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IN THIS ISSUE

We print an article by Jack Mundey on urbanisation arising from his attendance at the recent Habitat Conference. This continues a discussion on cities and urban problems which has been a regular feature of our pages for some time now.

Two pieces on recent important marxist writings about education open what we hope will be a continuing and lively discussion. The Fraser-inspired enquiry into education, headed by none other than Sydney Vice-Chancellor Bruce Williams, makes it even more urgent that a socialist analysis of education under capitalism, and development of a socialist alternative, be undertaken.

Janna Thompson contributes a piece on the Democratic Party in America which, in the absence of a mass labor or socialist party has become the party of 'the people' (workers, blacks, women seeking change) although it is controlled by big business and pro-capitalist forces.

Lloyd Edmonds, a participant in the Spanish Civil War, gives a critical background review of George Orwell's popular book 'Homage to Catalonia'. Noting that this book is almost a standard text on the war for many school literature classes, Edmonds shows that the weaknesses and political line of the book perhaps explains some of its easy acceptance by the educational establishment.

Our usual 'Comment' and 'Economic Notes' appear, and a review by Bill Gollan of Claudin's important book on the international communist movement completes the issue.

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Three thousand people crammed into Sydney Town Hall on Monday, September 20, and another 1500 outside, launched a movement for an Australian Republic with a new, democratic constitution.

Continued resentment over the coup of November 11, 1975, was not unexpected. At every public appearance since then, Governor-General Sir John Kerr has faced a demonstration of some kind, even if small. Stirrings among wide circles over the undemocratic nature of the Constitution and many institutions established under it were known to exist.

But the depth and breadth of the feeling for change was a cause for surprise all round - causing pleasure for those who wanted change, including the organisers of the meeting, and a mounting dismay by those who fear it and want the coup legitimised and/or forgotten.

If the movement lives up to its initial promise and spreads to every state, as this writer believes it will, it could become one of the few movements in history around a country's constitution which has not been mainly the property of wealthy and powerful elites.

This possibility arises for several reasons. One of them is the peculiar historical circumstances in which bourgeois democracy took shape in Australia and the new, also 'peculiar', circumstances of last year's constitutional coup. The historical circumstances which gave Australian bourgeois democracy certain colonial characteristics (analysed in more detail in Comment, ALR No. 50) were that the British ruling class, having learnt its lessons from the American revolution, was much more prepared to give in to demands for Australian independence in return for retaining influence on Australian political affairs. This influence could be exerted directly through institutions such as the governors and indirectly through
being able to shape more easily the formation of the Australian political elite and its ideology. (For example, having been ‘given’ independence, this elite never lost, for a long time, its apron string mentality towards the ‘Mother Country’).

These factors, together with others like the existence of a number of different states trying to preserve an independent identity, exerted their influence when the Federal constitution was drawn up. The result was, and is, an undemocratic constitution, even by the restricted standards of other bourgeois democracies. And it was precisely these undemocratic hangovers from the colonial past (whose existence was unknown by many and forgotten by others) which were brought into play by the conservative establishment forces when they perceived the need last year.

The immediate cause of the movement arises from the jolt given by the unexpectedness and outrageous audacity of the coup. The resolution of the 25th National Congress of the Communist Party of Australia last June estimated this aspect as follows:

"By its actions in November 1975, the ruling class weakened its own institutions and its ideological hold over the people. It succeeded in obtaining the government it wanted, but at great future cost. Widely held views on the democratic content of the Constitution, rights of the House of Representatives, neutrality of the Governor-General and responsibility of the media have been shattered. The experience of November 11 raises new demands for constitutional and parliamentary reforms and for control of the media."

But, more deeply, the springs of the potential of the movement lie in the new stage of the crisis of world and Australian capitalism which other documents of the CPA analyse as embracing every aspect of economic, political and social life. Faced with these manifold and intractable problems, a growing and generally dominant section of the ruling class is gravitating towards repression as a means of overcoming the problems.

This trend in ruling class politics is strengthened, if anything, by recognition of the fact that those “below” are looking in the direction of expanded democracy, and increasingly bucking against impersonal, bureaucratic and authoritarian institutions and control over their lives.

In the ‘fifties and early ‘sixties, Marcuse’s phrase “repressive tolerance” was an apt description of the situation in many developed capitalist countries - what was “repressive” for those who wanted change was the fact that they were tolerated and could be contained because they had so little impact.

From 1968 onwards, that period rather rapidly faded and, in Australia under Fraser at any rate, is being increasingly replaced by "repressive intolerance". The developing movement for constitutional change is one of the forces working in the opposite direction.

It is in these circumstances that a broad national debate about, and a movement for, a new democratic constitution is taking place. As so often in history, a backward, outmoded feature of a particular society has become the cause and catalyst of a movement for change whose potential goes far beyond the simple removal of the backwardness.

Once a debate about a new constitution begins, especially if it takes on a mass character, all sorts of questions open up which the various ruling class, establishment and conservative forces would prefer to see left well alone. Such questions include, among others: What is democracy? How can democracy be extended, power decentralised and decision-making placed more in the hands of those affected by the decisions? Can political democracy function properly without economic and industrial democracy, i.e. without real popular control over the important levers of economic and social life, in particular, over the means of production, distribution and exchange? And can there be proper democracy without popular control over and access to the means of information, communication and education? How might such popular control and access be achieved and what are the obstacles to obtaining them?

In what ways can the fine sentiments of a democratic constitution best be guaranteed and carried out in practice? What social structures will be most likely to provide real avenues for the actual exercise, by ordinary people, of the rights, freedoms and liberties written into the constitution? And what ideas and values promoted by society and guiding education and culture within it will most encourage ordinary people to make use of the avenues provided, to really participate in affairs rather than remain passive bystanders?
The answers to any or all of these questions point in the direction of a self-managed socialism which more and more in today's conditions poses itself, on the democratic issues as on others, as a real and necessary alternative to the three 'models' hitherto developed in advanced industrial societies: bourgeois democracy, fascism and bureaucratic socialism.

Serious and detailed answers to these questions are required from the proponents of self-managed socialism as much from its opponents. If a national debate really takes place around the constitution the case for self­managed socialism will need to be presented in a new way, alongside existing ways which must themselves continue and be made more concrete. In developing this case the general features of advanced capitalist societies, the historical experiences of the various bureaucratic socialist societies and the specific features of Australian capitalist society will all have to be taken into account, as should the opinions, reactions and contributions of workers and the other participants in the movement.

Whether the above questions are posed in the coming debate and what mass support develops for the various different answers to them depends very much on the degree and manner of participation in the debate by the supporters of self-management socialism. To stand aside on the grounds of the 'constitutionalist' and liberal-democratic starting point of the debate would be elitist and wrong. Any real mass movement always begins at the level of consciousness and perception of the problems of those involved and the wider layers of the concerned and interested. Where it goes from there depends on both objective circumstances and events and on the quality and content of the arguments put by the various groupings within the movement.

The debate itself must also take place in a democratic spirit. Any moves by any force within the movement to impose views or exclude the views and participation of others can only harm the movement as a whole. The correctness and credentials of the different proponents will be judged on the manner as well as the content of their intervention in the debate and on their preparedness to actually engage in debate with other sections.

There is also the question of whether the debate becomes widespread among ordinary people, taking place in factories and other workplaces and in local communities as well as in seminar rooms and lecture theatres. Socialists and the labor movement will have something to contribute in this direction. A key point here is whether workers and others see the importance of the debate and the connection of the democratic issue to their other conditions and interests. Doubtless those with a narrow traditional and reformist view of what working class interests are will try to prevent workers taking an interest and participating in the debate. But if the workers and other oppressed people are to become a creative and political force they must take an active interest in this and other debates.

Constitutions in themselves are, of course, merely words written on paper. They can be interpreted or twisted to suit those in power, or ignored, depending on the circumstances. (For example, the Stalin Constitution of 1936 - agreed by many of different political views to be one of the most democratic in the world - did not prevent the gross abuses of, and crimes against, socialist democracy and ideals and rights and civil liberties which actually occurred. Similarly, the American Constitution and Bill of Rights have not in fact prevented gross inequalities and deprivation of rights in capitalist America). They usually fail to recognise the dependence of political on economic power, the difference between proclaimed rights and the conditions for actually exercising them, and the largely fictitious nature, in these circumstances, of the impartiality of the laws and institutions they embody.

But, after all, constitutions are social and political rather than purely legal things. What can be done with, or to, a constitution depends on political activity and contention rather than legal interpretation (which itself is in fact far from being the value free, "objective" and "impartial" activity that polite convention assumes).

A movement for constitutional change is therefore to be judged not only on the desirability of the aims it proclaims, but also on the degree of involvement of large numbers of people in affirming and achieving those aims. For this establishes a climate of opinion about what should or should not be done, what
should or should not happen in the society. Such a climate of opinion, the degree of hegemony of ideas achieved, is a real and vital political force.

Of course, different social classes and strata place different meanings on constitutional categories and words, reflecting their different situations and interests. But once again, the more people there are involved in defining and struggling for their view of things, the more will high-sounding phrases be freed from their glibness and given concrete meaning in mass consciousness.

