rendered obsolete not only social revolution, but even social-democratic reformism.

Changes in class structure certainly need more study by the left. The Communist Party's draft 21st Congress documents suggest that the trend of social development in modern Australia . . . sets the owners, managers and administrators apart from their employees and the rest of the nation, including scientists, technicians, planners and social scientists, educators and other highly qualified people essential for the new and advancing level of the productive forces.

The left is certainly concerned with strengthening co-operation and unity between the labor movement and intellectuals, white-collar and professional workers. It should, as the Congress documents suggest, oppose "proletarian sectarianism" and recognise the special contribution to political debate and action made by the growing radical minority among these strata.

Theoretical clarification of this issue is important. This should be firmly based upon analysis of actual reality, recognising that marxist theory is a generalisation of concrete social forces that can and must be objectively measured and studied in their movement. This is one very important issue to be discussed before and at the Communist Party of Australia Congress.
The Qantas pilots’ strike certainly did not express a conscious radicalism or desire to remake society, as some over-enthusiastic supporters seem to suggest. But it did express a deep moving and as yet only incipient demand by citizens for access to control over the “policy levers which determine their lives”.

There is surely some lesson for the Establishment, and for some on the left, that the pilots, with a degree of individual freedom of decision given to few employees, found that their ultimate power lay in the collective weapon of the strike. It is perhaps more than symbolic that pilots met in the Sydney Trades Hall.

The left has to develop policies to raise consciousness of more basic issues contemporary Australian society poses before wage and salary workers. The Communist Party hopes its Congress will be an opportunity for an exchange of views on these issues, and not only within its ranks. An encouraging degree of interest and critical discussion is already evident.

1967 OPENED with the visit of Air Vice-Marshall Nguyen Cao Ky. No one in authority seemed to be prepared to say what the purpose of the visit was, nor what its results are.

There was a great difference between this visit and Johnson’s; almost a case of “after the Lord Mayor’s carriage . . .” “Security” was the overwhelming consideration, with thousands of men detailed to “protect” the visitor from any hostile opinions, and hundreds available to assault demonstrators (with the Brisbane police predictably the most vicious of all).

It would be political naivete to deny that the visit turned out better than expected for Holt and the war party here. This was aided by press reporting, which was mainly gushing nonsense, unmarred by any critical examination of the evasions and outright lies advanced by Ky in reply to the very few probing questions put to him.

Apart from a handful, the journalists seemed strangely shy, possibly because they were bound by their instructions from the controllers of public opinion, who deliberately set out to support the US war in Vietnam, and the US puppet, also to advance their plans to elect an ALP leader amenable to their wishes. A further classic example, were one more needed, of the great power of the Establishment when it considers it necessary to “swing into action”.

The whole exercise was phoney, of course. The let-down will be all the harder, and it will not be long in coming. Ky is no more a patriot or a democrat than was Diem or the other nine
between them, nor has he popular support. He depends more abjectly upon American power than Diem ever did.

When Harry Stein of Tribune asked Ky to explain why the National Liberation Front controlled so much territory and population, his answer was: “I don’t think they have control of the majority either of the land or the population. They are deep in the jungle, split in small groups. . . So we have pushed them now back to the borders, to the jungles. . .” (SMH, 20/1/67).

No Australian paper contradicted this editorially, yet all the evidence shows Ky was deliberately lying. With fanfare of trumpets, two wholly American offensives have been opened recently. In the Mekong delta, the closely settled rice-bowl of Vietnam, with 5½ million people, the Americans are trying desperately to smash popular support for the effective NLF government, and are bogging down in the mud of the paddy fields and the political swamp of popular support for the NLF. Only 30 miles from Saigon, the Americans suffered their heaviest casualties of the war in an effort to control the Iron Triangle. This campaign is likely to be as complete a failure as “Operation Attelboro” late last year.

On January 24th a bold attack was reported on a US naval vessel in the Saigon River.

If these facts were not enough, the Sydney Morning Herald reported that even the South East Asian experts in the US Administration would only claim a bare majority control for Ky: “At the end of 1966, 57 per cent of the population was under Government control. . . The agonisingly slow progress of the pacification program has been a major disappointment in both Saigon and Washington.” (SMH, 23/1/67.)

Ky was obviously lying on this crucial question, showing that popular support is for the NLF, demonstrating that he cannot speak for the Vietnamese people.

These facts also cast a different light upon the war situation. The Americans are not winning, despite all their military superiority and their balance of terror.

The war, costing an astronomical $20 billion, is exposing basic American military-political weaknesses. The longer it goes, the more these weaknesses will operate.

The other side, of course, is the sickening horror of the American death and devastation wreaked on Vietnam and so cynically excused. Take the justifications advanced for the often denied civilian deaths from bombing of the North. “You can’t do this sort of bombing without hurting people. There are civilians everywhere,” said Mr. Sylvester, retiring Assistant Secre
tary of Defence for Public Affairs (Australian, January 24th.) Civilians are everywhere in the South, too; napalm, high explosive and "resettlement" are killing thousands and uprooting hundreds of thousands in a horrible orgy of genocide.

Mr. Sylvester also demoted to second place the pretext of "Northern infiltration"; the first purpose of the bombing is "to invigorate the morale of the South Vietnamese" (meaning Ky and his junta). Such is the moral bankruptcy of US imperialism.

Northern bombing is not winning the war, either. Indeed, the Americans are paying dearly for this war crime. The North Vietnamese anti-aircraft defence, armed with sophisticated Soviet missiles and advanced conventional systems, is causing increasing losses. It is described as "... what the Air Force already calls the most fearsome air defence of any war..." And up-to-date MIG's are flying in increasing numbers over Vietnamese skies.

SECONDARY AS IT IS to their own heroic struggle, world-wide support for the Vietnamese people is essential for their victory. Never has US political isolation been more obvious, and world opinion is shifting still more against its imperialist aggression. U Thant's latest and firmest declaration reflects this.

Material support from the socialist countries is growing, with the Soviet Union supplying the most vital needs for defence of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. World-wide popular support for Vietnam, in which Australian protests are not unimportant, are continuing to grow. In Australia, the national division is as deep as ever. The left needs to work out methods of broad mass campaigning, avoiding any tendency to turn inwards or concentrate on just one method in the struggle to pull Australia out of Vietnam. A new stage of grassroot answer to the government's war propaganda, and explanation of the issues, appears urgently needed.

At this decisive stage in the Vietnamese war, the divisions in the international communist movement and the socialist world are an intolerable burden, affording US imperialism room to manoeuvre by preventing solidarity of action by all anti-imperialist forces. Outright Chinese rejection of the appeal for common action is the main obstacle.

THIS BURDEN is incalculably weightier since the latest events in China, events which have paralysed Chinese diplomacy and worsened its egocentrism. More, they are causing great damage to production and to socialist relations, damage not easily caught
up. The disunity officially—and artificially—set in train by the "cultural revolution" will not be easily overcome, whatever the outcome of the power struggle.

Events in China are still only too obscure. Doubtless there are exaggerations and distortions by the daily press, interested in anti-China campaigning. However, there are enough hard facts to show the serious divisions and the dangerous departures from socialist theory and practice.

Since 1957, there has been the ill-fated "Great Leap", the reversal of domestic and foreign policies decided by the VIIIth Congress of the Communist Party of the National Peoples' Congress, China's parliament. The Chinese leaders have moved in stages from official agreement with the 1960 Declaration of 81 Parties to complete rejection, and have lifted their differences with the CPSU to the level of violent hostility to virtually every other Communist Party, and establishment of splinter groups wherever they can. Party and socialist democracy is trampled on, moving from breaching the party constitution to suppression of newspapers, suspension of education, closing of the Young Communist League and dismissal of the elected trade union leadership.

The colossal dangers in such a situation are obvious. One ray of hope still shines; the divisions within the party and nation are so deep that they must reflect vital social and political forces which are striving to overcome the degeneration of the Thought of Mao Tse-tung, and for a return to scientific socialism and realistic policies. Even if two qualifications are made—that forces hostile to socialism could use the chaos, and that victory for those opposing the present leading group would not necessarily remove all the Maoist distortions immediately—this provides ground for some optimism in an otherwise wholly disheartening and dangerous situation.

Certainly all the friends of China, and the international communist movement first, must do all in their power to help the great Chinese Communist Party back to scientific socialism and to fraternal communist relations.

This is in the interests of the struggle against imperialism and the US war on the Vietnamese people. It is in the interests of preventing world war, and it is in Australia's national interests, already harmed by 17 years of the anti-China policy and by the US threats to widen the war and drag Australia into such a catastrophic crime.
THE XMAS-NEW YEAR PERIOD of 1966-67 will certainly hold a special place in the political history of the Vietnam war, when that history comes to be written. For this was the moment when, largely through the reports of an American journalist, the demand for an unconditional end to the bombing of North Vietnam took on life and color for millions of people throughout the capitalist world.

With the despatches from Hanoi of Harrison E. Salisbury, an assistant managing editor of the New York Times, and their exposure of the real consequences of the bombing, this demand has sorted itself out from all other demands as the cardinal immediate step to be taken if the conflict is to be brought to an end. The ending of the bombing of North Vietnam will not in itself bring peace. But continuation of the bombing guarantees the prolongation and intensification of the conflict.

The dramatic strengthening of the demand for this first step in "de-escalation" in Vietnam has come almost exactly two years after the beginning of escalation—the latest, most feverish and most murderous phase of US Vietnam policy. Escalation—the involvement of massive numbers of US troops in direct combat in South Vietnam and, from February 7, 1965, the continuous bombing of the territory of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam in the north—was itself the child of failure.

It is all too easily forgotten (largely because it reflects the inglorious evolution of the American position) that the pre-escalation US stand, adhered to for a decade, was that US military men were to take no part in the fighting but were simply concerned to "advise" the armed forces of the South Vietnamese client regime. In December, 1964, on the eve of escalation, there were
just 23,000 such advisers in South Vietnam. But the developments of the early weeks of 1965 were such that the US could no longer afford the luxury of this measure of detachment. Escalation had the plain purpose of preventing the politico-military collapse of the Saigon regime, and an end to the war, which were imminent at that time.

All the varied justifications advanced for the bombing of North Vietnam cannot hide the essential fact that in its origin it was primarily designed to salvage the morale of the Saigon regime. (The statement of that youthful ghoul, Air Vice-Marshal Ky, that the day the US began to bomb the north was “the happiest day in my life” accurately expresses this political truth.)

The bombing of North Vietnam continues to be primarily a function of US policy in the south. It is not, and never has been, primarily designed to prevent the passage of men and supplies from the north since these have never been anything but secondary elements in the war in the south.

Some figures give a notion of the magnitude of the assault by the world’s most powerful imperialism in the period of escalation on a poor and economically backward nation of 30 million souls. The total of US armed forces in South Vietnam—army, marines, air force and navy—has now (January 1967) reached 460,000, nearing the peak figure of the Korea war. The US magazine Newsweek wrote (December 5):

Additional troops are currently flowing into the country at the rate of 15,000 to 17,000 a month and there is no sign yet of an early slackening in that rate. Indeed, as of now the only limitations on the size of the US build-up in Vietnam would appear to be domestic political considerations and the question of how many GI’s the Vietnamese economy can tolerate without collapsing.

As for the air war, the present daily average of missions against the north is 130 to 150, each with one to five aircraft. Nazi Germany reached a monthly record of 12,000 individual aircraft sorties against Britain during the Second World War. The Americans are flying more than 24,000 a month over both North and South Vietnam.

Concerning the effectiveness of this monstrous pattern of aggression, a well-informed supporter of the US, Denis Warner, has written (Melbourne Herald, December 23): “... there is nothing about the situation to suggest that victory is appreciably closer than it was five years, or even one year, ago.”

Whence comes the strength that is effectively combating this titanic onslaught? The Vietnamese power to resist is without a doubt the most glorious political phenomenon in the present-day world. Bertrand Russell’s tribute to the people of Vietnam could be echoed by friends of peace and freedom everywhere.
Russell said, at the November 16 press conference in London which launched his proposed Vietnam War Crimes Tribunal:

I can recall many wars. I cannot recall a people so tormented, yet so devoid of the failings of their tormentors . . . I have no memory of any people so enduring, or of any nation with a spirit of resistance so unquenchable.

Whether the Vietnamese power to resist is demonstrated in the unabated military struggle of the National Liberation Front in the south, or in the no less courageous and superbly ingenious fight against the air war in the north, it springs from a popular moral and political unity, and an attachment to independence, without peer in the modern world. It was this unity and attachment to independence which brought the Saigon regime to the threshold of collapse in the beginning of 1965. It is also the guarantee of the success of the Vietnamese cause.

A high official of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam once pointed out to me the remarkably homogeneous character of his people’s history. The Vietnamese identity was historically formed in resistance to the aggression of feudal China. The modern Vietnamese nation was formed in the process of resisting French aggression. The national entity of Vietnam, which for historical reasons has been more strongly formed in the north than in the south, is coming fully into being in resistance to the aggression of the US in South Vietnam today.

The goal of Vietnamese struggle is national independence, the right to develop Vietnamese society unfettered by foreign interference. Seeking independence, the Vietnamese act with independence in the process of their struggle. The hoary slander of “Peking domination” of Vietnamese policy (Sir Robert Menzies’ “downward thrust of Chinese communism”) has taken a severe beating in recent times, as the Chinese leaders have become ever more deeply embroiled in their “cultural revolution” in-fighting, and Hanoi has unfolded a series of brilliant diplomatic initiatives to do with the war, of which the decision to admit Harrison Salisbury is only one. The care taken by the Vietnamese leaders to foster good relations with the Soviet Union is perhaps the most striking proof of their firm independence of the present Chinese leading group, with its obsessive anti-Sovietism.

It should also be said that within this independence there is also, as it were, another: the independence of the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam vis-a-vis the government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. The charge of “tool of Hanoi” against the Front ought to be seen to be false from the heroic quality of the fighting men of the NLF: no force on earth could make men fight in that way in order to implement the will of an outside interest.
But above all the charge cannot stand up to historical examination: the course of their country's history has meant that regionalism as between northerners and southerners is a quite significant element in Vietnamese politics—northerners simply could not succeed in organising a movement in the south that ran counter to the will of a significant section of southerners. The difference in flags and programs between the socialist government in North Vietnam and the national-democratic NLF are no mere device: they express the differing stages of revolutionary development in the two halves of the country.

The “counter-escalation” which has no doubt taken place over the past two years, with the entry of North Vietnamese forces into South Vietnam, would certainly have been agreed with the NLF beforehand in all its details, and would have taken place in the manner and to the extent desired by the Front.

In any case, the North Vietnamese military presence in South Vietnam remains distinctly ancillary and geographically limited. Western estimates of the strength of this presence vary according to propaganda exigencies.

Thus, the Christian Science Monitor wrote on August 6: “Overall, North Vietnamese comprise between 15 and 20% of the total communist military strength in the south.” The same report gave the total NLF strength as 282,000, suggesting the number of “infiltrators” from North Vietnam would be between 42,300 and 56,400.