The resolutions passed at the September 20 meeting set the initial framework for the constitutional debate. They were:

† Now that representative democracy is becoming even more limited it is essential to Australian political freedom that Australians be ready to engage in extra-parliamentary activity.

† The present monarchic constitution is being used as a threat to democracy. It should be replaced by a democratic constitution. To this purpose there should be a broad national debate followed by a people's convention to draft a new constitution for submission to the Australian people.

† The new Australian Constitution should declare that all public power in Australia emanates from the Australian people and that only the Australian people should have the right to dismiss the government they have elected. If there is to be a ceremonial Head of State, he or she should have no political power.

† To symbolise its maturity as a nation, Australia should become a Republic.

† The new Australian Constitution should declare that Australian democracy is founded on freedom of opinion and information, and on a universal and equal voting system fairly reflecting the political wishes of Australians.

† The new Australian Constitution should include a Bill of Rights proclaiming the rights to citizen action, to individual liberty and privacy, to work, to adequate living conditions, and to non-discrimination on racial or sexual grounds, or on the basis of nationality or belief.

† We support the petition now circulating that demands the resignation of the present Governor-General on the grounds that he did not have the right to dismiss a Prime Minister who maintained the confidence of the House of Representatives and that his continued presence is a cause of division among the Australian people.

† This meeting endorses the formation of a movement to work towards the objectives stated in the previous resolutions.

All these resolutions are worthy of support. The meaning of most of them is clear enough, though there may be many different views as to what "universal and equal voting system" will most fairly reflect "the political wishes of Australians", for example.

But there are a number of key points whose concrete meaning and actual realisation in practice pose many questions.

These are especially:

• that all public power in Australia emanates from the Australian people

• that Australian democracy is founded on freedom of opinion and information

• that, under the proposed Bill of Rights, citizens have the right to work and to adequate living conditions. (Other aspects of the Bill of Rights, such as non-discrimination, are no less important, but those most discriminated against have already done a lot to clarify what they actually require).

Analysis of these points, already established as aims of the movement, and how they might be realised, is a suitable place to begin working out the detailed case for self-managed socialism and the answering of the questions posed above.

- B.A.
Urbanisation: A Challenge to Socialism

by JACK MUNDEY

When one talks of human settlements we see a rapid urbanisation of the world. In 1950 it was 30 per cent urban, in 1975 40 per cent urban and it is anticipated to be at least half urban by the year 2000. This, in fact, means 3½ billion people in the urban areas of the earth.

If these huge agglomerations occur - for example, Mexico City is expected to reach 30 million by the year 2000 - what are the chances of providing sufficient food, the necessary increase in energy, and sufficient productive employment in the cities?

In order for people to move from the countryside to the cities, a surplus of food must be produced in the rural areas which can be used to feed the dependent urban populations. These surpluses may come from domestic supplies or from foreign sources. From the first urban settlements several thousand years ago, until the middle of this century, cities were sustained largely, if not entirely by the food produced in the surrounding countryside.

In the last quarter of a century more countries have become dependent on food imports. The world food pattern has altered profoundly in recent decades.

This year the USA and Canada will export an estimated 94 million tons of grain. In consumption terms, these Northern American countries are exporting enough grain to feed, at their respective consumption levels, 560 million Indians or 115 million Soviet people.

A generation ago, Western Europe, which was the most urbanised region of the world was also the only importing region. Now, Asia, Africa, Latin America, Western Europe, Eastern Europe (including the Soviet Union) are net grain importers. A great amount of the food imported into these regions is to feed the cities. So the rapid rate of urbanisation has exacerbated the food problem and its mal-distribution.

Today, not only are nearly all countries food importers, but a growing number now import over half their grain supplies. Among these are Japan, Belgium, Senegal, Libya, Saudi Arabia, Venezuela, Lebanon, Switzerland, Algeria, Portugal, Costa Rica, Sri Lanka, South Korea and Egypt.

As rising import needs throughout the world have come to exceed exportable surpluses, both the US and Canadian governments, in order to avoid politically unacceptable rises in
domestic food prices, have restricted access for some countries. Most recently, Soviet and Polish grain buyers were excluded from US grain markets late last year. The Canadian Wheat Board banned any new wheat sales from mid-July of 1975 until the harvest was completed.

Anticipating future difficulty in gaining access to US food supplies, some industrial countries have negotiated long term agreements which are intended to ensure access to North American grain supplies. Japan, the Soviet Union and Poland are among these.

After a quarter of a century of burdensome food “surpluses” and keen competition among exporters for markets abroad, the emerging competition among importers for assured access to supplies, represents an ominous reversal and a deepening food crisis.

Those countries remaining important exporters at a global level can be counted on the fingers of one hand. Australia is one.

If the trends of the past several years continue, the collective import needs of the 100-plus importing countries will greatly exceed the total exportable supplies, particularly when harvests are poor.

This creates a “politics of food” - a type of food diplomacy. The hostages in this game are the cities of the world which are sustained with imported food. They are living literally from “ship to mouth” as Lester Brown, of the US research organisation “Worldwatch”, points out.

Surely many countries would do well to consider whether rapid urbanisation is in those countries’ interests, considering the growing dependence on distant food supplies. It was noteworthy at the Human Settlement Conference that there was a tremendous respect for the magnificent performance of the Chinese in feeding and clothing its huge population, its self-help example, and of the socialist application and enthusiasm of its people in this regard.

**Energy and Urbanisation**

Urbanisation and the availability of energy are closely related. The emergence of the first cities appears to be closely associated with agricultural breakthroughs such as harnessing of draft animals, the domestication of new agricultural plants, and the development of irrigation systems. This enabled humans to harness more energy for their own purposes … to capture more solar energy on plants, or in the case of draft animals, to convert otherwise unusable roughage into a form of energy that could be used to increase the food supply. Important though these new energy resources were, the agricultural surpluses they made possible were never enough to support more than a small proportion of the population living away from the land. Indeed, as recently as 1800, only 2.2 per cent of the population in Europe resided in cities of 100,000 or more.

The energy breakthrough, which permitted much larger populations, even majorities, to be sustained in cities was the discovery of fossil fuels, initially coal and later oil. The harnessing of fossil fuels to generate steam for industrial power, gave birth to the industrial revolution, permitted the concentration of economic activity and ushered in a new era of urbanisation.

The large scale migration of people from country to city requires an abundance of energy. In an urban environment, additional energy is required to satisfy food, fuel, housing and transport needs. Assuming no change in consumption levels, each person who moves from the countryside to the city raises world energy requirements.

With food, urbanisation raises energy requirements on two fronts. As the urban population increases, relative to the rural food producing population, additional energy is required in agriculture to generate this requisite food surplus. At the same time, more energy is needed to process the food and to transport it to urban areas.

As more and more people move into the cities, each person remaining in agriculture must produce an ever larger surplus. This, in turn, requires broad substitution of mechanical energy for labor in food production.

It is customary to point with pride to the small percentage of the population living on the land in industrial nations such as the United States, where 5 per cent of the society living on the land provide food for the remainder. Nelson Rockefeller was recently boasting about this, but as Professor David Pimentel illustrates, this level of labor productivity in agriculture requires vast...
amounts of energy. He said "If the current 4 billion population were to be fed at US consumption levels, using US energy intensive agricultural production techniques, and if petroleum were the only source of energy, and if we used all petroleum resources solely to feed the world population, the 415 billion barrel reserve would last a mere 29 years."

Until recently, it was assumed that the world would move from a fossil fuel era into the nuclear age. After a quarter of a century the world is beginning to have second thoughts. Failure to devise any satisfactory techniques of waste-disposal, and the inevitable spread of nuclear weapons along with nuclear power, are raising doubts in the minds of increasing numbers of people in all countries, who are mounting opposition to a nuclear "solution". Besides the seemingly insoluble waste disposal problem, the economics associated with nuclear power are becoming questionable. In 1975, in the USA, there were 25 times as many nuclear reactors cancelled or deferred as there were new orders placed. The nuclear industry is sick and it is far from a foregone conclusion that the world will move from the fossil fuel era to a nuclear one. There could be a growing reliance on solar energy.

If the world moves towards a solar age, it means among other things, that the population will need to be more broadly distributed, for the simple reason that solar energy itself is broadly dispersed. The mechanisms for capturing solar energy vary widely. They include solar collectors, which are used for bath heating and cooling; photovoltaics, which convert solar energy into electrical energy (the form that powers COMSAT's international communications satellites) and indirect forms of solar energy such as wind, water and firewood. All forms of bioconversion including firewood are of course solar based. The great attraction of solar energy is that the source is safe, sure virtually endless and rather widely available. It is imperative that governments must be forced to have massive amounts of finance channelled to solar research.

If the world goes solar, the optimum size of human settlements is likely to be far smaller than it would otherwise be. People and planners should be considering the prospect of numerous relatively smaller communities, widely distributed for energy efficiency, rather than the continuing massing of people in enormous cities.

**EMPLOYMENT**

The depth of the crisis of capitalism can be shown by the International Labour Office's figures on the projection of employment by the year 2000.

It claims the industrialised countries will need to create 161 million additional jobs - an increase of 33 per cent. In the same period the Third World countries must attempt to create a massive increase of 922 million new jobs - an increase of 50 per cent.

With an estimated 300 million people unemployed now, there is every likelihood that 1 billion could be unemployed by the turn of the century. The majority of these will be in Third World countries, on the fringes of giant cities of 20-30 million people each. Surely it is with these stark realities that there must be a genuinely new revolutionary approach to employment; that it should not be seen as an end in itself, but that its benefit to society is seen as first and foremost, and the consequences of all labor undertaken are considered in the light of the needs of society now, but even more importantly for the needs of future inhabitants of this planet.

**FINITE NATURE OF THE WORLD**

There are at least three reasons why urbanisation trends may not be able to continue as projected until the end of the century: one, the inability to produce sufficiently large food surpluses; two, the disappearance of the cheap energy needed to underwrite the urbanisation process; and three, the near impossibility of creating enough jobs in urban settings under present social and political systems.

It is with these factors in mind that China's experience of the last 30 years should be drawn upon. While there has not been a spectacular increase in total food production, there has been great success in stopping the previous mal-distribution of food, and there has not been the on-rush to urban areas as has happened in nearly every other Third World country.

In many Third World countries it is not uncommon for a country with 70 per cent of its people in rural areas to allocate only 20 per
The strong urban bias in public investment in social services, particularly health and education, further enhances the attractiveness of the cities for those rural dwellers.

Professor Michael Lipton, in his book *Why Poor People Stay Poor*, points out that a child from an Indian city has 8.5 times the chance of going to university than a similar child from a rural area. A similar situation exists in medical care in the cities/rural conflict in most Third World countries.

**REAL URBAN-RURAL BALANCE ONLY POSSIBLE UNDER SOCIALISM**

Food, socially beneficial jobs, and rural restoration, are all tied together, and most of the blame for the neglect of the urban and rural areas rests with those who have exploited the workers and the peasants over centuries - solely for exploitation and profit.

However, during the past several years the global environmental crisis has been defined in industrial or rich country terms - in terms of pollution. The two have become virtually synonymous, but there is another, perhaps even more serious facet of the environmental crisis. Eric Eckholm, in his book *Losing Ground*, describes it vividly:

"In the world war to save the habitable environment, even the battles to purify the noxious clouds over Tokyo and Sao Paulo, and to restore life to Lake Erie, are but skirmishes compared to the uncontested routs being suffered in the hills of Nepal and Java,"
and on the rangelands of Chad and northwest India. A far deadlier annual toll, and perhaps an even greater threat to future human welfare than that of the pollution of our air and water, is that exacted by the undermining of the productivity of the land itself through accelerated soil erosion, creeping deserts, increased flooding, and declining soil fertility. Humans are...out of desperation, ignorance, short-sightedness or greed, destroying the basis of their own livelihood as they violate the limits of the natural systems."

Perhaps the single most helpful effort in arresting this deterioration and restoring the countryside would be the mobilisation of the population for massive reafforestation projects. Reafforestation serves several important ends. It reduces runoff, reduces soil erosion, lessens the frequency and severity of flooding, slows the silting of reservoirs and canals and over the longer term provides an important source of fuel and building materials. There is so much to be gained from a large scale reafforestation project in virtually every Third World country that it is difficult to understand why more governments have not initiated programs for this purpose.

In a number of countries, particularly in Africa, and to a lesser degree in Asia and Latin America, desert expansion poses a serious threat to agriculture. Reafforestation also provides the possibility for employment for huge numbers of people, which is certainly socially beneficial, as it provides for future inhabitants of the globe. Here again one has to point to China's performance in the rather massive restoration of the countryside (particularly reafforestation, water conservation works, and terracing) in the last 25 years, to demonstrate it can be done.

In our day to day preoccupation with problems and events we tend to forget the fateful arithmetic of population growth. Occasionally we need to remind ourselves that a 3 per cent annual rate of population growth on a present population of 15 million would find itself with 285 million just four generations hence. Similarly, Mexico with 60 million now, will have more than 1.1 billion people in a century. This would exceed the present population of the USSR, India and Bangladesh combined.

I raise these projections not because they must materialise, but to emphasise the urgency of reducing birth rates where they remain high.

Many politicians, planners and citizens believe the tide from rural to urban cannot be slowed or stemmed. Often we say socialism will solve all problems. And what a sweeping generalisation that statement covers. The decisive and paramount consideration is what sort of socialism.

The usual priority for day to day economic considerations, not that such considerations are unimportant, consume an inordinately large amount of time of the thinking and actions of most socialists. Yet in the area of ecology, environment and related issues of burning importance, these are relegated to the background. Some of the more sectarian and dogmatic socialists scorn ecology as not being a "class" question and of no great importance in winning socialism.

It was noticeable that socialists from the workers' movement, union leaders and rank and file unionists were in fact at a minimum at the UN Habitat conference and Habitat Forum, yet what subject more than "human settlement" should concern the workers' and socialist movements?

The massive movement from the countryside to the cities in the last 25 years has been based on conditions which do not appear to be sustainable in the future. Under socialism, correcting this imbalance should not be an impossibility. Of course, in suggesting that there must be a checking to the urban bias, for very obvious reasons, is not to suggest that the city has to be abandoned.

The evolution of cities represents an important facet of the social evolution of our species. As Barbara Ward has pointed out so effectively in The Home of Man, "cities are an integral part of contemporary civilisation, both repositories and custodians of culture". Thus any real urban-rural balance must be a socialist one.

While self-help, revolutionary actions in each country, must be the main struggle of the people to win socialism and a better life, this must not be posed against an increasing need for more global considerations of human problems, and the the need to see these international problems as our problems, which we can do something about by increasing awareness, improving communications, raising consciousness and by co-ordinated actions of people concerned with retaining a habitable planet.
One of the most commonly prescribed books for students of English literature has been George Orwell's *Homage to Catalonia*. Educational authorities and others present this book, not only as literature, but as the authority on the Spanish Civil War of 1936-39. Is this choice justified? And if not, why is it promoted in this way?

George Orwell served altogether about four months on the Aragon and Teruel fronts in Catalonia. On arrival in Barcelona, he enlisted in a unit dominated by Anarchists and POUMists, had a brief excursion into the Aragon hills, fired a few shots, returned to Barcelona and, after a short stay there, returned to London. Because of the stalemate that had been reached in the Aragon, he saw little fighting. By a mischance he was nearly killed in May 1937 when a bullet went through his throat.

In Central Spain, on the Madrid front, in Andalusia, in the Asturias, in the Basque country, large armies were locked in combat. The insurgent generals, in addition to their regular troops, recruited over 100,000 Moorish mercenaries in North Africa, and also received men and massive military aid from nazi Germany and fascist Italy. The troops marshalled by the government on the various fronts numbered over 600,000.

The main countries all played some part in the conflict either openly, as in the case of Germany, Italy and the Soviet Union, or indirectly, or in an underhand way, as in the case of the USA, Great Britain and France.

Yet our students get as a definite statement of this Armageddon, a picture of a futile guerrilla skirmish.

In the minds of the troops and the people of the war zones in Central and Southern Spain, Barcelona represented an oasis of recuperation and recreation where the rigors and austerities of war could be forgotten for a time at least.

The well-being was, of course, relative. Compared with Paris, Barcelona was austere; in comparison with Madrid, it was the fleshpots.

Madrid was very nearly isolated. It was
WHY THE HOMAGE TO ORWELL?

linked by only one route with the rest of Spain. As its food was all brought in on this one road - the Valencia road - the diet of the Madrileno was meagre and unvarying: salted cod, lentils, Mexican chick peas, and ersatz coffee - that was it.

For nearly three years the living conditions of the Madrileno were like that. They suffered food shortage, actual danger and physical restriction to a limited city area.

Barcelona was heavily bombed several times, but apart from that it survived the war intact without becoming a battleground. Barcelona had hundreds of square kilometres of farmland surrounding it - all of Catalonia. From it came a constant flow of fresh food. The many textile and clothing factories of Barcelona operated throughout the war. Many of these, particularly the self-managing enterprises, had their own purchasing and selling agents in France. Through these channels were brought food, clothing and cigarettes, mainly for the employees of the factories, but some trickled out to the general population.

And of course there was the port. Despite the blockade, some ships were generally in the harbor and consumer goods dribbled through.

The two cities felt the impact of the war, but in one case it was extreme and in the other, relatively mild.

Madrid never capitulated. It was betrayed in March 1939 by a clique of officers headed by Colonel Casado.

Franco's troops marched into Barcelona early in February 1939 and the city was surrendered without a shot being fired.

If the two cities are compared for their war records, their devotion to democratic ideals and constancy to the Republican government, then Madrid deserves the honor and the glory. Truly heroic Madrid! Yet Orwell pays his homage to Catalonia.

There is no lack of material on the Spanish Civil War. On the contrary, a veritable spate of novels, poems, anthologies, histories, pamphlets and films deal directly with the war. Writers of the eminence of Andre Malraux in France, Jose Maria Gironella in Spain and Ernest Hemingway - to name three from different countries - have written major novels with the Spanish Civil War as the dominant motif.