But by October, things had changed. President de Gaulle, in a speech in the Cambodian capital, Phnom Penh, had called for the withdrawal of US troops, and Washington had countered with an offer that US troops would be withdrawn if North Vietnamese troops were also. In grave disquiet, a Saigon official told the US News and World Report (October 10):

We would not last six months without the Americans. In terms of manpower, the Allies would be taking away something like 350,000 men. The Vietnamese have only about 40,000 here, or about one-seventh of the total communist personnel. A drop in the bucket ...

There seems little reason not to accept this estimate, wrung from a Saigon politician in a moment of truth.

The massive American military onslaught has exacted a heavy toll in blood and treasure in both South and North Vietnam. How can they still express their confidence in victory? Wilfred Burchett has written (National Guardian, New York, November 5):

“Final victory” is not conceived as wiping out all Americans on South Vietnamese soil or throwing all Americans into the sea, still less imposing a total military defeat on the US. It means that the National Liberation Front leadership is confident that it can smash every offensive the US and its satellite
forces mount, that it can defeat every military and political manoeuvre, that it can impose heavy losses on enemy troops on a sharply rising scale, that it can continue to defend and enlarge the territory and population under its control; that in the end the US will see that there is no alternative but to pack up and go home.

The phrase “impose heavy losses on enemy troops on a sharply rising scale” is worth a moment’s examination. There can be no doubt that escalation has aborted the transition from the stage of balance of forces in the Vietnamese liberation war to the stage of counter-offensive. What the Americans have achieved in fact in two years of escalation is to “freeze” the war in the stage of balance of forces, denying the liberation armies the chance of victory in military counter-offensive but unable to move to such a stage themselves.

The question of the strategy to be adopted by the liberation forces has certainly been the subject of heated debate among the Vietnamese and among their closest friends in the international arena. There seems little doubt that the Chinese have counselled a wholesale reversion to guerrilla war in face of the American build-up. Incidentally, such a step would have meant a lessening of the Vietnamese need for sophisticated military equipment such as the Soviet Union alone can supply. But this proposal has been resisted by the Vietnamese, with Soviet backing.

What appears to exist in South Vietnam at present is a unique combination of mobile warfare and guerrilla warfare, coinciding with the actual situation of the country, with guerrilla warfare showing a recent tendency to predominate. The “sharply rising scale” referred to in the Burchett passage would seem to indicate that the NLF leaders certainly contemplate a future stage at which mobile warfare would assume greater weight.

Like every other war, the Vietnam war is a politico-military phenomenon. When the war ends, as end it will, politics will weigh heavily in the balance. The political unity of the Vietnamese, and the world support for them, even in the conditions of the obdurate refusal of the Chinese leaders to take joint socialist-camp action in support of Vietnam, will play the key part in achieving peace. Putting it another way, the present crushing military and political isolation of the US and its supporters, including the Holt Government, will only be aggravated with the passage of time. The political realities of the Vietnamese nation will prevail.

The former Australian diplomat, Gregory Clark, in a remarkably perceptive essay in Fact, December 16 has written:

The classic example of how ineffective overwhelming military strength can be once the guerrillas have passed this “critical point” (in mobilising popular support) is Algeria. Here the French, by pouring men and arms into the country, had reduced the guerrilla numbers to a mere 5000. But in the process
of so doing, they had so antagonised the civilian population that they eventually realised that even if the guerrillas were completely immobilised they (the French) would still be unable to control the country. They had no alternative but to withdraw.

Reviewing the settlement of the Cuban missile crisis of 1962, the only recent international crisis of dimensions comparable with the Vietnam war, the thing that strikes one is its aspect of ambiguity. Four years after the settlement, the question of “Who won?” in Cuba is still the subject of debate. Supporters of the socialist cause see victory in the continued existence of socialist Cuba, while the upholders of the United States position see their victory confirmed by the removal of the Soviet missiles. Can we expect a similar ambiguity to hover around the eventual Vietnam settlement? It seems at least likely. It seems that a settlement of such an “ambiguous” character alone corresponds to the exigencies of the present delicate world power balance.

But nuclear balance of terror or no, social progress will find its way forward. Just as the continued life and activity of the revolutionary Cuban government is quite unambiguous, so too must be the reality of the independence of South Vietnam which will emerge from the war, even if it be slowly and in stages.

When in his January interview with Harrison Salisbury, the Premier of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, Pham Van Dong, used the words “we will be generous in relation to peace terms at the eventual peace talks”, he was addressing middle-of-the-road South Vietnamese politicians as much as anybody else.

The two years of escalation have been years of barbarous assault on the people of Vietnam, south and north, two years of imperialist infamy, of reckless challenge to world peace, of a revival of reactionary forces around the globe who see in the escalation of the Vietnam war the advance signs of the war against the socialist world, to which their misanthropic aspirations are so closely wedded.

But they have also been years of unmatched glory in the history of the people of Vietnam, banner-bearers in the world of the sixties for the cause of national liberation and social progress, and years of a mighty and growing popular struggle against the policies of aggression in the United States, Australia and other countries.

The second anniversary of escalation in Vietnam sees the policy of escalation recognised by more human beings than ever before as the barbarous, reckless, self-defeating aggressive device that it is. It is a moment for Australians, whose government has made our country a party to this greatest international crime of our times, to salute the dauntless people of Vietnam who have foiled the policy of escalation and will eventually bring it to defeat.
DISCUSSION:

RURAL MECHANISATION

WHILE useful discussions have been held by some trade unions and one political party (the Communist Party of Australia) about the effects of scientific and technological changes on employment and incomes, these have dealt mainly with the mining, transport (sea and rail), meat, building and several other industries.

This brief study, however, will deal with technical advance in one of Australia's largest rural industries, the growing of sugar cane. What is happening here, together with modern methods of crushing cane and of loading sugar in bulk—the latter has already decimated waterside employment in many coastal towns in Queensland—is an answer to those who say that technological change will not adversely affect employment.

In addition to mechanisation at a three stage level—the canefields, mills and bulk loaders—other radical changes are occurring at what could be called the cane root level in the sugar industry that a few years back could boast of affecting, directly or indirectly, the employment of one sixth of Queensland's workers.

What follows will make it clear that the cane cutter with his big knife and a perpetual ache in his shoulders and back will soon be no more. Whether that is a good or bad thing is superfluous for the canecutter's fate has already been determined.

The number of harvesters has risen five times from 161 to 821 in the last three years, and the amount of cane mechanically harvested increased over the same period from 8.7 per cent. to 39.1 per cent. of the total crop. In terms of tonnage this meant 1.1 million tons mechanically cut in 1962 and 5.3 million tons mechanically cut in 1965.

The fast growing use of mechanical harvesters, most loading also being done by machines, has affected the employment of manual cane cutters to the extent that while 7516 were cutting during the 1963 "peak" period their number has fallen to 5872 in the 1965 "peak".

Canecutters of tomorrow, and there will be far less of them than previously, will be as far removed from those cutters immortalised in book and verse as the wharfies of the future will be from those of today.

For the Colonial Sugar Refining Company (1965 net profit $13 million) which finances, mills and refines much of the sugar crop, as well as setting the home price, several other big millers and some of the bigger farmers, the sugar industry is a highly profitable one.

But profit making, planning of employment (including looking after those displaced from jobs) and utilisation of one industry as the base to develop others, just don't mix except on the odd occasion when such a mixture can bring the like of Colonial Sugar Refining Company new and bigger profits.

The changing nature of the sugar industry has been known for some time to CSR the king pin in it. CSR has been diversifying its operations and, as the saying goes, is in everything but the kitchen sink. For more
on this see Pete Thomas’ study of CSR—*The Big Crush*.

But the many people who in one way or another depend on the sugar industry for a livelihood cannot diversify their jobs, much less their homes and families. The situation in this important rural industry, like that in some other industries, makes government control an urgent matter.

There is a very strong case for the nationalisation of CSR as the starting point to bring employment stability and planning of development to the sugar industry. Nationalisation would allow CSR’s refineries and mills to operate as public enterprise groups.

CSR is enormous; profits and the high charges made by the company could be ploughed back into a fund to lift standards of the smaller cane farmers and the field and mill workers.

Within such a framework it should be possible to find other employment in the industry for those displaced and to act towards establishing badly needed secondary industries, including those based on cane by-products, in North Queensland.

In any event, a start must be made somewhere to protect the workers in this big rural industry from the double edged threat of displacement, and the growth of the contracting system, with the latter already leading to the worsening of wages and working conditions for those employed by the contractors.

**Ron Brown**

**UNIONISM ON THE CHEAP?**

Pat Clancy’s article in ALR No. 2 gave much to think about. All unions are faced with the problem of surging costs, but we also seem to try to conduct unionism in Australia on the cheap.

In Europe the average unionist pays something like an hour’s pay for a week’s union dues—about $1 a week, $13 a quarter, or $52 a year. Australian dues for tradesmen are about 30 cents a week, $4 a quarter or $16 a year.

Cheap unionism makes for inefficiency and in the end tells against the workers themselves.

The creation of labor councils, federations within an industry and finally amalgamations, is a recognition of the need for improvement by some form of rationalisation of thought, action, manpower and equipment. Some unions have felt the impact of modern technological development in post-war Australia and have to a limited extent streamlined their business affairs.

*But, by and large, it can be said that the Australian trade unions operate with 1900 vintage, horse-and-buggy methods in a 1966 space age.*

Employers have amalgamated through forms of closer organisation such as employers’ federations and chambers of manufactures. They have, as a class of profit makers, combined to face the organisations of the workers with a united front.

For some considerable time ahead, and even after industrial unionism is achieved in some industries, the closer organisations of the unions such as labor councils, will be needed to get common thought and action. At present these are by and large represented in their leadership by union officials from the smaller craft unions.

In Melbourne Trades Hall Council 1,000 affiliated members entitle a union to four delegates—the maximum a union can have under current rules.
A bigger union paying affiliations for 6,000 or up to 12,000 financial members, is still represented by only four delegates. Hardly a democratic representation.

One result is that the leadership of the THC reflects in its leading committees the outlook of craft unionism, and a belief in the support of arbitration and legally based wages and working conditions as an assistant to trade unionism's growth and development.

I see the need to give rights to the smaller unions whilst they precariously exist (modern methods will eventually banish the craft, as with the stonemason and the cooper, and the craft union will wither away).

But I also see the urgent need for the larger, more powerful unions to have a bigger voice in the direction organisations such as labor councils must take to satisfy the workers' demands. And along with this, I believe, must go higher union dues.

Is the aim of amalgamation to keep unionism cheap and improve the service by rationalisation of manpower and equipment? Or should we also have higher union dues to provide still better quality trade unionism?

COLIN WILLMAN

AMALGAMATION AND FRAGMENTATION

PAT CLANCY is only one of a number of union officials of late who have expressed opinions on the growing need for a complete re-organisation of the Australian trade union movement.

These views have been expressed by people as widely divergent in their views as Short of the Federated Ironworkers' Association, a right winger, Egerton of the Queensland Trades and Labor Council, and Clancy a communist. All have stressed the need for amalgamation of smaller unions into larger units.

But mere agglomeration will solve nothing—not even the problem of union administration or economics. The real need is for unions to specialise—not in a narrow craft manner but on an industry wide basis.

It is true that the problem in Pat Clancy's own industry is the relatively simple one of amalgamation—that is if we just consider the industrial organisation of the construction industry.

If, however, we consider seriously the problem of the building of industrial unions, it is obvious that, along with amalgamation there is a certain amount of what, for want of a better word, we could call "fragmentation".

For example: if this suggested "industrialisation" of unions is to be a success then it must either start with or include at an early stage the basic and monopoly controlled industries. When we think of basic industries and monopoly control we think automatically of the steel industry. The basic union in this industry is the union at present known as the Federated Ironworkers, and whether we like it or not, whether we like the present leadership and policies of the F.I.A., this is the base from which should be built the future Steelworkers' Industrial Union of Australia.

If we accept this premise, we must also accept the fact that a considerable number of members of Comrade Clancy's organisation, that is, all those engaged on maintenance as distinct from those engaged on construction or re-construction, would be then absorbed into such a Steelworkers'
Union, as would all other tradesmen, office workers, canteen staffs, etc., employed in this industry. At the same time those F.I.A. members employed in industries outside the basic steel industries would be absorbed into other industrial unions.

I envisage that ship construction and repair would be organised as one industrial union, forging and heavy engineering as another and right on through the whole gamut of Australian industries.

In some industries where there is not so much overlapping, there would be very little of this fragmentation and it would be a “simple” case of amalgamation.

In practice it is not proving quite so simple. In the modern maritime industry, ships of 50,000 tons are now on the coast with crews of less than 40 men. These crews belong to seven different unions.

To form the maritime industry into one organisation that would cover every worker employed afloat on every ship, tug, barge, dredge, oil rig, launch or boat in every river, harbour, port or wherever the Australian flag is carried on overseas ships, would enhance the collective bargaining power of these workers many times over. But in spite of the obvious advantages of such a cohesive organisation, such a maritime industrial union seems as remote as ever.

Historically, I believe it was the Romans, some 2,000 years ago who formulated the slogan “Divide and Rule”, but no doubt shrewd slave owners were using the tactic long before Romulus and Remus. It is still the basic tenet of bosses today. It is obvious that more on this vital subject is needed.

In this regard Left Review could assist by recounting the historical lessons that are to be learnt from the great struggles to build industrial unionism in the United States in the bloody struggles of the 1930s.

ARTHUR E. WILSON.

A GENERAL MOTORS TOWN PLAN?

ROY NELSON in “Cities for the Future” (A.L.R. No. 4) contends that forecasting techniques of traffic consultants simply construct a future based on existing trends which, as he says, is “hardly planning”.

He advances the radical alternative method of evolving first a town plan with “maximum accessibility convenience and mobility minimising capital investment in transport networks—while retaining the desired residential densities.” A transportation study on such a basis, he says, would give very different results. So far so good.

Next questions then are: What sort of town plan? What are the “desired densities” of housing?

If we are to minimise transport costs “including time costs” what results will this have on the proportion between transport-on-rails and motor vehicle transport? Citizens as well as experts must answer these questions, but there are experts and experts.

We will use our space for a few thoughts on the “bad” experts who use their skills at the service of big industries so that the obstacles and challenge confronting the “good” ones who genuinely have the interest of the people at heart can be better understood.

Nelson throws interesting doubts on the validity of computer techniques of big American traffic consultant
firms. But there are other even more serious doubts.

Wilbur Smith and Associates, the world-wide U.S. firm of traffic consultants working here in conjunction with an Australian firm, have so far permitted the public to see only a summary of their survey and analysis section of the $850,000 report for Melbourne. The study-manager of this survey is American Marshall M. Rich.

In 1964 Mr. Rich delivered a paper on traffic survey laws to a symposium "Living with the Motor Car" organised by the Royal Automobile Club of Victoria, attended not only by Ministers and department heads but international traffic experts.

Mr. Rich's paper was based on a book called *Future Highways and Urban Growth* which had been prepared by his firm of Wilbur Smith under commission from the Automobile Manufacturing Association of USA.

Mr. Rich's 1966 summary for Melbourne forecasts within 20 years "express bus services on freeways" and the new freeway systems are to "vary between 250 and 350 miles in length."

Now "express bus services on freeways" is definitely a General Motors Corporation idea. In fact a film produced by GMC was shown at the RACV symposium soft-selling an elaborate system called "metro-mobility" with bus-trains, "interchange stations" built above the freeways, and special bus-lanes for reversible traffic in the centre of the freeways.