And in comparison with these three, Orwell's knowledge of Spain and the war is obviously limited and deficient.

Orwell and Hemingway are two leading figures in the world of letters. Both went to Spain on the side of the Republic. Both wrote books about the war and both books deal with the exploits of a guerrilla band. However, while Hemingway's work is a novel, a piece of imaginative literature, Orwell's work is a political memoir.

Hemingway really knew Spain. Before the war he had lived in Spain and he appreciated the Spanish way of life. He held this hispanismo so deeply that, on the defeat of the Republic, he went to Cuba to live. There he witnessed another revolution. With the victory of Fidel Castro, Hemingway continued to live in Cuba, greatly to the satisfaction of the Cubans.

After May 1937, Orwell returned to England to be lionised by the literary establishment. Orwell had gone to Spain for the experience. His immediate and unremitting concern was to be a writer. He needed experiences and concerns that he could transmute into literature.

Orwell kept aloof from his fellow soldiers. He shows no particular liking or interest in the individual Spaniard or Catalan who were his comrades. The history of Catalonia, or of Spain, or the intricacies of the Spanish and Catalan political scene were not his concerns.

Hemingway, on the contrary was in Spain because he was a partisan on the side of the Spanish people. He loved their individualism, vigor and distinctiveness. His ear for their conversation and their thoughts is portrayed in his description of the members of the guerrilla band. In sharp contrast to Orwell's qualified war effort, sense of futility and self-recrimination is Hemingway's whole-hearted commitment, optimism and vigor.

Hemingway had no doubts. Every talent and asset he had, he devoted to the cause of the Republic - his writing skills and literary renown, his contacts with influential people, his personal income. He risked his life beyond the call of his journalistic duties.

He saw as clearly as did Orwell, cruelty, inefficiency and political manoeuvring. But paramount, over-riding these, was the necessity to defeat the resurgent forces of reactionary Spain.
In contrast to Orwell's desultory excursion in *Homage to Catalonia*, the band of guerrillas in Hemingway's book *For Whom the Bell Tolls* has a positive role to play in the war. They are part of an offensive by the Republican Army. They are to blow up a bridge so as to disrupt the communications of Franco's forces - an exploit integral to the strategic plan of the Republicans.

Orwell's centuria makes its excursion into the hills of the Aragon with no aim, with no purpose. Its members are apparently actuated by a consciousness of their inactivity in Barcelona and by a vague hope that what they do may be of some use. Orwell says of himself: "I was sick of the inaction on the Aragon front and chiefly conscious that I had not done my share of the fighting. I used to think of the recruiting poster in Barcelona which demanded accusingly of passers-by 'What have you done for democracy' and feel I could only answer 'I have drawn my rations' .... And, of course, I wanted to go to Madrid. Everyone in the Army whatever his political views always wanted to go to Madrid."

Why didn't they go to Madrid? There was nothing to stop them. John Cornford, a communist and a poet who also served with the POUM in Barcelona went to Madrid. He was killed there.

When staying in Madrid, Hemingway had a room at the leading hotel in the city, the Florida. The main buildings of Madrid were regularly shelled by Franco's artillery, among them the Hotel Florida. So Hemingway became a collector of shell fragments. When one of the hotel rooms was hit, he gathered shell fragments, labelled them, and made his room a museum-piece. Hemingway enjoyed showing visitors to Madrid his miniature war museum.

Hemingway's political attitude has been vindicated by events in Spain today. Continuing its policies from the Civil War period, the Spanish Communist Party is winning majority support of the Spanish workers. Further, the two political parties that were the bulwark of the Spanish Republic - the Communists and the Socialists - are the workers' parties today. The Anarchists have ceased to be an effective political force.

It is doubtful whether, for the Western world, any other internal conflict has had the intellectual and cultural impact of the Spanish War. To many people, especially those concerned with the onward march of the fascist regimes, Spain was the scene of overriding importance in this struggle.

And it is extraordinary that this struggle should so often be presented as a story of one man's episodic and brief stay in one region of Spain. It is extraordinary because of the battle of the Spanish people against the military coup of Franco, although it had aspects peculiar to Spain and arising from Spanish history, was generally regarded as part of the defence of democracy against fascism. This defence became Europe-wide, then worldwide, with World War II.

Why, then, homage to Catalonia?

It was not Catalonia. The attraction to Orwell was the Anarchists and their allies, whose base was Barcelona.

Their philosophy, their methods of organisation, or lack of organisation, their more primitive style of life - these are the factors which appealed to Orwell. A more appropriate title for his book would possibly have been "Homage to Spanish Anarchism".

The Anarchists figured prominently during the Spanish Civil War period. It is different today. Summarising from a study of the underground workers' parties in Spain today in an informed article in *The Economist* of January 28, 1976, the prevailing trend among the Spanish workers is towards socialism. Of the trade unionists, about half are influenced by the communists and a third by the socialists. The article specifically states "The anarcho-syndicalist CNT, once the biggest Spanish labor movement, is of little significance today".

But today's students in Australia read Orwell - and his preference is very clear. He says "The danger was quite simple and intelligible. It was the antagonism between those who wished the revolution to go forward and those who wished to check or prevent it - ultimately between Anarchists and Communists".

The communists' policy was never in doubt. It was to win the war. This was expressed by Dolores Ibarruri (La Pasionaria) when Largo Cabellero proposed setting up a trade union government. She said "When we must concentrate all our efforts on the waging of a war so vital for Spain, experiments in trade union governments seem to be a grave error."
Should this plan materialise, it would lead to the disintegration of anti-fascist unity and accelerate the triumph of fascism.

"The trade unions are already represented in the government and have ample freedom to act. We suspect this plan is nothing but a manoeuvre to push the Republican parties out of the government and the Communist Party firmly opposes it.

"With the Popular Front we won in February and with this Popular Front government which gives proportional representation to all anti-fascist forces in the country, we shall win the war."

In fact, just as Largo Cabellero never abandoned the idea of leading a government based on his party and the UCT, so, too, the anarchists never renounced the plan to give
first priority to the establishment of libertarian communism.

Here are quotations from two historians, neither of whom are friendly to the communists, both conservative in attitude but with knowledge of the anarchists.

Dante A. Puzzo, in his work *Spain and the Great Powers*, wrote: "The Anarchists had a barricade philosophy and spoke the language of revolt in season and out. Frozen in a posture of defiance, they were boisterous, turbulent and troublesome always, effective revolutionaries never. Thus it had been under the Monarchy, thus it had been under the dictatorship and so it was under the Republic. It was only after the revolt of the generals that the Anarchists seized the opportunity created by that event to implement their notions of 'libertarian communism' and then only in Catalonia where they were strongest."

Gerald Brenen in *The Spanish Labyrinth* declares that "Ineffectual as a revolutionary force, only moderately successful in improving the conditions of the workers, it (the Anarchist movement) has dogged and hampered every government, good or bad.... By playing always for the highest stakes it has necessarily proved on many occasions, the friend of reaction."

Why was the anarchist movement in Spain so crucial to the war period? Spain was one of the strongholds of anarchism going back a hundred years. In 1873, it claimed a membership of three hundred thousand - a large number for those days. It had 270 local centres, the most important of them in Barcelona.

In October 1910, a congress of anarchist groups and certain independent federations of workers met in Seville and formed the CNT - Confederation Nacional del Trabajo. So, at the outbreak of the Spanish war, the Spanish working class was divided. The trade unions had two confederations - the UGT (Union General del Trabajadores) led by socialists of whom the best known is Largo Cabellero and the CNT dominated by the anarchists.

From the beginning the anarchists established a pattern of non-co-operation.

Salvador de Madariaga (a conservative Spanish historian), for example, writes of the 1931 elections: "The workers affiliated to the UGT voted for their men. But the Anarcho-Syndicalists voted for the middle-class liberals. There were two reasons for this. The first, the unbridgeable enmity which separates Socialists and Syndicalists, due to their rival bid for the leadership of the working classes; the second that, as the Anarchists always preached contempt for suffrage, they had no political machinery of their own; so that when it came to voting - which they did this time to help oust the Monarchy - they preferred to vote for the middle-class Republican whose liberal views were more in harmony with the anti-Marxist ideas of the Spanish syndicalists."

The Civil War was waged with a minimum of anarchist participation. When the anarchists were reproached about the immobility of the Aragon front, they replied that they had no arms.

In fact, they had more arms than did many other fronts. At the beginning of the war they had captured most of the arms in the Barcelona fortress. Until the Negrin government later established state control over them, the Barcelona factories worked for the anarchists. They also had at their disposal a complete network of international brokers who purchased arms for them in France and other countries.

What they did not have, and what they were constantly demanding, were aeroplanes and tanks - which were lacking on all fronts. The limited numbers at the disposal of the Republican government, of necessity had to go to the fronts where there were offensives.

The real reason for the immobility of the Aragon front stemmed from the policies of the anarchists. They stated that winning the war did not mean winning the revolution. They planned to keep their forces intact for the future libertarian communist Spain.

Spain had not discarded many social relics of its past. As late as the 'thirties of this century, social categories that were vestiges of earlier economic stages of Spanish history asserted themselves for survival. Along with its mule-cart agriculture, its semi-feudal land tenure, the Catholic permeation of all aspects of life, its antique political parties such as two monarchist (one Bourbon and one Carlist), and various regional clerical parties, it had for the oppressed a simplistic and unreal political philosophy.

Anarchism is an expression of the primitive economy of pre-industrial Spain. Independent
peasants, peasants ruined by debt, the large landless population of a country not yet industrialised - these social strata are predisposed to anarchism.

Arthur H. Landis in *Spain, the Unfinished Revolution* sums it up well. "Its (Anarchism's) summons to violence, its generous and mystical utopianism, its nostalgia for a golden age is readily adaptable to a country which is still essentially rural, where the proletariat is relatively weak and of immediate peasant origin, and where the Catholic faith has for a long time been the bearer of hope and consolation for humble folk."

Why was Orwell promoted so strongly in the Cold War period?

By the end of World War II, after two decades of unprecedented political and social upheavals, ordinary people, the hoi polloi, had taken part in, or seen, a major series of social collisions and governmental upsets.

During the 'thirties, while experiencing the shattering effects of the Depression, the breakdown of capitalist society, they, at the same time, witnessed the rise of counter-revolutionary forces spear-headed by Hitler and his like.

Then the war. The fascist countries, propagators of hierarchical societies dominated by a master sex, a master race, a master class. They were the enemy. Unabashed apostles of force and exploitation, who disdained to cloak their ideology with the sanction of law or the mystification of religion.

And to be fought they had to be exposed. The basic forces of society were uncovered to increasing numbers of people. Working people thus got a crash course in social education.

The antithesis of fascism was the Spanish people's struggle. The sustained effort of the Spanish people to cast off their social enemies highlighted the 'thirties. It was the alternative.

This mental attitude - a degree of lack of acceptance of the status quo, a lack of acquiescence in capitalist norms undoubtedly was a matter of concern for the theoreticians of world capitalism. It was particularly so for the financial and industrial oligarchy of the United States and Great Britain, as voiced by Churchill at Fulton in 1946.

The USA with immense economic power was poised for world hegemony. But people doubted the rightness of this cause. So started the battle for people's hearts and minds. So started the Cold War.

One of the ideals that had to be undermined was the repute earned by the Spanish Republicans in their resistance to Franco. If not obliterated at least it could be perverted.

Hence the welcome of the authorities for Orwell. He became the cultural hero. As well as a distortion of Spanish history, this introduction to Orwell leads on to later works where collectivism is depicted as nightmarish horror.

Troops of literary authorities and educational pundits, whose general bias is to oppose change, welcome a revolutionary Orwell - but an Orwell urging anarchy in opposition to marxist parties who are denounced as conservative.

The same attitude pervades most histories of the Spanish Civil War. It is accepted practice to describe the main defenders of the Republic, the socialists as well as the communists, as intriguers, opportunists and power-hungry. Now and then a footnote qualifies these assertions. Hugh Thomas, the historian of the Spanish Civil War who is generally regarded as the most sound, and extensively quoted by the liberal educational and literary establishment, warns in a footnote against acceptance of Orwell's analysis and facts.

Despite this, in a recent two-hour program on the Spanish Civil War by ABC radio, the arranger, J.D. Pringle (one-time editor of the *Sydney Morning Herald*), eulogised *Homage to Catalonia* both for its literary merit and "the best account of the Spanish war". Thus art is put at the service of politics.

The anti-marinist intellectual, George Orwell, serves current political ends, to discredit communists and to pervert the history of the Spanish Civil War.

Lloyd Edmonds served in the Spanish Civil War in the International Brigade from 1937 until January 1939. During that time, he was in many parts of the country, but particularly the Madrid front and Catalonia. He knew Hemingway rather well on first-name terms, seeing him both in Madrid and on the fronts. As a result of his experiences, Lloyd Edmonds joined the Communist Party of Spain.
For the last few months the government has been under pressure, mainly from mining interests, to devalue the Australian dollar.

For example, early in August, Australia’s largest mining multinational, Conzinc Riotinto, used its submission to the government’s White Paper on manufacturing industry to argue for devaluation.

CRA called for an exchange rate policy that would aim at balancing Australia’s current overseas dealings. In the past Australia made up current account deficits (resulting from us importing more goods than we could export) by encouraging foreign capital inflow.

This year, for example, the Department of Trade estimates we will have a balance of trade surplus of $1.1 million but we will have an “invisible” deficit of around $2.6 million. “Invisibles” are items like freight charges, government spending overseas, and profits.
ECONOMIC NOTES

that are remitted overseas by foreign owned companies operating in Australia.

This leaves a current account deficit of $1.5 million. While new foreign investment in Australia will make up some of this deficit it will leave a gap.

This will mean a drain on Australia's reserves of foreign currencies.

CRA admits maintaining a balance on current account would demand a lower exchange rate but says the risks of such a policy would be small compared to the benefits.

Later, the Australian Mining Industry Council joined in the call.

On September 7, former Labor Treasurer Mr. Bill Hayden said that "blind Freddie and his dog" could see that the Australian dollar was overvalued and that reports in overseas newspapers such as The Economist suggested the overvaluation was of the order of 15 per cent.

Of course the government must keep denying it intends to devalue to discourage speculative selling of Australian dollars, but the pressure is clearly there, and growing.

PRESSURE

On August 11, in the second of three articles in the SMH putting the mining industry's pre-budget case, Mr. J.C. McNeill, president of the Australian Mining Industry Council and managing director of BHP, said devaluation of the Australian dollar is "inevitable and necessary".

"But the Mining Industry Council is not saying that it ought to happen now. Rather it is taking the view that when the government feels it is appropriate to stimulate the economy and that means when it feels that it has inflation sufficiently in hand .... the proper way to provide that stimulus would be by devaluation of the currency".

He dismissed the inflationary impact of such a move. The use of the exchange rate as a weapon in the fight against inflation: "the fight against inflation is being borne by the export industries".

He even went so far as to claim the government was showing favoritism to the manufacturing industry over the export-oriented mining sector.

"The ideal position to be in, in Australia at the moment, is manufacturing something in Australia and selling it in Australia."

Next day, Mt. Isa Mines Ltd.'s finance director, Mr. L.J. Carden and Mr. J. Ralph, who holds a similar position with Conzinc Riotinto, put the case again in the same paper.

Both argued that the move shouldn't be delayed because of fears of inflation.

"Studies I have seen recently do not lead one to the conclusion .... that devaluation does not have a significantly adverse impact on inflation and an increased inflation rate", Mr. Carden said.

He agreed that there would be a tendency for industry to push up its prices following a devaluation to levels just beneath those of imported goods, but claimed the Prices Justification Tribunal could be used to disallow any increase in prices it felt were "unreasonable and purely related to the devaluing move".

This appeal to the completely discredited PJT shows that the mining lobby is either naive - or engaged in an extensive special pleading exercise.

Even Mr. Carden wants to have two bob each way.

The PJT, he believes, should allow price increases to manufacturers to the extent that they have a large imported component in their manufacturing costs. "To the extent that their costs are not imported costs, devaluation would not affect their costs at all and consequently they should not be allowed to put their prices up, assuming that the PJT rationale continues to operate."

But ultimately he wants the PJT abolished. "Providing industry is properly controlled so that uncompetitive practices are stamped out or largely stamped out, the market place should be the proper determinant of prices."

He did see the PJT, though, having some
ideological value: "... as an indication to the working man at large that there is some obvious restraint operating on the price mechanism".

DEVALUATION: WHAT IS IT, HOW DOES IT WORK?

Why is the mining industry pushing so hard for a devaluation of the Australian dollar? How does devaluation work, and what effects does it have? Is it inflationary?

A fifteen per cent devaluation of the dollar would mean that instead of one Australian dollar being worth US$1.25 or £0.72, it would be worth only $US1.06 or £0.61.

This means exporters, like the mining companies, will get 15 per cent more Australian dollars for their coal or iron ore - since prices for these commodities are set on the world market.

If prices and wages in Australia remain at their present levels this means these mining companies will be 15 per cent better off. It would mean a massive boost to their profits if sales income could go up 15 per cent in this way with no increase in costs.

But there must be an effect on the local price level. This is because importers must pay 15 per cent more Australian dollars to buy Canadian paper, American machinery or Japanese television sets. Of course, they pass these prices on in higher local prices.

But prices they can charge depend on the local market - and if nothing changes there they cannot raise their prices at will. Builders, for example, will pay more for any materials they import but will not necessarily be able to charge more for completed buildings. A transport company will pay more for an imported truck, but will not necessarily be able to recoup this with higher freight charges.

These industries will be hit particularly hard if workers are able to win wage increases to compensate them for the higher prices of imported consumer goods. If workers can maintain their standard of living in this way, devaluation will have the simple effect of taking part of the surplus produced from one section of industry - the section that neither exports nor competes with imports - to boost the profits of exporters.

For example, if one-third of commodities are imported, or have their prices determined by the prices of imported goods, a 15 per cent devaluation will lead to a 15 per cent price rise for these goods and a 5 per cent jump in the average price level as reflected, say, in the Consumer Price Index.