If one wants to see what Australian capital cities will look like in 20 or 30 years time if present trends are allowed to continue, one need only to study Los Angeles, San Francisco or Washington, because such cities are today equivalent in population, high car density and low housing density to the cities our children may live in.

For proof that in such US cities private automobiles even if supplemented by autobuses have long since been shown to be a failure for hometo-work journeys read G. S. Wheeler (*Communist Review*, Jan., 1966). Yet Wilbur Smith and Associates, who must know full well the disastrously extravagant consequences are deliberately forecasting "systems" for Melbourne that have already spelt tragedy in America!

It is hard to escape the conclusion that Wilbur Smith's interests are those of General Motors-Holden and Ford. They don't care what happens to our cities in 20 or 30 years provided, in the meantime, several million more cars are sold.

We cannot trust such "experts" to draw plans for the people's needs. Nor can we trust the Liberal Governments. Last June Victorian Local Government Minister Hamer appointed the chief planner of the Sydney Cumberland County scheme Mr. R. D. L. Frazer as Chairman of the Victorian Town and Country Planning Board.

With a great flourish from the daily press, Hamer ordered Frazer to prepare a scheme for satellite cities for Melbourne. There was talk of 10 such satellites each with a population of 100,000 or so and within 30 miles of Melbourne. To prevent endless suburbia, there was to be a green belt between Melbourne and its satellites.

No matter what efforts were to be made to establish industries in such satellites to make them "independent" they would inevitably turn into mainly "dormitory cities" because they would be too close to Melbourne to overcome the magnet of such a highly diversified industrial and cultural centre. Commuting between the satellites and Melbourne on a mass scale would be inevitable.

Actually, coupled with the Wilbur Smith freeway scheme, the effect
would be to aggravate and multiply all the worst headaches of a genuine town planner, equivalent to pushing the newer outer suburbs some miles further out, thus making the housing density lower still and increasing all development costs—road, transport, reticulation of all services with further deterioration of public transport.

Melbourne’s “sprawl” already near a world record, would be “sprawlier” still! The outer suburbs can be reached effectively only by car, and many a young couple, setting up home are committed to a car-to-work travel for life, condemning many a housewife incidentally to a car-less immobile sterile type of life.

Every worker should be entitled to a family car, but its main purpose should be visiting, recreation, camping, maybe some shopping, but not home-to-work journeys.

A free-way based, 30-mile-away satellite system would only compound and congeal the problem. Already in Melbourne a radial freeway system, the most pernicious traffic-tangler of all, with its spokes all penetrating to the heart of the city, is taking shape; the Tullamarine freeway, the south-eastern freeway, the St. Kilda freeway-Kingsway complex and now a projected Yarra-Valley freeway.

It is no good protesting that it is not “us” who are making such mistakes. In reality, by remaining silent in the face of present trends, we are allowing the car monopolies, the oil monopolies, the steel monopolies, the rubber monopolies and others to “plan” for us. What is needed is not just any plan, but a plan, satisfactory to the labor movement, and in which progressive citizens and experts combine.

MAURIE CROW

COMMUNISTS AND ART

RALPH GIBSON’S article “Art and the Battle of Ideas” is a welcome, if long overdue, nascent awakening on the part of communists to the problems of literature and art. This despite its doctrinaire and possessive approach.

Art, or society will never be the possession of Communists to pass judgment upon; even the type of benevolent judgment which Mr. Gibson apparently would give.

Like many communists, Mr. Gibson has not grasped some apparent facts: socialism in the USSR is of the primordial type and not on the eve of communism by any means; marxism has been understood by the preponderance of communists in a warped or infantine manner.

There is no proof that “a widespread understanding of marxism” is a good foundation for “creative work and for sound critical judgments”, in the realm of art. History thus far has not demonstrated this point. One can only hope that it will do so.

Certainly “we should not seek to establish a single trend in art as was attempted in the days of Stalin.” But it is not clear to this reader that USSR leading circles have “moved away from this idea” to any significant degree.

Unfortunately in the first land of socialism “the door” is not “wide open for all with artistic talents”. It has closed behind Sinyavsky and Daniel with a clang. Yevtushenko and Solzhenitsin and some others are regarded with at least scepticism and suspicion by high authority. The prose works of Pasternak have not been published. These are names well known because their talents broke barriers or repressive actions against
them helped make their fame. What of others?

Nor is it clear that "as a general rule it should be our aim to help art workers to become good communists, or at any rate to become humane and progressive people, then help them to follow their own artistic courses."

Further articles on these matters together with discussion of the mysterious trend "socialist realism" may appeal to many readers.

I hope sincerely that Mr. Gibson and your magazine will not take offence at these pretentious and perhaps blasphemous remarks. Congratulations on producing an improved and improving journal.

K.L.

PILOTS' STRIKE

JUST at the time when progressive people were licking their election inflicted wounds and sounds of despair were heard across the country, an intense and long-standing conflict flared to a climax as the Qantas pilots decided to strike.

The importance of this struggle between a small group of highly skilled, comparatively well paid, key personnel and the Federal Government, for this is what it amounted to, has not received the recognition that it deserves from the political left in our country.

It will be remembered that although the pilots were fighting for higher pay and greater safety precautions, the kernel of the dispute and the most important factor politically was the demand that the pilots should have some say in the conduct of their industry.

The Federal Government was very much aware of this, hence the threats of dire penalties which, in the circumstances, they were powerless to carry out.

So, we saw a small well-favored section of the community demanding and obtaining, at least in principle, a tiny piece of our socialist objective.

The possibilities opened up by the successful outcome of this strike are thrilling. The threatened resignations at Concord Repatriation Hospital were feelers in the same direction and can we not visualise academics, who in the past we have not counted on to any extent in the struggle for socialism, coming to the conclusion that they must take militant action not only to preserve their threatened economic security but to maintain educational standards?

Others, too, will sometimes unconsciously, as I believe to be so in the case of the pilots, find their own way to a limited socialist objective.

And what may be learnt from all this?

1 Unsaid, but inferred by the pilots' claim, was the belief that the Department of Civil Aviation cannot be as effective on safety issues as it should be when the private sector of our airlines is in a position to influence the Government and thereby departmental aviation policy. Example: the Winton air crash inquiry which the Minister promised has not yet taken place.

2 The solidarity of the pilots must make us wary of using such terms as "vacillating middle class". The workers have been set an example.

3 We are repeatedly told that in the fight for socialism the "workers" are the most important section of the community. In the light of unceasing change and swift technological advances what does "worker" mean?
We must be prepared to give much more positive and ungrudging support to the struggles of others whom the "workers" at present do not feel to be part of the main effort to achieve a better distribution of our country's production.

A deep study of the proposals for the 21st Congress of the Communist Party is necessary.

H. Clements.

EYL ANNIVERSARY

Dialogue among the politically aware is becoming an important and stimulating part of Australian life, just as the word itself is becoming part of a new jargon of the left (disturbing the more elderly jargonists, who surely have little right to complain!)

In particular, friendly debate is a crying necessity among the many breeds of socialist-inclined Australians hitherto frequently separated by ultimately groundless prejudices, fears and misunderstandings as well as by real differences of approach, method and principle.

A small piece of history was made in Melbourne last December when a platform of committed socialists of various approaches addressed a gathering of 75 (mainly) young people on the subject "Have Socialist Ideas a Future with Young Australians?"

The occasion was organised by the Eureka Youth League as part of its 25th anniversary celebrations.

Main speakers were Dr. Ian Turner, senior lecturer in History at Monash University; Mrs. Audrey Blake, foundation secretary of the EYL; Mr. Paul Marriott, co-editor of the Monash Student newspaper Lot's Wife; Mr. John Halfpenny, prominent member of the Amalgamated Engineering Union; Mrs. Mavis Robertson, national secretary of the EYL; and Mr. Douglas Kirsner, a member of the Melbourne University's Students' Representative Council.

Listening to the informed and lively discussion one felt assured that socialist ideas do have a future among young Australians.

Major points of agreement appeared to be: socialists have the alternative to the ills of capitalist society and to be successful Australian socialists have to remould their thinking and attitudes to conform with the realities of contemporary life. This latter point was given great emphasis by Mr. Marriott who said that socialist ideas in their old form had little future with young Australians but they could become influential if socialists refused to rest on the laurels of yesterday's victories.

Points of probable disagreement, and subjects which certainly warrant further substantial discussion and argument among the left were the following views expressed in one form or another in at least three of the papers presented.

1 Economic and material problems for the great mass of people in the "western" world have largely been solved, and these factors would no longer provide motive forces for the development of the socialist movement; on the contrary, spiritual and moral issues of liberty, equality and fraternity, man's alienation from control over the power levers which determine things in our society, would form the basis of winning adherents for social revolution.

2 With the advent of the new technological revolution the industrial working class is disappearing or dissolving and hence will not be the main social force for socialist trans-
formation; on the contrary, that force would be the highly skilled and educated technicians, intellectuals and students.

Some brief comments on these points.

I strongly agree that moral issues are relatively more important in this connection than previously. My argument is with those who say, or infer, that economic and material problems are vanishing or minimal in our present society.

The appendices to the Communist Party's National Congress documents disclose from taxation returns in 1963-64, that 91% of all taxpayers earned under $4,000 a year and 64% under $2,400!

John Stubbs in his book *The Hidden People: Poverty in Australia* reveals that 500,000 Australians are definitely living in poverty and suggests that the real figure may be closer to one million. There are 150,000 families with an income of less than $35 a week — numbering in all 600,000 people.

The late President Kennedy indicated that in the most advanced capitalist country, the USA, 17 million people went to bed hungry every night, while 30-40 million are classed as poor.

In the USA today, in the midst of so-called affluence, depressed areas, poverty and unemployment are great problems.

Some years ago US Secretary of Labor, Wirtz, warned of the danger of millions upon millions being permanently excluded from the production process as a result of the widespread introduction of automotive systems.

Therefore economic and material questions loom rather large and, in reality, give no sign of diminishing in importance as motivations for social action.

In capitalist countries today tremendous numbers engage in strike or stop-work action for higher wages or shorter hours, including white collar and professional workers, e.g., bank officers, nurses, teachers, pilots.

However, it is true that no Chinese wall separates economic and moral issues, as evidenced by the actions and demands of the Qantas pilots, Victorian teachers, Mt. Isa and GMH strikers. It is also interesting to note that in the movements of Northern Territory Aboriginal stockmen and the US Negro civil rights movement, economic aspects are well to the fore and form a natural part of the campaign for equality, often giving rise to it.

It is evident that economic and material issues, linked with moral issues, issues of alienation, etc., will go on being a big fount of struggle and will play an integral part in mass movements leading to the development of the socialist movement.

Furthermore there is no doubt that white collar sections are growing faster proportionately than industrial workers in this country. There is no doubt also that intellectuals, technicians and university students are assuming greater political weight and that there will be no socialist transformation without the majority of these sections taking a socialist stand.

The appendices to the CP of A. Congress documents show that at the 1961 Census there were 2.3 million industrial workers and 1.3 million under the general heading of white collar workers. They show also that in the US in 1964, 48% of the work force were white collar and 52% blue collar workers and that US Government sources estimate that in ten years time 48% will still be blue collar workers.
So that even in the USA, where automation is considerably more developed than in Australia, the industrial working class is still the predominant section of the community and the position will be only slightly different in 1975.

My contention is that the foreseeable future holds the prospect of the industrial working class remaining the biggest section of the population numerically, over a very long period of time, despite technological changes. I contend also that the industrial working class will remain that section of the work force most pulled towards struggle and social change on both economic and moral issues, notwithstanding the accelerated emergence of intellectuals and professionals into the political arena. The future of both industrial workers and professionals is indissolubly linked.

Scepticism and prejudices on both sides must be broken down.

The conception of an intellectual elite leading the way to socialism with a passive unenlightened mob trailing behind is just as ludicrous as that of the industrial working class making the endeavour without intellectuals, technicians and students.

Such matters are of vital importance for socialists to thrash out. A good beginning was made at the EYL symposium.

Let there be more and more of it. The young are again showing the way.

JOHN SENDY

IN DEFENCE OF MARXISM

"CHANGES in Modern Capitalism", by B. Taft, appearing in the first issue of Left Review, is surely deserving more serious criticism than the adjective "good" appearing in the second issue and the discussion of it appearing in the third. That is, of course, if Left Review is to be considered seriously as a marxist journal.

As though any analysis of a marxist nature can be made without taking into account the process of change, Mr. Taft commences his investigation of changes in modern capitalism as if it were a great discovery. He chides those he calls "marxists" for their failure to note these changes and considers this deficiency as being due to a "certain stagnation in marxist thinking in the forties and fifties".

If this estimation were true, we would certainly consider it due for much stronger condemnation. However, argument would be wasted, because people who leave out of their calculations the subject of change can be discounted as marxists.

Of far greater importance is the writer’s immediate follow-up in the nature of a rebuke, denoting the slowness in their ability “to examine new phenomena, free from dogma and preconceived ideas”, for this causes Mr. Taft’s condemnation to recoil with double violence directly upon his own head! By this assumption Mr. Taft indicates that his investigation is to be made with entire neglect of the marxian dialectic reasoning, the relation of facts to their vast interconnection, which, of course, includes "preconceived ideas". That is, his intentions are to keep his findings strictly to his observations, free from everything. In other words, he is to use the metaphysical approach instead of that of the marxist dialectic!

As though this were not bad enough, Taft has the temerity to attempt to equate his terms for investigation to Marx himself. "Marx", he says, "placed economics on scientific foundations and was characterised by a challenging attitude free from preconceived and blinding class prejudices".
As though Marx would waste his great intellect to make a science of bourgeois economics!

It is absurd to even suggest that Marx's discoveries, such as surplus value, falling rate of profit and wages as robbery, to mention but a few, were unrelated to class prejudices or preconceived ideas. Any socialist knows that Marx's analysis of capitalism was for the purpose of making a science of socialism.

Marx never considered crises in themselves as capable of destroying capitalism, rather did he view such as periods for intensifying the class struggle and thus helping to fulfill the dialectic of workers' victory over capitalism. The low ebb of class struggle at this juncture necessitates one who views it free from preconceived ideas, as something to go along with and frame one's tactics accordingly. But in the dialectic sense it would appear as a passing phase in which a high level of class struggle would inevitably appear again.

In fact, is not this the position now! The deep crisis of British capitalism and the monetary crisis in America which is assuming world-wide proportions: Does this not demand intensified class struggle? And if it were coupled with a change of the policy of the Soviet Union of peaceful coexistence with America which has done nothing else but provide encouragement to America's escalation of the war in Vietnam, if the Soviet Union were to say: "Not a step further—or else!" is there any doubt that the intensity of the class struggle could be raised to the highest yet known in history, placing socialist victory on the order of the day? This at least appears to be apprehended by capitalism, who fall over themselves in frantic efforts to obtain the Soviet's peaceful intervention in Vietnam.

Commenting on new changing features of capitalism, Mr. Taft says the problems are neither solved nor are being solved: not that they cannot be solved within capitalism. On automation, a definite impossibility of solution within capitalism, he contents himself with the assertion that it demands a different social framework for its solution. The growth of monopolies is seen as "a great menace to peace and liberty and restricts the effectiveness of political democracy". As though the workers should be interested in bourgeois peace and liberty beyond the realm of its assistance in ending capitalism!