If, as we have assumed so far, workers are compensated for this by a 5 per cent wage rise, they are no worse off on average. Exporters are getting 15 per cent more for what they sell overseas, and have to pay 5 per cent more for goods they buy here, and for workers' wages - so they are still ahead.
But capitalists who neither export nor compete with imports, on the other hand, also have to pay 5 per cent more for goods they buy here, and for wages but can charge no more for the commodities they produce - so they are behind.

While it is clear the mining lobby would be satisfied with this result there is no obvious benefit in it for the capitalist class as a whole. The Australian Financial Review in an editorial on September 8, clearly expressed the interests of the whole capitalist class on this issue:

"... a devaluation would be pointless, and positively harmful, unless it were accompanied by a deliberate policy of reducing real wages ...."

This is to ensure, they continue "that the benefit to our export industries would not be dissipated in a new surge of cost inflation".

If, for example, the Arbitration Commission refuses to pass on price increases to wages (as they have successfully been doing this year) and if continuing high levels of unemployment hold back workers' bargaining power, the capitalist class could achieve this aim.

The benefits of devaluation will still go straight to the export sector of the capitalist class, but the cost won't all be at the expense of other capitalists, but at the expense of workers' living standards. And any long term readjustment upward in the rate of exploitation through this, or any other, measure to reduce real wages will benefit the capitalist class as a whole.

CLASS AND SECTIONAL INTERESTS

Looking back now over the arguments of those calling for devaluation, we can clearly see both sectional and class interests being articulated.

We quoted Mt. Isa Mines' Mr. L.J. Carden earlier, arguing that the Prices Justification Tribunal could be used to confine price increases to direct costs. In other words he wants the general increase in prices following devaluation to be held below the price increases MIM obtains overseas for its copper, lead, silver and zinc.

This is a clear statement of a call for redistribution of the surplus towards the mining industry.

Mr. John Ralph, Conzinc Riotinto's finance director, is also optimistic that the benefits of devaluation can be confined to the mining sector.

"I don't think the inflation effects of a devaluation are all that great, although psychologically it must have an effect. (Which is a strange way for a hard-headed capitalist to talk about a coldly calculated operation like devaluation, by the way!)

He goes on: "Our calculations show that the effect on the inflation rate is about 10 per cent of the change in the currency value so if you have, for example, a 10 per cent devaluation, the effect on inflation would be about one per cent."

(It is interesting that a week after Mr. Ralph said all this, his company - like other mining companies - received massive boosts in the budget. Two weeks later, CRA announced its profits in the six months to June 30 were a massive $28.8 million, up 49 per cent on its previous result.)

The Financial Review, on the other hand, is concerned not with redistributing the surplus within the capitalist class, but with increasing the overall size of the surplus. It recognises that the only way this can be done is at the expense of workers' living standards - that the capitalist class as a whole needs a higher rate of exploitation.

If the actual course devaluation takes has this effect, that's good. Otherwise it is a pointless exercise.

Whether this can be achieved depends on many factors outside the immediate questions facing the government on devaluation: when? and by how much?

For example it depends on how the Arbitration Commission reacts, and what line it takes on wage indexation following a devaluation. It depends also on the guidelines the government gives the Prices Justification Tribunal, and on the position the ACTU takes.

But most of all it depends on whether workers can be made to cop another cut in real wages.

- T. O'S.
In 1972, the year McGovern was chosen as the presidential candidate by the Democratic Party, it seemed as if the progressives, the feminists, the black activists, the young, had at last made the Party their own. Reforms in convention procedure, in the selection of delegates, ensured that more women, more blacks, and more young people attended the national convention than ever before. Issues like abortion, homosexual law reform, were debated in public for the first time. The power of the political bosses appeared to be broken, and Mayor Daley was forced off the convention floor. And finally, a candidate was nominated who, whatever his shortcomings, was firmly opposed to the Vietnam War.

Now, four years later, a "counter-revolution" seems to have taken place. At the party convention, the percentages of women and blacks among the delegates were less than in 1972, and rules of procedure were adopted which made inequalities in state delegations difficult to challenge. In '72, the South Carolina delegation was repeatedly challenged because only 25 per cent of its delegates were women. In '76 only 9 per cent were women, but the delegation was not challenged at all. Further, the party refused to make a serious commitment to the goal sought by feminists, a 50 per cent representation of women in each delegation. The party will "encourage each state to initiate an affirmative action plan" but neither goal nor time limit is specified.

In spite of the serious problems in the US political and economic system, there was no attempt to discuss these pressing issues at the convention. A move by the New Democratic Coalition, a group of progressives including Michael Harrington, Tom Hayden, Gloria Steinem, Betty Friedan, Ron Dellums, I.F. Stone to set aside time for such a debate was squashed by the Carter contingent. Some controversial issues could not be avoided. Against the wishes of Carter, who wanted to avoid the subject altogether, a pro-abortion plank was put into the party's platform (mainly through the efforts of the feminists).

Carter did his best to muffle the effect by declaring his personal opposition to abortion
and by suggesting that he would veto attempts to provide federal money to abortion clinics.

The political bosses were back. Mayor Daley's round face beamed from his stronghold in the Illinois delegation, and George Wallace, the outlaw, sat on the same platform as McGovern. Carter, the advocate of a Baptist form of Christianity, seemed to be bent on fulfilling that Biblical prophecy concerning lions and lambs.

Out of this mindlessness came a candidate who managed to achieve a high level of vagueness and ambiguity. Liberals did their best to interpret Carter's muddy speeches as commitments to social justice, while southern conservatives were reading him as a defender of the status quo.

It would be wrong to regard the Democratic National Convention as a total defeat for progressive forces. Though there was less enthusiasm for party reform this year, significant gains were made by those who want to make the party more open and democratic. The unit rule, which permits delegations to ignore minority preferences by voting as a bloc, was repealed against Carter's wishes. This change can be seen as an important contribution to democratic reform, for the unit rule has always been used as a weapon by political bosses like Daley.

Feminists also made gains: in particular, they managed to win a commitment from Carter to remake the Women's Committee, formerly a women's auxiliary to the National Committee, into an independent organisation reflecting feminist views. This means that feminists will have more of a chance to affect the day-to-day operation of the party.

It would also be a mistake to be overly impressed by the appearance of unity which the party managed to achieve in front of the television cameras. Beyond the range of the cameras, disagreements took place, demands were made, compromises were hammered out. The unity Carter sought could only be achieved by paying attention to what feminists, blacks, labor leaders wanted.

But these positive features can't disguise the fact that for progressive forces the convention was a big step backwards. In 1972 it seemed possible that a new alliance could be forged between radicals, left liberals, progressive labor, feminists, blacks, poor people and other disadvantaged minorities: possible that progressives might be able to use their party's platform to debate in public radical alternatives to present policies. In 1976, the chance of building a new Democratic Party seems much more remote.

The difference between the Democrats of '72 and the Democrats of '76 is usually attributed to the severe defeat in the '72 election - a defeat which taught the party (according to the political commentators) that Americans were more conservative than expected. Watergate and other scandals (so the story goes) have accelerated this rightward movement. According to a much quoted public opinion poll, about 50 per cent of Americans regard themselves as conservatives.

This is one point of view. On the other hand, the members of the New Democratic Coalition, left wing mayors, radical state legislators and congress people who have been elected to office in recent years, generally on a Democratic ticket, claim that Americans were more willing to challenge orthodox ideas and traditional ways of doing things than ever before. How can so many people call themselves conservative and at the same time be open to radical ideas?

When you begin talking to people it soon becomes clear that the terms used to describe political positions have unexpected meanings. When people describe themselves as conservative, they are generally registering a distrust or opposition to bureaucracies in government, labor unions and businesses; often a distaste for scandals and corruption which have come to be associated with these bureaucracies; sometimes a feeling of impotence and anger in the face of worsening conditions, almost always an opposition to liberalism and socialism. Liberals (to most people) are people in favor of more government control; socialists want total government control; and who, after Watergate, would be enough of a fool to trust a government?

The ultra-conservatives, who talk about the need for decency, morality and curbing federal power, feel that their historical moment has arrived. It is these reactionaries, not the left, who are this year talking about forging a great new majority, and considering leaving their party to form an organisation of their own. The fact that the heroes of the right,
Ronald Reagan and John Connally, are financed by agribusiness and oil corporations is one of those contradictions of right wing politics papered over by talk about free enterprise and individual liberty.

Why hasn't the Democratic Party, the party of social reform, been able to expose the right and take advantage of widespread dissatisfaction with the status quo? Some of the reasons for this failure to meet the challenge of the right are found in the nature of the Democratic Party and its present predicament.

The Democratic Party is not, and never was, a social democratic party or an American equivalent of the Australian and British labor parties. The Socialist Party, which flourished from 1900-1919 might have become such a party, but it was too young and weak to survive the post World War I reaction and a communist breakaway. The Democratic Party at the time of the rise and decline of the Socialist Party was a disintegrating alliance of midwest farmers, Southern whites, and some groups of urban immigrants. The fortunes of the party were revived by the Depression and the long reign of Franklin Roosevelt, who made the Democratic Party into a new coalition consisting of progressive business people, trade unions, the poor - especially of the cities, minorities, the educated urban middle class, populist farmers, and the traditional Democrats of the South. The basis of this alliance, and of the New Deal itself, was the belief that capitalism can be made to work to the advantage of almost everyone, providing economic growth is maintained by government controls and an expansionist foreign policy, and providing the distress and damage caused by the system is alleviated by government-financed programs. Liberals have traditionally argued for more government intervention - particularly to remedy obvious social injustice; Conservatives of the party want handouts for businesses and farms, but not for the unemployed or the poor.

The Democratic Party is the party of welfare state capitalism in the US, but the commitment to welfare has always been shaky. The relative strength of conservative forces - Southern Democrats and big business (which contributes most of the party funds) - has ensured that programs designed to help the disadvantaged have been kept to a minimum. The Democrats, for all their years of power in the White House and Congress, have done far less to bring about social reforms than the shorter-lived British and Australian labor governments.

There have always been tensions in the Democratic alliance - inherent contradictions between blacks and white Southerners, between workers and employers, between taxpayers and those who live on welfare, between farmers and city dwellers. As long as all groups believed that economic expansion could be maintained and everyone would benefit, friction could be kept to a minimum. But now that inflation has become a serious problem, economic growth harder to maintain, foreign economic expansion more problematic, welfare programs more expensive and unemployment more severe, reconciling opposing interests has become a near impossibility.

In spite of internal contradictions the party has not only held together in this form for 44 years, but it has also prospered. Among the electorate, Democrats outnumber Republicans two to one, and Republicans can only win elections if they manage to persuade a considerable number of Democrats to stay home or cross over (in '72, many Democrats simply didn't vote). Some political experts believe that the US is gradually moving towards a one-party political system.

All would be well for the Democrats if their policies were actually working. But it has become clear to most people that they aren't. Lyndon Johnson working in the framework of New Deal strategies tried to please the corporations and stimulate the economy by carrying on the Vietnam War. What he got was inflation and a defeat. He tried to placate the poor by a War on Poverty, but the results fell far short of his aims. No Democrat wants to follow in Johnson's footsteps, but no party leader has a better alternative, and no one wants to risk disturbing the potentially explosive elements of the Democratic alliance - an alliance whose raison d'être is the preservation and promotion of capitalism in the style of the New Deal.

The result of this predicament is Jimmy Carter, a candidate whose ambiguities are designed to placate the contradictory elements of his party (who for the moment are willing to be placated) and at the same time appear sympathetic to those increasing
WHATEVER HAPPENED TO THE DEMOCRATS?

numbers who are disenchanted with New Deal capitalism. Carter has to endorse the traditional Democratic orthodoxies which hold the Party together, and at the same time appear to oppose them. He must appear to be hostile towards an establishment which consists mostly of Democrats. This is a difficult trick and one of the interesting spectacles of the coming months will be to see how long Carter can do his balancing act and where he will land when he falls.

People on the left have always had an ambivalent, if not hostile, attitude towards the Democratic Party. In fact, it is much more difficult to be a radical working in this party than in the ALP or the British Labor Party. The Democratic Party does not have any socialist ideals - even as historical leftovers. The Democratic Party, far more than any labor party, is dominated by big business interests and only in a few states, like Michigan, are the views of organised labor significant. The party contains some of the most reactionary elements in the country, and the compromises that a radical has to make to remain politically viable are hard to live with. When Tom Hayden lost the Senate primary in California, he felt compelled to endorse the winner, Tunney, a representative of agribusiness and nuclear interests, the very forces Hayden opposed in his campaign.

Can the Democratic Party ever become what it is purported to be - the party of the common person, a party dedicated to democratic reform?

To overhaul the Democratic Party requires two fundamental changes: developing a new political program which opposes, down the line, most of the political beliefs that Democrats have lived off for 44 years, and bringing together a new coalition to support the program. What this amounts to is revolutionary takeover. Not surprisingly, it was not accomplished in 1972, and it is not likely to be achieved by 1980.

There are people in the party who are working for radical change, though their influence is largely confined to their local areas, and their programs are generally confined to single issues. At the convention they were not in the mood to act tough. When Elaine Brown, a Black Panther and a California delegate, called for a walkout, she did not get much support. Most blacks, workers, women, liberals seem to prefer to get a fraction of what they want from a victorious party than risk getting nothing at all.

The success of the party makes it impervious to change. Roosevelt's forces remade the Democrats in desperate times when the future of the party looked bleak. The Democrats of today may be theoretically bankrupt, but their entrenched majority in Congress and most state legislatures makes self-examination seem unnecessary, even dangerous. Most Democratic leaders seem willing to shed their political philosophy completely, as the party moves rightward to occupy positions abandoned by Republicans in this party's march to the far right. This development is disturbing to labor, to the poor and the minorities, but there is no other party they can vote for; they are rapidly becoming disenfranchised, as the Southern blacks and poor whites have been for generations.

In the end, the progressives may only get the party they want by starting one of their own. At the moment, a split isn't on the cards: progressives are still demoralised by the McGovern defeat of '72; they lack unity, and without effective radical movements they have no one to back them up. But the Democratic Party is a volatile organisation, and the economic and political situation is unstable. The conditions for remaking or breaking the Democratic Party may come sooner than anyone expects.
Education is always a political event ... education is never neutral, educators are all politicians. Thus there can be no talk of education without talk of power, without talk of economic and political power.

- Paulo Freire.

The basis of this article is twofold: to provide a survey of three interlocking currents in contemporary radical education; and to indicate the nature of practical political activity in which Australian radicals are currently involved. With the forces of political and educational reaction demonstrably on the march, the need for revolutionary action has never been more evident.

IVAN ILLICH: THE ATTACK ON SCHOOLS

For most teachers, students and academics, serious questioning of the accepted norms for schooling was begun by Ivan Illich. In his attack on a wide variety of social institutions, Illich has been principally concerned with humanity’s lack of autonomy. This is nowhere more evident than in the process of compulsory schooling, by which society perpetuates and transmits its myths and ideologies. Illich contends that the school processes people so they may more readily consume institutionally defined products. In this way, schools become manipulative institutions which proscribe and foreclose opportunities for students and teachers to meet their own needs. Against the prevailing notion of society organised along industrial and bureaucratic lines, Illich posits, in Alternatives to Schooling (1972), a concept of conviviality. He writes -

I choose the term conviviality to designate the opposite of industrial productivity. I intend it to mean autonomous and creative intercourse among persons, and the intercourse of persons with their environment, and this in contrast with the conditioned response of persons to demands made upon them by others, and by a man-made environment. I consider conviviality to be individual freedom realised in personal inter-dependence, and as such, an intrinsic ethical value. (P. 50)

While Ivan Illich is best known for his Deschooling Society (1971) it would be misleading to see this merely as a book about schools. In by-passing a plethora of reformers who still put their faith in the perfectibility of institutions, Illich argues for the disestablishment of any and all social structures which frustrate conviviality. Modern societies, according to Illich, by conflating the distinction between education
and schooling, not only devalue learning undertaken on one’s own behalf, but also facilitate the school’s monopolisation of education funds and resources.

Illich’s trenchant critique of social institutions has aroused widespread debate. Yet it has also been subjected to a radical marxist evaluation. Herbert Gintis, in the *Harvard Educational Review* (Feb. 1972), accepts that Illich’s description of modern society is pertinent, but suggests his analysis is simplistic. Gintis charges Illich with not going nearly far enough. Deschooling Society is a diversion from the complex political, organisational, intellectual and personal demands of revolutionary reconstruction in education. It is crucial, Gintis writes, that educators and students who have been attracted to Illich by their own frustration and disillusionment, move beyond him.

Central to Gintis’ attack on Illich is the latter’s neglect of the political economy of education. For Illich, the source of social decay is located in the manipulative behavior of corporate bureaucracies. Gintis, by contrast, argues that the normal operation of basic capitalist economic institutions are to blame. These consistently sacrifice healthy community development, work, environment, education and social equality to the accumulation of capital and the pursuit of profit. Furthermore, the deleterious social outcomes of capitalist production are quite independent of the values and preferences of individuals. They are certainly in no sense a reflection of the autonomous wills of manipulating bureaucrats. Thus, by merely ending manipulation and endorsing conviviality, Illich has ignored the structure and functioning of economic institutions under capitalism. In rejecting schools, Gintis concludes, Illich embraces a commodity fetishist ideal in education, and in rejecting political action he affirms a utilitarian, individualistic conception of humanity. Since Illich’s analysis fails to pass beyond the given, it offers little hope for radical educational change.

**PAULO FREIRE: EDUCATION FOR LIBERATION**

Far more radical, both in theory and practice, has been the work of exiled Brazilian educator, Paulo Freire. After the rightwing coup in 1964, Freire was arrested, jailed, and deported for the allegedly subversive nature of his work in promoting adult literacy. As he later remarked, “education for liberation is not the subject for a picnic; one can’t expect the ruling class to send you on holiday to a tropical island”.