Mr. Taft is also in error when he says "periodic crises occurred every 8-12 years" up to World War Two, and that this was in accordance with Marx's analysis. There was no crisis for over two decades since 1873, and it was this that led to rejection of Marx's theory of crises by Bernstein in his revisionist proposals published in 1898. Marx made no assumption regarding the appearance of crises every 8-12 years. The fact that they appeared to repeat themselves this way was purely an exterior fact, a matter of chance. Crises may repeat themselves every five, 10 or 20 years; they commence in periods of high development, although Taft appears to think differently.

When Bernstein rejected the marxian theory of crises in 1898, a profound general crisis broke out in 1900. Mr. Taft, stating his additions necessary for the understanding of new features in capitalist crises which would do away with general crises, sees a crisis within Europe which contains all the features for a general crisis, but for the saving graces to capitalism of the British Labor Party.

One is left wondering why this dry connection of facts ever saw the light of day? So uninspiring is it that the writer himself appears to see the
necessity for the question: "Does all this mean that the case for socialism is less powerful or compelling in western countries than it was in the thirties?"

But it is of no avail to rescue him from his anti-marxist course. His deduction: "There is a growing gap and contradiction between what capitalist society could provide and what it does provide," leaves Mr. Taft with two courses: as this is a perfect statement of reformism, he could enter the Labor Party with honors. As, also, it was part of Bernstein's revisionism that capitalism could provide, etc., he would be welcome there also. Certain it is he takes his departure from Marx, who viewed capitalism as a class society absolutely incapable of providing anything for the solution of human problems.

In the third issue of Left Review, Alf Watt considers crisis to be near. Discarding the marxian dialectic, however, he makes the astounding conclusion for a revolutionary party that, "We must formulate a comprehensive policy to correct the instability and avert the crisis". Does this mean anything else than that marxism should be dressed up to appear respectable? Is this the intention behind the article in 1 and the discussion in 3 of Left Review? If it is, it can bring nothing but ridicule, scorn and contempt on those who attempt it.

Those who desire to remain marxists should take heed of Engels' quote from Hegel in his thesis on Feuerbach: "One believes one is saying something great if one says that 'man is naturally good'. But one forgets that one says something far greater when one says 'man is naturally evil'." Commenting on this, Engels says: "This contains the twofold meaning that, on the one hand, each new advance necessarily appears as a sacrilege against things hallowed, as a rebellion against con-

ditions, though old and moribund, yet sanctified by custom; and that, on the other hand, it is precisely the wicked passions of man—greed and lust for power—which, since the emergence of class antagonisms, serves as levers of historical development . . ."

KEN CARR,
Victorian Labor College Student.

WORLD MEETING OF MARXIST ECONOMISTS

WITH proposals for a conference of the world's Communist Parties again being considered, it is timely to suggest that a meeting of leading marxist economists also be held. Such a gathering is, in my opinion, necessary to analyse the present situation and trends in the capitalist and the "third" worlds.

A collective examination is needed, because the information available to the economists of each country is not necessarily comprehensive, and because economic data is more easily interpreted if there is a familiarity with the country concerned. Even the Soviet economists, who have access to very comprehensive data, would be handicapped by this lack of "touch" with many countries.

There are many of us who believe, and not without reason, that the next decade and more will not be a simple repetition of the last. To label this viewpoint and its protagonists as dogmatists will not help throw light on the vital questions involved. Nor would it help if the protagonists of this view yielded to the temptation of replying in similar vein.

It is because the truth about a complex situation is urgently required that I make the above proposal.

ALF WATT
THERE'S A NEW KIND of struggle note sounding off in the ranks of American labor on the eve of negotiations for close to 4,000,000 workers in 1967. "Substantial wage increases" is what you hear, along with no wage freezes; instead, wage re-openers after one year. Wartime inflation and higher profit making are being pointed to in union meetings as new factors in boosting these demands.

Negotiating in '67, will be a million teamsters, a million auto workers, thousands in maritime, railroads, telephone. A million steel workers whose wages are frozen until '68 are champing at the bit to break loose from that freeze and go get a piece of those steel profits.

Half a million workers employed in national, state and city governments, always tied to whatever crumbs politicians will give them, today are walking picket lines, taking strike votes, and are shaking up the city hall, state capitals and Washington. They want at least $2.80 an hour instead of $1.50.

United Auto Workers' Union president, Walter Reuther, always thought to be a pacesetter in labor negotiations, in Long Beach, California, last June at his union convention told the 3,000 delegates he favored "an annual salary". It fell flatter than a pancake and now Reuther is talking of a "substantial wage increase". He will convene 3,000 delegates from his 900 locals in April here in Detroit to finalise the 1967 demands. Negotiations will be with the auto tycoons General Motors, Ford, Chrysler and the dying American Motor Company. The Big Three of auto may reach $2 billion in profits again this year, though sales of the '67 cars are sluggish. A constant rising cost of living
caused by war inflation, soaring profits, small wage increases, or frozen wages, as well as thousands going to war training has cut into sales.

At the UAW "economic" conference next April, a companion piece of negotiations for Reuther to win along with the "substantial wage increase" will be better working conditions, especially curbs on speedup which is reckoned to increase about 25% each model year.

Gradually being opposed are long term contracts, like the UAW's three year one with the auto corporations. With the ever rising cost of living, 3.5% from June, 1965, to June, 1966, the workers want the contracts short (one year) and with the right to re-open for wage increases. While the UAW remains one of the few unions to retain a cost of living escalator clause, which has netted them 13c an hour since 1964, the workers say it's not enough. *US News and World Report* stated recently that every time the cost of living goes up 1% in the US it takes $52 a year out of the pockets of the consumers. Cost of living in the US, according to the US Department of Labor, has risen about 13% in the last ten years.

Fear of a recession haunts the auto towns of the US and Canada; already over one million unsold 1967 and 1966 cars are in the stockpile. Only a facelift on the '67 new models took place, because this is contract renewal time and the companies don't mind a stockpile. It's a tactic to plead "no sales, lower profits", while they sink unreported millions into plants overseas. They will also manipulate their profits to show a sharp decrease from the $2 billion (net) they sweated out of the workers in '65.

This way they hope for a "cheap" settlement, a three year no wage re-opener contract, with some crumbs in the way of pensions, and some medical care improvements. Where they will battle down to the mat will be on improving working conditions, curbing the murderous speedup—because that's where the giant profits mainly come from.

Many wise workers, with some political understanding of economics, are advancing the need for a shorter work week with no cuts in pay, as one way to prevent the threatening layoffs, when the stockpile of unsold cars becomes the excuse for short work with corresponding cuts in pay, or layoffs.

A new factor, stepping up the traditional militancy of the auto workers is the fact that 60% of the UAW's one and a half million members have less than five years seniority in the plant.
Right now they bear the brunt of the brutal and inhuman working conditions.

Any decline for the auto market here in the US and Canada finds the competition for the remaining market fiercer than ever, with the full burden for protecting the enormous profits of past years put on the backs, especially of these young workers, Negro and white. It’s done by increased speedup, automation and threats to lay them off if they don’t “cut the mustard” (keep up the pace).

Also the economic squeeze in foreign markets is compelling many firms to set their eyes on a greater share of the American market in 1967, which will create new problems for the auto workers here.

The Canadian Parliament was in an uproar recently when Studebaker of Canada imported thousands of Volswagens from Germany duty free and resold to Volkswagen of Canada. The Canadian Government was shortchanged $2 million by means of the tax evasion.

Automotive News, a manufacturers’ sheet here reports German Opel (General Motors owned) will ship 40,000 Kadett cars to the U.S. Production at the plant is accelerating rapidly said the News.

Opel management reports they have produced 4,000,000 cars in four years and over 50% of its production is being exported to 120 countries. GM is building an assembly plant in Antwerp, Belgium, to help assemble the Kadetts. Some $325 million has just been spent by GM to improve its Opel plant (GM reports a drop of 62% in its third quarter profits of 1966—export of capital is likely where it went). Ford and Chrysler all report drops in profits for the third quarter, 1966, but with new plants being built by all of them in scores of countries, it’s not hard to figure where the money “dropped”.

To tackle this matter, UAW president Reuther has set up World Auto Councils with headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland, and talks about winning a minimum world wage in auto.

The Big Three of American auto of course are taking care of “dropping profits” in their own way—they upped car prices an average of $56. President Johnson who decries “inflationary wage raises”, murmured something about a Congressional check into higher car prices. Nobody figures this will happen.

A special problem that merits the most serious consideration and action in all labor contract renewals is the need for the upgrading of Negroes into the skilled trades. Despite Federal,
State and city laws, and Fair Employment Practices clauses in union contracts with employers, the facts are discrimination is rampant in upgrading, promotions, and giving Negroes a chance to get out of the killing foundry jobs. All the hot, hard, dirty jobs are still predominantly the only jobs the Negro workers can get.

The other great union preparing for 1967 wage and contracts talks is the independent union, The International Brotherhood of Teamsters. They have 1.7 million members and their first 1967 negotiations cover 450,000 truck drivers working for some 10,000 owners. President James R. Hoffa, facing two jail terms for alleged "jury-tampering" and other government charged "crimes", is proposing a three year contract with a 5% a year annual gain, which would come to over 30c an hour.

He spoke on something many American labor leaders are concerned with; growth of employer resistance, banding together of employers to beat down the unions. In the recent negotiations with General Electric, 11 unions banded together, called into a united front by action of the Industrial Union Department of the AFL-CIO*, and negotiated from a new position of strength.

Hoffa has said he would like to call together teamsters, auto, railroad, maritime, and other unions to present a similar united front before employers in the 1967 negotiations.

Hoffa calls inflation the workers' big problem here. In bitter tones he speaks of the fact that the US has a $60 billion war budget and spends $2 billion a month in Vietnam. He blames the war for inflation. "I call for peacetime preparations when this war ends, and we all hope it ends soon. We need to prepare for building schools, houses, roads hospitals—that's what we need," he says.

Hoffa said the trucking industry of America can well afford a 5% annual wage increase, which would bring long haul drivers an additional 0.5 cents a mile on the 11.25 cents a mile now paid. Local cartage drivers and non-drivers (warehousemen) who are paid by the hour, would receive between 15c and 17c an hour annually beyond their present rates of $3.10 to $3.50 an hour. On pensions which are $250 a month at 57 years of age, after 20 years in the industry, Hoffa wants employers to put an additional $5 a week over a three year period into the pension fund. They put in $8 a week now. It means an undisclosed pension raise. He

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*American Federation of Labor—Congress of Industrial Organisations; the nearest US equivalent of the Australian Council of Trade Unions.—Ed.
also wants continued a cost of living escalator clause. Talks begin early January.

Hoffa said also that his union will continue to spend $10,000 a month to help organise farm workers in the US. He said he could not at present foresee any merger between his union and the two Longshore unions, the one that Australian-born Harry Bridges heads on the West Coast and Tommy Gleason's union on the East and Gulf ports. It's reported a merger of Longshore is under way, fathered by Hoffa. The Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers' Union is preparing to go into the United Steel Workers' Union.

Some 17,000 telephone workers here in Detroit voted down a contract offering them $3.50 a week raise as insufficient. Also they don't want any three year contracts, as was negotiated by Joe Heirne, their president, often talked of as AFL-CIO president George Meany's prospective successor.

Grumbling is taking place in some steel locals because no wage re-openers exist until 1968, also because the steel workers gave up their cost of living escalator clause in the last 1965 negotiations. A smash through by the Teamsters of a 5% raise will set the pace for auto, steel, telephone, maritime, and others. Hoffa usually gets what he sets out to win. A new wind is blowing.

The Building Trades started much of this off on May Day when they went out for 75c an hour increase spread over two year contracts and won it. This burst the 3.2% wage freeze of the Johnson Administration, now they are all "going for the fences" as they say.

The idea of "class partnership" advocated by George Meany, AFL-CIO president, still exists among many top labor leaders, but important differences do exist and so do some significant departures, as related above, especially amongst lower levels of leadership.

The year 1967, from where we sit, looks like waves of struggles rising which could reach new heights in the fight for security, for peace, for equal rights for Negroes, for jobs for millions of American youth, and wash away some more of "class partnership". But with few exceptions American labor leadership still remains silent on the fight for peace, following George Meany's backing of LBJ's war policy, shaped by Meany's "foreign minister" Jay Lovestone. When LBJ said the General Electric workers here shouldn't strike because GE was making "strategic" war materials, the workers struck anyway. The year 1967, we predict, will see more of that.
Art Protesting Against War and Oppression

Outrage and horror at the rapine and murder of foreign invasion seen in the eye of a Vietnamese child—barbed-wire a symbol of 20th century militarism and the concentration camp.

Above: The Observer, Peter Miller, oil on hardboard, 1966 in the possession of the artist.

Right: The Wire, Noel Counihan, acrylic on hardboard, 1966, in the possession of the National Gallery
Richard Dixon

ISSUES IN LABOR CONFLICT

The President of the Communist Party of Australia advances some views on the issues involved in the continuing conflict within the Labor Party, particularly on Vietnam.

FOLLOWING its defeat at the Federal elections, the Australian Labor Party is once again in the throes of internal conflict in which the future of the party, its prospects, policy and leadership are being fiercely debated.

The struggle again demonstrates the absence of a common political outlook and ideology in the Labor Party. Although organised together in a single party, the policy and rules of which they are supposed to abide by, the various factions and trends almost inevitably take up political-ideological positions that correspond to the interests of different social groups in capitalist society. Also, almost inevitably, their differences stem from or are influenced by the fundamental class division in capitalist society, between the working class and capitalist class.

At the centre of the present conflict in the Labor Party and the differences over leadership is Labor's policy on the war in Vietnam, its plan to end conscription and withdraw Australian troops from Vietnam.

Everyone recognises that the Vietnam war raises great national issues. Australian participation in the war is dictated by the class aims of monopoly capitalism, and by the same token, the class interests of the workers impel them to oppose it. The nation is divided over the war, and it is in this setting that the division in the Labor Party assumes such importance for the whole labor movement and the progressive people in all walks of life.

Labor's Federal election setback has been seized upon by the right wing forces to make an all out bid to take over the Federal leadership of the Labor Party and change its foreign policy. While most of the right wing leaders are reticent in public, they are
campaigning within the party for Labor's Vietnam policy to be changed, and brought into line with the policy of the Holt Government.

The Australian Workers' Union officials, who refuse to be inhibited by Labor Party rules on public statements, openly declare their support for the dirty war in Vietnam and the US alliance, while remaining silent on conscription. Waiting on the sidelines, the Democratic Labor Party is gleefully supporting the stand of the AWU leaders. Mr. B. A. Santamaria said that Labor acceptance of the AWU standpoint would open the way "for agreement with the DLP"—not a very inviting prospect for the Labor Party.

If the AWU bureaucrats publicly proclaim the right wing intention of ditching the progressive points in Labor's policy on the Vietnam war, it is the New South Wales branch executive of the Labor Party which is the main centre of the intrigues and manoeuvres to change the leadership of the party and its policy. The right wing are firmly in the saddle in NSW, and their activities endanger Labor Party unity and threaten a new split.

Left to themselves the right wing groups would probably not get very far. However, they are supported by the capitalist press, which has confused and misrepresented the issues, and this makes them more dangerous. The motive of the press in trying to snatch victory for the right wing is all the more suspect when we recall the scurrilous and vicious campaign it waged during the Federal elections to defeat the Labor Party.

The line of propaganda of the capitalist press is interesting. In an editorial urging the "Labor Party to reconstruct itself by moving right", a Sydney newspaper wrote the following: "This has become a middle class conformist country which distrusts political extremism. It looks for policies slightly left or slightly right of centre." (The Sun, 28/11/66.)

Obviously The Sun is trading on the proposition that the industrial working class is disappearing, being absorbed by, or subordinated to, the middle class, a proposition that is useful for those people in working class organisations who are trying to edge the labor movement away from radical policies.

Statistics demonstrate, however, that the numbers of industrial workers are increasing and there can be no doubt that, as a class, they will continue to be decisive in modern capitalist society. This is confirmed by the continuing high level of the strike movement, which also serves to refute propaganda that the class struggle in Australia is giving way to middle class conformism.
The argument that the Labor Party should weaken its ties with the trade unions is continually advanced by the millionaire press and the right wing, because of their concern that the trade union affiliations might prove a source of left wing and progressive influence on Labor’s policy. It is most important for them therefore to condemn or minimise, whichever the circumstances require, the role and influence of the industrial workers.

The Sun’s argument also implies that the Liberal-Country Party Government, which has plunged Australia into the Vietnam war, has a policy that is just “slightly right of centre”. In fact, the Government’s policy is far to the right. It reflects the standpoint of extreme and reactionary trends in the monopoly capitalist set-up in Australia. Its support for the United States in the unjust and dirty war in Vietnam brought about the confrontation with the labor movement and radical-democratic forces, and divided the nation.

Labor’s defeat in the Federal elections was a serious setback for the labor movement, but it is not the end of the road. Forty-two per cent of the people voted for the parties opposing the Holt Government’s war policies. By any standard that is powerful opposition. The main part of this vote came from the workers, but it also included intellectuals, peace supporters and others opposed to the war.

Labor’s Federal election policy aroused more interest and debate than for many years. However, confusion on the external danger, and an economic situation that favored the Government, prevailed over the mood for change.

A feature of the elections that calls for close attention is the fact that large numbers of people felt so strongly about the issues that they not only voted against the Government, but joined in various activities in opposition to the Vietnam war and conscription. All this suggests that, providing the forces that advanced alternative policies carry the struggle forward and through open debate and appropriate forms of action that involve ever wider circles of people seek to clarify the issues before the nation, the political situation can be turned against the Government.

Although the Holt Government increased its majority in the Federal elections, it cannot be sure it can retain this support. Having taken the step of involving Australia in the unjust war against the Vietnamese people, the Government must take other steps—conscription of the youth, taxation increases and suppression of opposition.

The war means that a continuous threat of crisis hangs over the Government. It lives in fear of military reverses and their
effect on the people. It must meet the ever-growing demand for more and more men and finance for the war. It has virtually no say in determining war policy and must haplessly follow the US in whatever direction it escalates the war, even to the point of nuclear holocaust. It knows that most countries of the world oppose the war, and it is faced with the opposition of close to half of the Australian people.

That is the position of the Government which, in part, explains the increasing pressure to make people conform to its policies. Defence of the Establishment, defence of capitalism, and suppression of new thinking is high on the agenda. The ultras of the Liberal Party and the extremist, racist and right wing groups associated with them are leading attacks on democratic liberties. They urge the suppression of anti-war and anti-conscription demonstrations, and call for police action against opposition at Liberal Party public meetings. Students and academics opposed to Government policies are publicly abused and threatened, and in some cases political control and police surveillance of universities have been proposed.

As Australia is sucked deeper and deeper into the bog of war in South-East Asia, and as the exorbitant demands of the war increase, it seems certain that conflict between the people and the Holt Government will grow. The forces opposing the war will be impelled, willy-nilly, to wage their fight on an ever widening front, defending democratic liberties and living standards and pressing for progressive solutions to the urgent social and cultural problems of modern society.

In this connection the standpoint of the Communist Party which is set out in the documents for its 21st Congress is very important. The communists believe that it is essential to combine various forms of action and struggle with debate and study of the issues before the people. More importantly, that the barriers to unity in action should be dismantled to permit parties, organisations and people of different political and religious views to join together in struggle for demands held in common. Unity in action will strengthen the fight of the people for their demands and win new supporters. It will create a new spirit and mutual confidence amongst the participants, open up new possibilities of agreement and of moving towards a coalition of the left forces.

Labor's Federal election policy on conscription and the Vietnam war clearly and sharply differentiated it from the position of the Liberal Party. Mr. Calwell characterised the Vietnam war as a "dirty and unwinnable war" and proclaimed Labor's intention of withdrawing Australian troops. Those very far-reaching propositions immediately posed other foreign policy questions, such as
Australia’s future relations with South-East Asian countries and the United States, but the Labor Party provided no convincing answers to these questions. Even the plan to withdraw the troops from Vietnam became compromised and uncertain following Mr. Whitlam’s statement that negotiations with the US Government on this issue might result in Australia keeping its troops in Vietnam. The Liberal spokesmen took full advantage of these mistakes to spread confusion about Labor’s policies and to drive home their charge of isolationism.

The Communist Party believes that Australia should reject imperialist policies and the military alliances to give effect to them. Our foreign policy should strive to bring the Vietnam war to an end on the basis of the withdrawal of all foreign troops and the application of the principles of the 1954 Geneva Conference. This country should work for the creation of peaceful conditions in South-East Asia and the world. Our relations with the United States and other countries should be governed by the principles of recognition of the right of all peoples to independence, non-aggression, and non-interference in the internal affairs of other peoples.

Turning now to domestic issues, Labor’s election policy for increased social service benefits, finance for education, various State projects and Northern development made very little impact. Obviously, something more was needed to arouse interest.

There are a number of vital economic and political issues of outstanding importance for Australia which the labor and democratic movements must tackle. These include the growth of monopoly and the rapid increase in foreign capital investment by means of which foreign, and especially United States, capital has gained control of industries essential for Australia’s future, and also the new problems being created by the scientific and technological revolution. Policies and activities to meet these changes are necessary. They should include greater democracy, worker participation in control of production, public ownership of monopolies and developed plans for future growth. In short, the new economic and political problems point to the need for basic social reforms of a transitional nature, that are linked to the concept of social change, the achievement of socialism.

SUCCESS for the right wing in the struggle in the Labor Party would do serious harm to Labor’s own future and also to the labor and democratic movement in Australia. In a post-election statement, Mr. Calwell declared that Labor would stand by its principles and continue to fight for them. The question for the Labor Party therefore is not to retreat and move to the right, but
to improve its campaigning so as to more widely popularise its policies on Vietnam and conscription among the people, and also to begin to look for more basic solutions to the economic, political and social problems of today.

For the labor and progressive movement in general there seem to be two main lines of approach that have validity.

First, the development of publicity and other activities in support of the issues upon which there is already wide agreement, opposition to conscription and the Vietnam war, by all organisations and people concerned. There is no doubt that as the war goes on many new and related problems will arise, such as the defence of democratic freedom, the rights of conscientious objectors and various economic questions, which will widen the basis of the struggles of the people. The Communist Party believes that unity in action of people and organisations, irrespective of their political or religious views, is the most effective form of struggle and would do most to consolidate the opposition to the Government.

Secondly, it would be advantageous to develop among all sections of the left a wide exchange of views on the problems confronting the people. Shortcomings in the analysis and understanding of problems is not confined to any one section and we could all benefit from deeper study and discussion of theoretical and practical questions. The objective should be the constructive elaboration of policies and a more effective popularisation of them.

CHINA appears to be moving both towards a period of internal political struggle without parallel since Mao took over effective control of the Party, and towards even more extreme expressions of the guerilla ethos and the belief in the omnipotence of the masses which have so long been the hallmark of Mao’s thought and action. In the long run, however, it seems inevitable that Mao’s heaven-storming policies will be replaced by others better adapted to the dull but efficient rationality of modern industrial society.

MAO was supremely well attuned to those needs (of China in an earlier period), and thus he was able to play the role he did. He is today not willing to recognise that the long period during which his ideas and methods were in harmony with Chinese needs has come to an end (p. 325).

(From Mao Tse-tung, by Stuart Schram, in the Pelican series “Political Leaders of the Twentieth Century”. For brief review see p. 64.)
SOCIALISM: A TRANSITIONAL POLICY

A Sydney Labor Party member and alderman discusses the concept of a transitional policy towards socialism, and makes proposals on what such a policy might be.

LEFTWING CADRES in Australia and throughout the world have been educated to the idea of an inevitable and catastrophic crisis through which the masses will turn to revolutionary struggle for socialism. Yet in the last hundred years capitalism has experienced only one major economic crisis, that of 1929-33. Between 1860 and 1914 there were recessions, but nothing comparable to 1929. And by contrast, in the last twenty years in the advanced capitalist countries the development of new productive forces has far outstripped that of thousands of years of human history, endowing mankind’s collective power over nature with new and fantastic capacities. We need only cite atomic energy, electronics, automation and cybernetics, synthetic chemistry (“plastics”), and the exploration of outer space.

Thus history has amended Marx’s perspective for the evolution of capitalism: “stagnation and decline of world economy”, “the tendency to reduce the workers’ standards of living and even pauperise them”, “increasingly frequent and deep economic crises”, in a word, transformation of capitalism from a relatively reactionary social system to an absolutely reactionary system.

Since 1945, the economy of Europe and (to some extent) of the world has been substantially reconstructed, and this has supplied the main driving force behind world economic development for a whole epoch. It has done so by a ceaseless renovation of the productive apparatus, which has been marked by technical progress calling for a high rate of investment. This in turn maintains and stimulates enlarged production.

We may for the purpose of this analysis divide the world economy into two sectors: one, the advanced industrial sector of
capitalist economies; the other, the non-capitalist areas in the 'third world', the workers' states and, within the advanced capitalist countries themselves, areas such as the independent producers in agriculture, in handicrafts, and even small and medium scale industry. The increased trade between these sectors has allowed the surplus value in the enlarged production to be realised—to the overwhelming advantage of the advanced capitalist industrial sector, it might be added, where it trades with less developed areas.

A further influence strengthening this sector is its continuous monopolist concentration. On behalf of this sector, moreover, the State has increasingly regulated, stimulated and 'planned' economic life as a whole, both on the national and international level. Monopolist concentration and its continuous subjection of the State has certainly not produced a super-capitalism, lying beyond imperialism. The two fundamental processes characterising post-war capitalism are: accentuated concentration and centralisation of capital; and the new role of the State in the management, control and orientation of the capitalist economy. We may designate it 'state monopoly capitalism'.

Scientific and technical progress has demanded massive investment, both to create and develop new, ultra-modern branches of activity, and to modernise existing ones. Hence a raising of the rate of investment. We see quicker replacement of equipment because of an obsolescence which occurs well in advance of its physical wearing out, and thus replacement proceeds without interruption, though its rhythm fluctuates. All this has considerable influence on the circulation of the total social product and the lengthening of the economic cycle.

The development of the productive forces demands enormous capital because, contrary to the 19th century and even part of the 20th, the process of production in some branches (more particularly machinery) comprises three stages instead of one: pre-production (scientific research and construction of prototypes—for example, developing the American supersonic plane to the prototype stage cost an estimated 1,000 million dollars); production properly so-called; and post-production (after-sale service, etc.).

The optimum use of vanguard techniques and automation demands production units of very great dimensions: for example, some years ago a modern steel-works had to produce a minimum of 4 million tons of steel to withstand unrestricted competition—today the figure is an estimated 7 to 12 million tons.

Today we need take barely more than 50 of the largest American corporations to reach a total of 128 billion dollars turnover, the share of each exceeding the billion (one thousand million) mark.
Some of these giants of industry are vaster and have more resources than some governments, and the tendency towards still greater concentration continues, strengthened by the insatiable demand of automated industries for raw materials and bigger markets.

The Working Class and Automation

We have to be concerned with the social consequences of automation on the proletariat directly engaged in production, on the whole worker population and on society as a whole. It is plain that automation leads in the long run to a great reduction in the number directly engaged in production, and that, on the other hand, the operatives are being transformed from specialised workers into technicians of a higher technological level. Thus the process of automation means quantitative and qualitative transformation of the proletariat.

Normally, under capitalism, this would be expected to involve an increase in technological unemployment, but experience shows that the process is in fact more complex. The new productive apparatus of advanced capitalism increases the number of jobs in the pre-production sectors (the United States is spending 68.4 dollars per inhabitant, about 2.8% of the gross national income, on research), as well as in the sale of an increased mass of products and a range of new products and after-sale service. On the other hand, to the extent that society is enriched by the increased productivity of the automated productive apparatus, the services sector develops, as well as the budget appropriations for public and social services (while remaining very backward in proportion to the increase in private profits). The overall result in an economy in expansion is the reduction of real unemployment.

The modernisation of the productive apparatus in this age of automation has exposed significant layers of workers to ordeals of displacement and reclassification. This process is inevitable, and objectively speaking, it prepares the way for socialism. But this is not to accept that the workers ought to suffer. To defend themselves, however, requires a strategy of confrontation of neo-capitalism itself, based on the achievements, the present objective possibilities and the new needs of the working masses.

Will Australia experience automation to the same extent as the bigger metropolitan countries? Probably not. It is held back by a small population and limited home market which do not justify the huge pre-production capital expenditure. Australia's relative stability will continue to attract foreign capital investment, but rather for extractive industry and to equip it as an outpost of
imperialism to play a counter-revolutionary role against the Asian national and social revolutions.

A Program for the Transition to Socialism

The transition to socialism will not come about within the framework of bourgeois democracy, nor will it come along an exclusively parliamentary path. Nothing is more dangerous or futile than to blind oneself to this. Rather it involves the struggle for the establishment of a labor government, basing itself on the socialist forces politically organised, supported on the democratic organisations of the workers in the workshops and offices, and on their unions.

The struggle for socialism will be grounded on the struggle against inflationary pressures, against the disadvantages that modernisation of the productive apparatus involves under capitalism, and against the crying disproportion between the workers' part of the increased productivity and the enrichment of society, and the part cornered by the monopolies.

Scientific socialists should stress not only the increased socialisation of the economy, the increased importance of public and social services, and the increased necessity for planning of social life generally, but also the manifold inequalities, disproportions, waste, and bottle-necks, still marking capitalist production.

On the social level the objective of self-management must be counterposed to the increasingly anti-democratic evolution of state monopoly capitalism, which concentrates the power of management and decision in the economy and the state into the hands of a very limited number. Self-management means direct participation of the producers and citizens in the management of the economy and the state.

On the cultural level, this increasingly technical and automated society aggravates the alienation of man, increasing his relative cultural impoverishment at the very time it becomes necessary both for him in his productive work, his role as a citizen and in his leisure time, to have the responsibility of a continuing education, both specialised and general.

Neo-capitalism, still engaged in the exclusive pursuit of the maximum profit, seriously distorts the "model" of the kind of life suitable to the possibilities and needs of our century.

A socialist transitional program, extending and eclipsing a program of reforms envisaged within capitalist social relations (i.e. reformism), would include:
Higher wages and shorter working hours, with the time to and from work included in the working day.

Defence of the increased wages against inflation by way of price control, realisable only by committees on prices possessing the right to have the books of big business investigated by independent accountants to reveal the actual profit, including the capital gains.

Office and workshop organisation embracing all categories, concerned not only with defence and improvement of conditions, but also with the management's regime, policy decisions, organisational procedures and introduction of new production techniques.

The struggle against man's alienation is truly transitional, establishing the basis of "dual power", and of the kind of democratic organisations of the workers in the factories, offices and workshops necessary, together with the unions, for the future socialist government. The concept that management is the province of the millionaire anti-social minority must be jettisoned. Here the unions and their research staffs, and socialist academics, have an important role to play.

Nationalisation of the major branches of industry, which, in line with the above appears as increasingly reasonable in that "private enterprise" is more plainly revealed as a misnomer, buttressed as it is by public money and funds, through subsidisation, protection, favorable freight and power rates, harbor installations, etc. (e.g. Ansett Industries, GMH, BHP, shipping combines, chemicals, minerals, oil).

Elimination of wage and salary discrimination against women, youth and Aborigines; full adult status at 18 years of age, including the adult wage for apprentices; implementation of measures directed to providing the basis for real equal status for women, permitting her integration in economic life and independence—creches, kindergartens, restaurants at or handy to, places of employment.

A secular education at all levels, to be aimed at the development of a rounded human being and not of a technological cog, and syllabi remoulded accordingly (cf. the Berkeley, USA movement); the blatant class inequalities revealed by the Martin Report to be attacked, with the aim of educational opportunity being equally available to all; a complete health service unrelated to ability to pay; modern housing for all according to need; adequate, comfortable, free public transport; full living wage for pensioners and unemployed workers.

Present external policy is the extension of the reactionary domestic policy assigning us the shameful role of 'big brother'
imperialism’s puppet in counter-revolutionary interventions against the Asian and Pacific peoples. We must reject the lie that their struggles for national independence and first steps to a socialist society threaten Australia.

The Vietnamese continue to take the vanguard role in this struggle, and their victory can only be to Australia’s advantage. This fact, the need for common humanitarianism, and the duty of internationalist solidarity—all demand that the working class adopt a policy involving all forms of aid, food, equipment, cash, medical supplies, and the offer of volunteers for civil and military duties (even if the Vietnamese should continue to decline this latter offer).

Victory for the imperialist counter-revolution in Vietnam could well be crucial for humanity’s fate. The best way to show our recognition of this is to organise material aid, and offer as volunteers. This helps arouse wider and more determined opposition to current policy from sectors of the population less aware of the historic importance of this struggle, and is at the same time consonant with massive aid in all forms from the workers’ states (who, after all, possess the best means of countering imperialism’s aggression). This internationalist rallying cry has been sounded by North Korea and Cuba.

The more this policy is accepted, the more opposition will grow to the increasing ‘defence’ appropriation, and the more it will be recognised that onerous war imposts are detrimental both to Australia’s economic development and to the scope of public and social services from which they detract.

We need also to take this into consideration: in view of the British trend to integration in the European Economic Community, Australia as an industrial nation needs to establish closer trading relations with the Asian and Pacific countries, and such relations are necessarily based on peaceful cooperation. How far will we get in the present hideous mask of imperialism’s puppet?

In Australian society the urge for a new ‘quality of life’ is evidenced in the renewed interest in town planning, as now in Sydney. Committees of citizens are indicated, and indeed are now emerging, concerned with the amenity of the neighbourhood, the siting of industry, noise and fall-out mitigation, the most salubrious and pleasant areas for residential zoning, the quality of new constructions, land use restrictions, accessibility to waterways, open space reservation, street furniture aesthetics, traffic generation, etc.

This draft of a socialist transitional policy is not claimed to be definitive. It rather aims to set out the approach which dis-
t distinguishes a viable revolutionary program from a reformist one. All political organisations with any mass allegiance in the advanced capitalist countries bear the essential characteristics of reformism. Their policies assume the continuation of capitalism, and do not envisage a revolutionary confrontation of capitalism. All the more vital, then, to establish criteria differentiating the reformist and revolutionary approaches.

To select from a socialist transitional program which proposition or propositions is most relevant at any given moment, socialists must engage in a dialogue with the people, and through this, emphasise the propositions which will take the movement forward.

The workers' states are still far from projecting a satisfactory socialist image. But under conditions of peaceful competition, the workers' states with their nationalised and planned economies would, because of their higher tempo of development, increasingly attract to their orbit the 'third world'. Eventually they would eclipse the advanced capitalist sector by restricting its sphere of operation, thus inducing the classical economic crisis.

We may also reckon on the enormous political attraction that a flowering of true socialist democracy in the workers' states would exert, through the development of institutions of self-management and the assertion of people's rights to decision-making at all levels. A stage can be thus envisaged, in which the relative strength of imperialism would have so deteriorated that it would lack any viable military or political expedients to prolong its life.

Unhappily, this stage is not yet with us; imperialism has not become defeatist, but directs its still formidable power to halting the revolutionary upsurge in the 'third world'. The longer that its aggression fails to meet with an adequate response from the anti-imperialist forces of the world, the greater grow the means of violence it deploys, and with them grows the terrible danger that the unavoidable eventual response will risk a nuclear confrontation.

In conditions such as these, it is futile to rely on any 'historic process' for a program for victory. It is our job to begin the regeneration of the socialist movement in the advanced capitalist nations.

This can be done if a leadership emerges in tune with today's needs, rather than one preoccupied with bolstering a subjective approach with irrelevant quotations from Marx, Lenin or Trotsky appropriate to other situations.
A member of the editorial board of the marxist journal Arena advances the view that intellectuals are now becoming the leading force in the struggle for socialism.

The 1966 general election was hardly a turning point for the left in Australia. The results confirmed that an era, a stage begun in the 1890’s, is at an end. The socialist movement has been at the crossroads for some time but it can hardly delay choosing its future path very much longer. What is perhaps clearer as a result of the elections is that one apparent way forward—the restatement of the best of Australian labor movement traditions without taking into account present day reality—does not exist. The proponents of this point of view from the Trade Union Defence Committee to Mr. Chamberlain have shown their sincerity and principle, but have not shown that progress can realistically be made from their position. The fighting stand on a left Australian Labor Party platform, seen often by socialists as the way to win elections, has been tried and found not successful.

The old argument that “the swinging vote can be won when the labor movement is united actively and vigorously campaigning on a policy which constitutes a clear challenge to the Liberals” (L. Aarons: Labor Movement at the Crossroads, p.19) has come out a bit damaged. But maybe such a viewpoint takes for granted a static class position, and one of the statements which underpins this tactical claim—“by and large, Australia’s 1,900,000 industrial workers are solid, thick-and-thin voters for the Labor Party”—is no longer obviously true.

Of course, it may be said that winning elections is not the only purpose of those wanting social change; the platform on which the elections are won is even more important. On the other hand social changes are brought about by the action of large numbers of people. The important analysis is one which looks at
the policies, voting, and movements in the elections from the view-
point of how immediate and long-term reforms are to be brought
about. The controllers of the mass media, with the support of the
right in the labor movement, are setting about the formation of
a modern ALP which may well help solve some of the problems
of capitalism as the Wilson Government seems to be doing in
England; but this is worthless to socialists.

Detailed studies of the voting have yet to be made, but the
developments in Victoria on a gross scale seem clear enough. The
ALP vote in general was down. The seat lost, Lalor, showed a
marked drop in the labor vote in the working class areas of the
western suburbs of Melbourne. There was a Liberal absolute
majority for the first time in Bruce which includes large working
class areas, in some of which the Liberal member topped the poll,
again for the first time. The new party, the Liberal Reform
Group, polled surprisingly well, and polled better in “middle-class”
electorates such as Latrobe, than in the more working-class areas of
Corio, Lalor and Batman. The seat of Yarra, held by Dr. Cairns,
contains two state seats one of which is blue-ribbon ALP and the
other is Liberal held. There was a small increase in the ALP vote
in the Liberal area; and a large decline in the industrial working-
class districts. Of course these are trends only. The old industrial
suburbs are still predominantly Labor-voting, the non-industrial
and most newer suburbs Liberal. To the trends shown by the
figures can be added the observations of many actively interested
in politics of two marked movements among voters. In the uni-
versities, schools, and among the intelligentsia generally there ap-
peared to be a swing against the government; some who had voted
Liberal for years before were voting Labor particularly on the
issues of conscription and Vietnam. On the other hand a swing
away from Labor was apparent in the factories and on the building
jobs.

Voting trends may be of little significance, often being influ-
enced by quite temporary factors—some commentators have chosen
Mr. Calwell’s age as a vital factor. The trend in this case is sig-
nificant because it supports what would be expected from a marx-
ist analysis. The classic formulation of Karl Marx, that “social
being determines consciousness” is not the same as one sometimes
assumed, “that relationship to the means of production determines
consciousness.” The social being of members of the working class
includes more than the relationships associated with work. Leisure-
time relationships do not necessarily, and in fact at present do
not, reinforce the ideology which could be expected to arise from
work relationships. The changes coincide with the shift in emphasis
from production to salesmanship, and the growth of the mass
media. To work out in detail the influences which have led to
the weakening of the old class consciousness of the industrial workers and the direction which new forms of thought will take will be a difficult task. It is sufficient for the moment to see that this destruction is theoretically inevitable, and in practice is occurring. To build one's hopes for socialism on expectations of the industrial working class acting according to some classical statements is as utopian as the views of those early socialists who hoped to persuade the wealthy of the correctness of their plans for social ownership and the redistribution of wealth. This is not to say that the old working class will play no part. It certainly will, even on the score of numbers, although arguments based on the numbers of trade unionists have about as little significance in themselves as the arguments of 80 years ago which were based on the number of peasants in Tsarist Russia.

Fortunately social change is not at an end because of the corrosion of the old working class ideology. As has been said often enough the 1966 election was fought on issues to an extent and with a heat rare in Australia. But as the results showed the vigor of the battle was not reflected in an increased working class consciousness, nor were the contending classes in the main those on the battlefields of yesteryear. The issue of conscription and of aggression against a small and freedom seeking nation were primarily issues of individualism, of the rights of individuals to decide whether or not they should kill or be killed, of how far a government has the right to dispose of its citizens, of whether other individuals regardless of the color of their skins, of their ideologies also have the right to live. A friendly critic some months ago criticised the Communist Party pamphlet on Vietnam for its failure to put the struggle of the Vietnamese in the context of the world revolutionary struggle, instead of which it emphasised the national independence struggle and the patriotism of the people. This critic was basing himself on a working-class outlook. Politically it is more sensible and opportune to take the line of the CPA pamphlet, but maybe we should also be looking at why the line of working-class internationalism and solidarity is no longer so strongly stressed.

It is time to look at the characteristics of the ideology of the intelligentsia, which is growing in numbers and has already as a group shown its opposition to the ruling class policies on more than one issue. The questions which interest us are of course as to what basis there is for anti-capitalism to be developed, and what form of social system is in line with the ideology of this class. The viewpoint and actions of Bill White, the anti-conscription hero, are typical of the views of the members of the social group which is now the government's main concern. At his final and successful appeal against conscription Bill White said, "people are responsible
for suffering and must accept the responsibility for it . . . No matter what part you take in the war, you are still responsible for your actions in participating." The theme of individual responsibility, a respect for the humanity of others, a refusal to hand over one's moral obligations or power to make decisions to another, is characteristic.

The ideology arises from the style of life of the group, where decisions must be made on the basis of knowledge and not on the basis of authority, where what is correct cannot be determined by the machine, the public service regulations, history or the organisation. The ideology is not that of the old-style industrial worker nor of the familiar public servant or white collar worker although it is not necessarily in contradiction with either. It is that of the highly and flexibly skilled person, most strongly at present represented in university trained workers but now developing on a larger scale as teachers' colleges, technical colleges and other institutions have abandoned the training by rule of the old apprenticeship styles. While as a percentage of the work force this class (or stratum) holds only a minor position it is rapidly growing. Just as in the days when the working class was setting the pattern its ideology was adopted or imitated by thousands of others, particularly intellectuals, so the viewpoint of the intelligentsia is adopted by many who are formally outside it. In part this is assisted by a practice long adopted by the advertising media of fostering an "individualism" based on the pseudo-choice of various shoddy consumer products.

By various legal means, and better co-ordination of effort, Australia's rulers have managed to reduce the role of the organisations of the working class. They have been assisted by the decline of some of the industries in which the workers were once most militant. Finding that opposition is coming from new sources, more conscious members of the Liberal governments and their extreme right supporters have moved. Thus Brian Dixon, a footballer and a Victorian member of parliament, with the full and cynically given support of the Bulletin's radical-right journalist Brian Buckley, has launched an attack on the Victorian universities, with strong hints at government intervention.

But while it is satisfying from an anti-government point of view to see the development of new militancy, it is not obvious this logically leads to socialism, at least as usually envisaged. To use an example, teachers who oppose bureaucratic and restrictive administration, in their union as well as the department, are not likely to be attracted to the idea of a social system characterised by large centrally administered organisations. Socialism in most countries is still of course at the stage theorised as the dictatorship of the
proletariat, the ruling ideas those of state collective socialism, and ideology appropriate to the working class. While, leaving aside the unnecessary exaggerations and distortions this is perfectly in harmony with marxism since socialism must be based on real social forces, it is not the only form of socialism which is possible.

Marx was not interested in perpetuating the rule of the working class. In his day it was the obvious means by which classes would be abolished. The end of capitalism may be brought about in a different style today. In many ways the ideology of the new opposition has a resemblance to that of the old anarchists, in the emphasis on individualism and the abomination of the rule of authority. Although the resemblance is real it is not complete; authority is not opposed in a destructive manner, but its scope is made narrow. The old anarchism was based upon a social class which was disappearing, that of the individual handicraft workers, in some countries peasants, and recent additions to the industrial working class. Its futility was what could be expected of a class doomed by history. The modern individualist rebel trend is certainly not in this category. It is interesting that in the USA an alliance seems to be developing between the students and the hitherto unorganised working class groups, particularly the Negroes. In Cuba the dictatorial regime was overthrown by an alliance of intellectuals and the very poor, and in which the organised working class played an important but subsidiary role. The alliances and co-operation between progressive groups in Australia will no doubt take forms which are not yet known.

The Soviet Union, or any of the other socialist countries, is not a model socialist state for progressive minded people in the advanced capitalist countries, although its achievements can be respected and admired. Nor is a centralised party which demands a large commitment, in terms of the right to determine policy on behalf of its members over a wide field, the sort of revolutionary party that is needed. Lenin's conception of the party was determined by the conditions of his country, one of which was the need for working class organisation and ideology in a country where the working class was small in size and non-working class influences were great. His ideas of organisation cannot be applied as they stand to a different class structure. While the Communist Party has made many changes in organisation in the last few years, the impression has been that they are pragmatic adaptations not underpinned by new theoretical considerations. The 1966 election will not have been a total loss if the lessons of long term applicability for organisation, policy and the meaning of social change are learnt. New forces for social reform have emerged, and new formulations of socialist ideology, and new conceptions of the unity of progressive forces are required.
Edward Bacon

ABORIGINES STRUGGLE: A NEW STAGE

The Queensland secretary of the Communist Party of Australia reviews the course of the Aborigines' struggle for equality, dignity and identity, and shows that a new stage in that struggle has been reached.

THE LONG SMOULDERING discontent of Northern Territory Aboriginal station hands, which burst into life, making national and international headlines late last year and is still in progress, marked the beginning of a new phase in the struggle for human rights for Australian Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders.

Contrary to the sedulously propagated myth, struggle is not something new for these people. Oppressed and restricted in a thousand ways, they have yet retained the will to live and advance, demonstrating it again and again throughout the long years since the main tribes were massacred or subjugated.

Since the end of the Second World War they have established an impressive record of various efforts to stand up for their rights in all the mainland States and in the Territory. But, until recent years, most of their efforts have been frustrated because they were broken into isolated groups, without much public understanding or sympathy.

This time their struggle is taking place in a new context. It is no longer possible for governments or pastoralists to take private revenge against Aboriginal leaders who stand up for their people, or to force groups into submission without fear of public reaction. The sorry truth about the conditions of life imposed on Australia's native peoples is coming out, and they are beginning to get the mass support they need.

The response by trade unionists and others to the appeals from Darwin and the direct appearance of Northern Territory Aboriginal leaders on the east coast was powerful evidence of this—powerful enough to cause the Federal Government and the big pastoralists to think twice about their original plans to use
the big stick, and powerful enough to shake rightwing union leaders’ views that the struggle could be diverted into harmless channels.

As yet, the dispute has involved only a fraction of the 40,000 NT Aborigines, more of whom will inevitably come into action before long. There is also a strong possibility that it may spread into Queensland, where some 5,000 Aboriginal station-hands live and work for a pittance in sub-standard conditions, and to Western Australia, where their situation is perhaps worst of all. The straight lines of the NT borders were not drawn by Aborigines. The importing of many hundreds of Torres Strait Islanders to work on rail, port and other constructions for big mineral concerns exploiting northern Australia has introduced a new component into the mainland struggle and also conveyed back to the islands new concepts of possible living standards and of ways to fight for them. This is helping to building Aboriginal-Islander unity.

Elsewhere in Australia, the spirit of rebellion against flagrant injustices is still rising, expressed in a wide range of struggles in country towns, in the response to the the “freedom rides” carried out or projected in New South Wales and Queensland, and in many other ways. Awareness is growing of yet another facet of the problem: the condition of the thousands of Aborigines forced from the country areas by mechanisation and other causes into the big cities, especially Sydney.

Over the past few years, the nationwide movement has thrown up a core of capable, devoted Aboriginal and Islander leaders. This core is growing steadily. This is perhaps the most important new factor that has emerged in recent times. There were always such leaders among the peoples, but their leadership was confined to particular areas.

Only since the mid-fifties have they begun to come together on an all-Australian scale. Restrictive laws, backed up by the State and Federal police forces charged with “native protection”, made it virtually impossible for them to do this alone. The groundwork for the nationwide organisational forms had to be done by devoted white supporters of the peoples’ struggles, together with a few Aborigines.

The process of bringing these elements together around a commonly agreed program of aims and actions was necessarily complicated and difficult. Though quite a big store of knowledge about the peoples had already been collected and filed—for example, in the Mitchell Library—there were and still are, including among Communists, many points of disagreement on inter-
pretation of facts, many subjective and onesided views and differences on such basic questions as the definition of an Aborigine.

As the founders of the organised movement began to come together, political differences emerged—were the peoples to be regarded as national minorities or was their problem purely that of a depressed section of the working class? Doubts were expressed as to the possibility of overcoming differences among the peoples themselves, especially those between Aborigines and Islanders, between "pure" and part-Aborigines, between town and country dwellers and between Aborigines and dark-skinned Australians of other origins.

The formation of the Federal Council for Aboriginal Advancement (FCAA) in the mid-fifties was a historic step towards resolving these and other problems. It was also the decisive, essential step towards the formation of a program which could show the path of nationwide struggle. It marked the real beginning of persistent and successful efforts to draw Aboriginal and Islander leaders into positions of responsibility in the States and Commonwealth, opening the way for the peoples to take control of their own destinies, with support from the white working class and people such as scientists, artists, writers, religious men and women and other individuals who had pleaded the cause of the oppressed and worked for them over many years. From the beginning, all who defended the human rights of the oppressed people had to work under conditions of serious difficulty.

Despite a great deal of pious claptrap in Annual Reports or occasional Parliamentary debates, both Federal and State Governments had long held the view that "assimilation"—meaning the disappearance of the people into an all-Australian amalgam—was not only inevitable but desirable.

But they also enforced the contradictory practice of herding large numbers of the peoples into restricted government settlements and church missions under conditions in which they could neither advance themselves nor even become "assimilated". They could, however, be used as they were and still are, as convenient pools of cheap labor for cattle owners and others—their lack of experience of normal Australian working conditions, wages and living standards making them easy prey for exploitation.

At the same time, the possibility of trade union action on their behalf was limited by the spreading of stories to the effect that they were naturally lazy and unintelligent, by the strong element of white chauvinism in the labor movement and by neglect or worse by some unions, especially the Australian Workers' Union (not to be confused with the North Australian Workers'
Union, which is a separate organisation), which covers most of their occupations.

It is scarcely possible to exaggerate the viciousness of the conditions forced on the Aborigines. As Charles D. Rowley commented in an article in *Oceania* in June, 1962: "There could hardly be a more complete case of racial exclusion and discrimination... than that affecting the Australian Aborigines".

Or, as Era Bell Thompson, a most "moderate" Negro commentator, who visited Australia for some weeks more recently wrote (*Ebony*, Sept., 1966):

"Repressive laws passed by the Australian States against the indigenous people were a combination of the 'Black Codes' enacted by the (US) South against the Negro, and Government Acts which restricted and pauperised the American Indian".

In these conditions, deprived of their land more completely than any other people, their complex social system destroyed, their customs and even their marvellous arts derided or scorned, yet still refused admittance to any but the lowest levels of white society, it is hardly surprising that feelings of pessimism became prevalent among them and that they became suspicious and resentful even of well-meaning white people. In fact, their clinging to what they could retain of their identity and customs, even their languages in the face of all odds is splendid evidence of the persistence of the human spirit in conditions of the deepest oppression.

On the initiative of the FCAA, the first Australian Conference on Aboriginal Affairs was held in 1958. Such conferences have been held every year since at Easter. The conferences have been marked each year by greater direct concern with immediate and fundamental problems of the movement and by increasing participation of Aborigines and Islanders from all parts of the country.

This Easter the conference will take place in an atmosphere of rising struggle by growing numbers of the peoples and of much greater sympathy and support from trade unions and the public. The spark that ignited at Newcastle Waters and spread to Wave Hill last year cannot be put out, whatever the pastoralists, governments and their rightwing friends in the labor movement may plan, or whatever they are able to do about particular immediate struggles. For, as the Gurindji people on Wave Hill declared last year, as the Torres Strait Islanders declared years ago, the peoples are now beginning to fight not only for equal wages, but for other fundamental rights—for the collective ownership of lands, together with mineral rights, for local autonomy, for modern health, edu-
cation and industrial facilities and all the other rights most Australians accept as normal but these people have never known.

The process of acquiring knowledge about such things, which began in a big way with the troop movement in the Second World War and has been helped inadvertently by the penetration of government and mineral monopoly teams, is being speeded up now by the visits of Aborigines and Islanders to work in the south or to go as their peoples' representatives to various parts of Australia, to New Zealand to study Maori conditions, even to Africa and socialist countries.

New research centres such as that established by the Australian National University are coming into being and supplying basic information. Surveys, such as those of the NSW Teachers' Federation, are uncovering important data. But no Australian Government, State or Federal, has yet even begun the kind of detailed study of Aboriginal and Island facts needed to disclose the full realities of the conditions and needs of the peoples. There are no statistics available on employment, health, education, etc., as there are for the white population.

The work done by the State, Northern Territory and local organisations for Aboriginal Advancement to help develop awareness and action is beginning to show results. Even such organisations as OPAL, established by the Queensland Government to counter the influence of the State Council of the movement, are being compelled in their practical activities to take sympathetic notice of the peoples and even to support their struggles on occasions.

Debates and resolutions of the United Nations Assembly, Federal and State Parliaments and other leading bodies of the general problems of colonialism and the particular plight of Australia's native peoples continue to throw light on the situation and to inspire the movement to further action. Several trade union bodies are beginning to take systematic notice of the problems of the people and give help—notably the Queensland Trades and Labor Council and the Building Workers' Industrial Union.

The growth of diverse organisations and individuals concerning themselves in one way or another with the movement brings problems in its train. Though many of them have no organic connection with each other, there are tendencies here and there and from time to time for one or another to assume exclusive rights to leadership. Such tendencies, as well as personality problems, have a disuniting effect in a movement which needs unity above all. Communists, perhaps more than anyone else, should know this and feel responsible to seek continually for ways to help bring together the maximum forces on commonly-agreed
plans of action. Dogmatism or sectarianism in any form are most glaringly out of place here. For, although the movement has made great progress in the last decade or so, it is still in a formative stage and no one yet has all the answers. Organisations flourish and decline in it, generally speaking according to the state of the movement, but also according to the degree of understanding, maturity and mutual tolerance possessed by leaders.

The welfare of the movement itself and its potential for enhancing Australia's democracy demand above all that its main aim be to assist the development of self-movement towards self-determination by the Aboriginal and Island peoples. This does not mean leaving them to get along as best they can. On the contrary, it implies the necessity of action by all democratic forces, especially the working class, to help clear the road for them. But it does mean that no personal or group interests or conceits should be allowed to disrupt their progress.

Within the general framework three tasks seem urgent:

1. Winning the right of the Aborigines and Islanders to participate fully and freely in North Australian development, along the lines proposed by Mr. J. Kelly in his fine work, *Struggle for the North*. This raises directly the question of struggle against the huge and rapid penetration of foreign capital and for genuine development of the North for the people.

2. Intensifying pressure on State and Federal governments for abolition of all restrictions and introduction of uniform legislation involving large-scale expenditure, to make equal rights a reality and to establish special national minority rights.

3. Much more systematic study of and assistance to the "ghetto" Aboriginal population of the cities. In this the trade unions can play a very big part by expanding their social role.

The progress of the movement over the last few years, despite all the growing pains and difficulties, has already achieved important legislative changes in all States and in the Northern Territory, but much remains to be done even to make the new legal rights effective, let alone to establish true equality.

Full human rights for Aborigines—the goal of the movement—are, it would appear, unattainable this side of socialism, for no Australian, white or black, yet enjoys human rights in the fullest sense modern industry makes possible. Monopoly capital prevents that. But what is done to help the Aborigines and Islanders to advance now is not mere abstract justice or charity. It is, in a very direct sense, an essential component of the general struggle for peace, national freedom, democracy and human dignity—the struggle that opens the way to the socialist future.
JOHN STUBBS' estimate that there are at least half a million people in Australia living in poverty must be considered conservative.

It is based on his own observation and research, figures supplied him by voluntary organisations and meagre Government statistics.

The fact is that there has been little research in Australia into the extent and nature of poverty and, even where some Government departments have collected information, says Stubbs, "they actually refuse to reveal the information even to social workers and universities."

In America, where there has been extensive research into poverty, President Kennedy accepted that 32,000,000 people in that country were living "on the fringe of subsistence." Even allowing for varying conditions, says Stubbs, the American research would indicate that Australia could well have a million people living close to the subsistence level.

John Stubbs, who is a political reporter for The Australian, admits that his is not a definitive study of the problem of poverty in Australia.

But he is a first-class reporter and he has set out the classes of people who suffer poverty in Australia, and has spelled out clearly what it means to them in terms of deprivation, misery and humiliation.

He has called his book The Hidden People because "our poor have been hidden by the increasing affluence of the rest of our society, and buried in the statistics . . . We have little contact with them . . . (because) they have been hidden by the suburban sprawl and changes in the structures of our major cities."

Who comprise the poor? About a quarter says Stubbs, are aged pensioners, many of whom are cold because they cannot afford heating, and are dirty because they are too ill or too weak to do their washing.

The rest are big families where the breadwinner is on the basic wage or less; the unemployed, Aborigines (their poverty statistics are close to 100 per cent.), widows and deserted wives, and derelict and homeless men.

He says: "Many, perhaps a majority, of depressed Australians are poor because they were born poor, for there is a vicious circle of poverty. Badly fed as children and badly educated, the poor seldom have the opportunity to learn a trade. Their will has been warped by their early suffering and rejection by the rest of society."

"Others are victims of the concept that there should be mobility in the work force and a pool of unemployed to reduce the pressure for wage increases.

"These include laborers who are getting old . . . too old to get a regular or decent job and not yet old enough to get a pension or die."

The chief sufferers of poverty are the children, says Stubbs, and his chapter on them—"The Young: The poor child's badge", makes tragic reading.

"Inadequate or ragged clothing is the badge the poor child is forced to wear," says Stubbs and he recounts the humiliations of children in this plight . . . of 10-year-old boys forced to wear their mothers' shoes to school or go barefooted . . . the boy co-
sidered unruly and a trouble-maker who cried when he was given a new pair of shoes; they were his first.

Big families present special problems. The parents often have to choose between herding them into one, cheap-rent room so that they can have adequate food; or pay exorbitant rent for decent accommodation and live mostly on bread and margarine.

John Stubbs has collected most of his material in personal interviews with pensioners, derelict men, heads of families and charity workers, and he presents his shocking facts quite dispassionately. Perhaps too much so, for there is room for indignation and anger.

The author takes no political standpoint, except to emphasise that the responsibility for dealing with the problem rests squarely on the governments, Federal and State, who, he says, tend to regard the existence of poverty with callous indifference or ignore it, like sweeping dust under the carpet.

He says: "The time has come for a major review of Australia's social security system to enable the vast amounts of money available to be spent in the most effective way."

A forlorn hope without big social changes.

TOM LARDNER

ANDRE VOZNESENSKY: Selected Poems.

IN MOSCOW in December, 1962, I was one of the 15,000 fortunate who managed to get tickets to the now-famous poetry-recital in the Palace of Sports at Luzhniki. Outside, in some three inches of snow, hundreds of the less lucky were clamoring to get in, and scalpers were doing a roaring trade.

Inside, the atmosphere was electric. This was the time of the first major confrontation between the young, progressive writers and their older and conservative counterparts, soon to be fought out on the Party and Governmental level.

But the first half of the program was dominated by a battery of poets of the middle and older generation, whose very appearance was in sharp contrast to that of the predominantly youthful audience. They were received with polite deference, but little more.

When Robert Rozhdestvensky and Andrei Voznesenssky eventually took their turns at the podium (Yevtushenko was in Cuba) the response of the huge crowd was incredible. Whereas the older poets had managed to recite only two or—if they were lucky—three pieces before the tepid claps died away, deafening rounds of applause brought both Rozhdestvensky and Voznesensky back for poem after poem.

And it was similarly instructive to note the difference in delivery: whereas most of the older poets relied on pure declamation in the best Russian bravura tradition—a style, incidentally, also favored by Yevtushenko—Rozhdestvensky stood casually with hands in pockets and breathed almost conversationally into the microphone, while Voznesensky excitedly rattled his poems off at machine-gun speed, his right hand pumping away uncontrollably at his side, like a nervous and inexperienced actor.

Yevtushenko, Rozhdestvensky and Voznesensky are the three outstanding representatives of that new wave of young writers who have revolutionised Soviet poetry and made it the mass artform of the age, as it was in the days of Mayakovsky—in a way ab-
solubly inconceivable in any capitalist country. Though Rozhdestvensky—a fine and sensitive poet—is still, regrettably, largely untranslated, Western readers have by now become reasonably familiar with Yevtushenko's work, and now we have a substantial selection of Voznesensky's verse, which illustrates both the depth in quality of the Soviet poetic revival and its range and variety.

This revival has been interpreted—correctly, I feel—as expressing the reaction of the younger generation to the Stalin period, reflecting their impatience with philistinism and bureaucratic strictures, their desire for a fuller and freer life and their demand for honest explanations of the past, together with their determination never to return to the negative features of that past. Yevtushenko, of course, is the laureate of the movement—the man whose verse, despite its frequent lyrical poignancy, trumpets from the public platform, giving immediate voice to burning issues in a direct and forthright form.

Voznesensky's, on the other hand, is a more personal and private voice. He is agitated by and large by the same questions as motivate Yevtushenko, but his way of answering them is more individual and unorthodox—but for all that no less popular. The shaping influence in Yevtushenko's work is obviously Mayakovsky; his imprint is plain on Voznesensky as well, but the dominant strain in the latter's verse is without a doubt that of Pasternak, to whom he bears a great resemblance, particularly in his emphasis on metaphor and his belief in the special powers of the imagination—as in Anti-worlds, dealing with the inner realm of dream and fantasy:

"Long live those Anti-worlds! Fantasists—into nonsense whirled. But without fools there'd be no wise. No oases without the deserts wide."

And again, in his notes (entitled I Love Lorca) to his poem The Lenin Sequoia, which is heavily influenced by the great Spanish poet:

"Metaphor is the motor of form. The twentieth century is the century of transformations, of metamorphoses. What is a pine tree today? Perlon? A fibreglass rocket?"

His concentration on the association of ideas and images leads Voznesensky to a special awareness of the nature of the modern urbanised and industrialised society around him, which he captures in a series of hard, brittle and vivid metaphors, reminiscent of the Russian futurists, the French symbolists, Lorca (Voznesensky's fine sequence on America, The Triangular Pear, recalls Lorca's Poet in New York) and even the English Imagists:

"My self-portrait, apostle of the heavenly portals, my neon retort—Airport! The duraluminium windows vibrate Exactly like a soul's X-ray . . . The monument of the era's An airport."

This is unusual and fiercely uninhibited verse, quite unlike that which we have come to expect from the Soviet Union, but it is contemporary in the best sense of the word and, above all else, uncompromisingly honest. Voznesensky recognises the unique role played by poets in fighting for truth, and, indeed, in suffering for their dedication. As he says in his notes on The Lenin Sequoia: "Poetry always means revolution. The songs of Lorca meant revolution to those hypocritical neo-inquisitorial jailors—for in them, all is internal freedom, abandon, temperament . . . Marx wrote that poets are in need of great endearment. What talk of endearment can there be when the naked heart of a poet is flayed with barbed wire? . . ."
And in his poem *The Ballad of the Full-Stop*:

“... That the winds whistled, as through the stops of clarionets, Through the bullet-ridden heads of our finest poets.”

Herbert Marshall’s translations seem to do less than justice to the distinctiveness of the original, through an unnecessary eagerness to match it rhyme for rhyme. His preface and notes—discreetly acknowledged by the publishers not to have been authorised by Voznesensky himself—would do credit to any gutter-press Kremlinologist in their inexplicable distortion of the admittedly very real conflict between writers and officialdom in the USSR. But for all that this volume is an important contribution in bringing to English readers one of the leading new literary figures in a country where poetry has attained the rightful place denied it in the capitalist world.

Roger Milliss

**PROFILE OF AUSTRALIA,**

Craig McGregor, a journalist in his early thirties, previously collaborated with Midget Farrelly to write *This Surfing Life.* The influence of journalism, of his own age group and his knowledge of the surfing generation are all marked in *Profile of Australia.*

There is plenty of information, sometimes colorfully irrelevant but more often usefully interpretative of Australian attitudes and responses. Now and then it’s inaccurate or repetitive, but basically it is carefully researched. A well-designed index is an asset. In a sense it impresses as a series of well informed newspaper articles rather than a basic analysis. It carries the weakness of journalistic style in that, for the sake of color, it sometimes overstates a case in a rather superficial way. About 4 or 5 pages, widely separated, dispense with women. Strung together are all the best known facts and legends but one understands little of what now leads more women to work, how this changes their own and their families’ attitude or even the attitudes which society adopts in bringing women into the work force.

It is in Craig McGregor’s approach and in his treatment of young people that the book assumes its major importance.

Here is recognition of the changing Australia in all its aspects and here is sympathetic intelligent treatment of the generation which has grown up since World War Two. Perhaps Craig McGregor’s past experience and association with Midget Farrelly enabled him to so objectively portray prevailing attitudes amongst those who are often the despair of their elders but on whom future Australian development more and more rests.

But because Craig McGregor is caught up in the affluent, expanding post-war Australia, some of his reflections are less than objective.

He accepts the notion of class, sees class divisions and refreshingly demolishes the tiresome and reactionary theory that Australia is a classless paradise, yet his views of class are largely confined to perceived class attitudes.

It is important how people view themselves and one cannot but agree that traditional working class attitudes seem out of date to the growing and younger white collar strata. Yet class concepts do not arise only from subjective attitudes; exploitation creates its own opponents. The real question
is the issues on which one fights. One can bemoan a lack of radicalism, an old fashioned anti-intellectual labor party, an ineffective communist party, but this will neither explain the growing polarisation in Australian politics nor find the radical policies which Craig McGregor so obviously desires.

White collar growth is a fact, but Craig McGregor's interpretation of the facts are not always accurate. He claims there are more white collar workers than others, but even his own quoted statistics belie his view unless one plays the numbers game. One can count as white collar everyone in the categories of professional, administrative, clerical, sales and transport and make up a figure roughly equal that of craftsmen, production workers, laborers, service workers and miners, or change it around a bit and still it will be an over-simplification to assume that every little girl who pounds a typewriter or serves in Woolies is white collar and therefore middle class, or that all listed under transport, pilots to postmen, are identifiable as one class grouping.

Certainly middle class values assist to create fertile ground for the anti-image of a Calwell or the trade unions. Yet a Whitlam will not, at least on Vietnam, lead to a radicalisation. The point is surely that given greater material wealth the radicals, recognising continued exploitation of blue and white collar workers (in Australia but also in the world), must take their feet and their visions out of the depression era and formulate meaningful policies for those with new values.

Craig McGregor considers many of them, foreign policy, white Australia, education, transport, equal pay, and he implies, too, the frustrations of association with impersonal power, the growing authoritarianism and the whittling away of democracy. A some-

what black and white view of the ALP, of the trade unions and the communist party, a general under-estimation of the left does not serve to explain, for example, the 10,000 people, intellectuals, students, old and new type unionists, ALP, communists and even liberal supporters who demonstrated against Johnson in Sydney and who show considerable disquiet at the direction of Australian foreign policy.

Just as the second World War was a watershed for the growth and development of attitudes, so the Vietnam involvement brings more sharply to the fore the growing contradictions in Australian society. It must be said that this book was written before Vietnam had fully impacted itself on the Australian political scene. A future edition may expand on the growth of both the articulate left, and, unfortunately, the right, in this situation.

One may quarrel with many opinions in Profile of Australia, but it is a stimulating and honest attempt to express in perspective the changing face of Australia.

Since a profile is "an outline of a face seen from the side" one may hope that Craig McGregor, with his highly readable style, may soon give us a full face portrait in depth.

Mavis Robertson.

FREEDOM IN AUSTRALIA

by Campbell & Whitmore.
Sydney University Press, 298 pp., $7.00.

THIS BOOK can be read with profit by lawyers as well as non-lawyers, for it is a critical analysis of a wide range of Commonwealth and State laws affecting the liberty of the individual in Australia.
The width of this range is shown by its contents, which consist of four parts: Personal Freedom, including personal freedom and the criminal law, police powers, treatment of the sick, and freedom of movement; Freedom of Expression, including public meetings, radio and television, theatre and cinema, the press, obscenity, defamation, contempt of court and contempt of parliament, security of the state and freedom of speech, and freedom of religion; Economic Freedom, including freedom to work and freedom of property; The Individual and His Government, including Aborigines, the discretion to prosecute, and protection from power.

On the whole, the authors adopt a liberal attitude to the rights of the individual, and, although they specifically state that their aim has been to present a balanced view and that they do not claim to be champions of civil liberties, they conclude their preface to the book with these challenging words: “Australians have no grounds for complacency on questions of freedom. Some hard-won victories of past centuries have been eroded away by Australian legislation, and even by decisions of the courts. There has been little effective protest. It is our hope that this book may play a part in stimulating protest in the future.”

A careful study of the book will certainly increase considerably the number of those who want to assist this protest, for the authors rely not on vague, general criticisms of the law relating to individual freedom in Australia, but on a detailed statement of the relevant laws and court decisions.

In a short review, it is impossible to set out even a small part of the facts and arguments adduced, but a few of the authors’ conclusions on the need for law reform gives some indication of their stand.

Vagrancy laws should be thoroughly reviewed and should not be used as an excuse for arresting persons suspected of other offences.

The censorship laws should be repealed and placed on a more sensible basis. Too much uncontrollable power is given to government officials and government and semi-government administration boards and commissions. The unsatisfactory law regulating the relation between these boards and the ordinary citizen should be replaced by a system of law which would enable the citizen to ascertain his rights by a simple non-technical procedure. Appointment of Ombudsmen and extension of legal aid would greatly assist the citizen.

Public servants should be given greater freedom to publicly criticise government policy and administration, for administrative efficiency and integrity in government depend upon free and open discussion of public issues.

The present law, which gives Parliaments and Courts the right to be both accuser and judge in cases of contempt is a relic of the past, and is the very antithesis of freedom of the individual.

The many merits of the book, however, must not blind us to its defects. For example, it seems to adopt a defeatist attitude in the fight for the right of public servants to publicly criticise government policy and administration, when it suggests that the only possible reform is the introduction of the careful use of the American Congressional Committee system for the purpose of questioning officials. The value of this system, however, depends entirely on the ability, outlook and sincerity of the committee members, and its record since the end of the second world war does not inspire much confidence. Too often it became an instrument to stifle freedom.
Apart from some exceptional cases, the right of the public servant to criticise both policy and administration is essential to an efficient democracy, and Australians must not rest content until this right becomes part of the law of the land.

Finally, in spite of its liberal treatment of its theme, the book nowhere analyses the law from the point of view that Australia is a capitalist, class society and that, therefore, the freedom of the individual cannot always be correctly analysed without taking this into consideration.

True, it could hardly be expected that such a question would figure in a book already of such wide compass. However, there is not even the recognition by the authors that there is an alternate structure of society based on public instead of private ownership, and that an examination made in this light would fundamentally alter many of the problems posed and solutions examined.

A LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

REVIEWS IN BRIEF
Three biographies in the Pelican series "Political Leaders of the Twentieth Century".

"KHUSCHEV", by Mark Frankland, 213 pp., 80c.

All these biographies will repay reading for the light they throw on present events.

Kruschev is the least researched and weakest of the three. Nevertheless, it is very readable, and the author's main conclusion is valid enough:

"Kruschev's rule was a transition period from something he clearly wished to abandon to something he could not properly imagine. He understood the need for change, but not the implications of that change" (pp. 208-92).

Stalin was first written in 1948, which adds to its merit.

While denouncing all the crimes, the author completely rebuts those who unthinkingly compare Stalin with Hitler:

"Not in a single field has Hitler made the German nation advance beyond the point it had reached before he took power . . . The Germany Hitler left behind was impoverished and reduced to savagery" (pp. 551).

Under Stalin (1948) "Russia is now the first industrial power in Europe and the second in the world . . . The whole nation has been sent to school . . . Its avidity for knowledge for the sciences, for the arts, has been stimulated to the point where it has become insatiable . . . of Stalinist Russia it is even truer than of any other revolutionary nation that 'twenty years have done the work of twenty generations'" (pp. 553-4).

Mao Tse-tung is a minutely researched and penetrating biography, specially useful at the present time.

Among the major traits of his subject he designates Mao's view that "the subjective creates the objective".

This can be the driving force for mighty deeds of heroism and fantastic achievements in one set of circumstances, while leading to ignominious failure and even farce in another—both to be clearly seen in Mao Tse-tung's China.

E.A.
WITH OUR NEXT ISSUE, April-May, Australian Left Review will have completed its first year of publication. During this time there has been a gradual development in format, technical quality, content, circle of contributors and editorial conception, which we feel has been for the better and which we aim to continue.

One result has been the accumulation of contributions which have not yet been published because of the lack of space. In order to clear this, to provide adequate space for the expanding discussion section, and by way of a bonus to readers on completion of our first year, the April-May issue will be extended to 80 pages.

Whether it will be possible to continue with the larger issue will depend on:

One, the continued support of existing contributors and the acquisition of new ones.

Two, the expansion of sales by about one thousand. The present paid circulation of over three thousand is just enough to meet current printing and running costs.

Readers can contribute by renewing their subscriptions (the bulk of which will expire with the next issue), by selling subscriptions (especially) and individual copies to new readers, and in every way publicising the journal. We also seek assistance by way of opinions from readers on what they like, what they don’t like, and what they can suggest for improvement.

All this will provide the necessary conditions for a further development in editorial conception and involvement, enabling ALR to play a still more effective role in serving and stimulating the left, and advancing the cause of socialism.

Letters and contributions are welcome and should be sent to Box A 247, Sydney South Post Office.

To meet printing schedules, copy must be in the hands of the editors one month before date of issue (the first day of every second month). Small items, and in special circumstances articles, may be accepted up to twenty days before publication date.

Articles and letters represent the views of the authors, not necessarily those of ALR, unless otherwise stated.
COMMUNIST PARTY OF AUSTRALIA

Documents for Discussion at 21st National Congress, June 1967.

This pamphlet, free to members of the Communist Party and on public sale at 20 cents, attempts a basic analysis of modern Australian society and advances proposals to build the Communist Party and further the cause of socialism in Australia.

Available at 168 Day St., Sydney and all Communist Party offices.

TRUTH OR REPOSE
by Jessie Street

Australasian Book Society, 338 pp. $4.25

An absorbing account, told with perception and humor, of events and people involved in the development of an able, energetic and fearless woman.

THE VIETNAMESE NATION:

Contribution to a History by Jean Chesneaux

English translation by Malcolm Salmon.


This work by the noted French orientalist, M. Jean Chesneaux of the Sorbonne, is an acknowledged standard work on its subject. The original text has been revised and a new chapter added to bring it up to date for the purpose of the English translation, which has been approved by the author.