Freire’s concern with developing a liberating pedagogy for the oppressed in the Third World has led him to assert that education is always a political event. Echoing sentiments in Marx’s *German Ideology*, Freire writes, “in a class society, the power elite necessarily determine what education will be and therefore its objectives”. To achieve through education a humane transformation of the world, Freire advocates a form of revolutionary praxis: that is, action and critical reflection on the world in order to change it. For him this involves a concept of man as a knowing subject who strives to achieve an ever-deepening awareness of the socio-cultural and historical reality which shapes his life. From this awareness develops a capacity to know and transform that reality, along with a commitment to such a transformation. To put it in Freire’s own words -

... to change hearts without changing the structures which prevent good hearts is insane. Consciousness can’t be changed through sermons or seminars. It can only occur when we are committed, engaged in a real programme of praxis, of action and reflection.

*(Thinking with Paulo Freire)*

**TOWARDS A POLITICAL ECONOMY OF EDUCATION: SAM BOWLES AND HERB GINTIS**

The third contributing theme to contemporary education emanates from the research of political economists Sam Bowles and Herb Gintis whose recently published book *Schooling in Capitalist America* (1976) is reviewed elsewhere in this issue. Their work is strongly critical of the failure of education to promote economic equality in capitalist societies. The reason for this is that the school system mirrors the inherently unequal structure of capitalism. Until this structure is abandoned and replaced by a more democratic and egalitarian system, our schools, colleges and universities will serve as
mere tools for reinforcing an authoritarian system, rather than as a means for transforming it.

Possibly the most dramatic finding by Bowles and Gintis is the statistically verifiable congruence between the personality traits conducive to proper job performance and those which are rewarded with high grades in the classroom. At the bottom of the occupational hierarchy workers have to be subordinate, docile, punctual and conform to external authority. If workers occupy positions higher up the employment hierarchy then the more valued traits are self-control, flexibility and the capacity to make decisions. Bowles and Gintis have found that schools reproduce different types of personality and behavior in different social groups, thereby reproducing social stratification and inequality. Thus it is otiose for devotees of progressive education, deschooling and open classrooms to expect such reforms to affect the basic structure of society. Educational change must be consonant with changes in the workplace; when factories and offices are changed from hierarchical, alienating structures into democratically run, egalitarian institutions, then schools will function as agencies for promoting equal opportunity for all. The school alone can never be an agent for equality in a fundamentally unequal society.

Bowles and Gintis are optimistic about the possibility of revolutionary political and educational change for several reasons. Firstly, they suggest the capitalist economy can continue to meet people's material needs only at the price of denying their needs for personal security, and more integral, self-initiated work and social life. Secondly, private property and hierarchical organisation will become less prevalent as participatory control by workers is found to be a more productive form of organisation. Finally, social problems are increasingly politicised through the extension of the role of government in society. Education is a prime example. Bowles and Gintis contend that when people understand the political origins of social and economic distress, they will come to sense the possibility of a political solution to these problems.
WHAT TO DO ABOUT SCHOOLS?

In June of this year, Sam Bowles and Herb Gintis visited Australia for two related conferences. The first, at Sydney University, was devoted to political economy, and the second at NSW Teachers' Federation Auditorium, concerned what to do about schools. This latter gathering attracted seven hundred students, teachers, academics and parents for a two-day examination of marxist perspectives on education.

In addition to the stimulating contributions made by Bowles and Gintis, other speakers at the conference emphasised the theme of radical political, economic and educational change in Australia. Peter Stevens from Sydney University, highlighted the inevitably political nature of the schooling process as an ideological prop for capitalism.

Rachel Sharpe argued that free schools and progressive schools were not genuine alternatives since they produce the same outcomes as conventional schools although utilising different means. In essence, she felt progressive schools were bourgeois middle-class establishments devoted to the pursuit of a reactionary individualism. By drawing from the state system both parents and children who are dissatisfied, that system remains fundamentally untouched and secure.

Other major speakers included Brian Abbey and Dean Ashenden, political scientists from Adelaide, who provided a marxist analysis of the South Australian education system. This centred on the Royal Commission of Inquiry into the Wilcox family's refusal to conform to the reactionary and irrational demands of the Director-General, headmaster and teachers at their child's school. Abbey and Ashenden amply demonstrated that education in South Australia denied democratic participation and criticism from either parents or students.

RADICAL EDUCATION GROUP ("RED G")

Stemming from the conference "What to do about Schools" has been the formation of a nationwide Radical Education Group (RED G), based in Sydney. The impetus of this group is primarily to promote a socialist analysis of schooling in capitalist society. Furthermore, RED G seeks to develop educational structures and materials which will facilitate both a critique of capitalism and the transition to socialism in Australia. Where necessary, RED G will actively intervene in educational institutions to defend and extend changes which transfer control into the hands of teachers and students. Although RED G is barely three months old, it has branches in each Australian State. Readers of *Australian Left Review* are strongly urged to become involved in this activity by contacting one of the organisers listed below.

RED G has also encouraged the establishment of study groups whose task is to develop an understanding of marxist theory in relation to education. In addition, RED G already publishes a regular news bulletin and will shortly bring out its own magazine, Radical Education Dossier (RED), three times a year.

CONCLUSION

This article has attempted to indicate both the theoretical rationale behind moves for radical educational change, and the practical measures taken to implement a political economy of education. Contemporary activists in education are in strong agreement with Marx's thesis on Feuerbach - that previous educators have merely interpreted the world, when the point, however, is to change it.

REFERENCES:

7. Radical Education Group (RED G), C/- Peter Stevens, 29b, Avenue Road, Glebe, 2037. Phone 660-4032.
8. Radical Education Dossier (RED), C/- Robert Mackie, 10 Reuss Street, Glebe, 2037. Phone 660-0874.
Reviews

Schooling in Capitalist America, Samuel Bowles and Herbert Gintis.

It's not so long since anyone wishing to speak in public on the politics of education had to begin by persuading the audience that they had something to do with each other. Circumstances have changed, and with them the state of our knowledge.

In 1974, G.S. Harman of the ANU published a bibliographical guide to the politics of education which ran to 311 pages, and there he described the field as a "new and exciting" one which "promises to provide substantial help in tackling some of the crucial problems in education today, both in complex technological societies, and in developing ones too". (1)

Sampling the items listed didn't inspire the same optimism in your reviewers - he'd left out material from France (2) and Germany (3), used a very narrow definition of politics, and so far as we could see, failed to include anything with a left or marxist perspective.

Now there has appeared a book which will make it harder to do the same thing in the inevitable second edition - and go a long way towards making us as optimistic as Harman.

In *Schooling in Capitalist America* by Sam Bowles and Herb Gintis, we have the first extended, penetrating and useful account by marxists of education in capitalist society. It is essential reading for anyone working in education or concerned with the analysis of the reproduction of the social relations of capitalism. Because the book is both important and not yet easily available in Australia, we will summarise its argument before commenting on it, and then conclude with a few brief remarks about its implications for research in education in Australia. We will summarise the argument under four headings:

What produces the schooling system?
How does the schooling system work?
Change in the schooling system.
Education and socialism.

What, at bottom, gives the school system its character and direction?

Bowles' and Gintis' argument is simple and direct. The accumulation of capital, the principal thrust in the determination of the social sphere is an erratic and sometimes tumultuous process riven by tension between the development of the means of production and the social relations of production. The reverberations are felt throughout the social formation:

Capitalist production ... is not simply a technical process; it is also a social process. Workers are neither machines nor commodities but, rather, active human beings who participate in production with the aim of satisfying their personal and social needs. The central problem of the employer is to erect a set of social relationships and organisational forms, within the enterprise, and, if possible, in society at large, that will channel these aims into the production and expropriation of surplus value.

The exploitative character of this objective impels the capitalists to construct what amounts to "a totalitarian system of economic power". (55) Their struggle to defend and extend this system forces them this way and that:

(onto) ameliorative social reforms .... the coercive force of the state .... racist, sexist, ageist, credentialist strategies used .... to divide and rule .... and an ideological perspective which serve(s) to hide rather than clarify the sources of exploitation and alienation of the capitalist order. (232)

Such is the engine which produces the schooling system. The expansion of mass education, embodying each of the above means has been a central element in resolving - at least temporarily - the contradictions between accumulation and reproduction. (233)

Their discussion of this basic contradiction of capital is not novel and doesn't claim to be. But to start an analysis of schooling from there is novel. Linking education with "the economy" is old hat. Right and Left have been correlating inputs and outputs and costs per student, or else attacking inequality, for some years now. But understanding education in terms of the basic contradictions of capitalism is quite a different thing.

In what ways does the schooling system serve capitalism?

Education in the US plays a dual role in the social process whereby surplus value .... is created and expropriated. On the one hand, by imparting technical and social skills and appropriate motivations, education increases the productive capacity of workers. On the other hand, education helps defuse and depoliticize the potentially explosive class relations of the
production process, and thus serves to perpetuate (these) social, political and economic conditions .... (11)

In carrying out this function the "education system does not add to or subtract from the overall degree of inequality and repressive personal development". (11) Rather it reproduces these conditions by facilitating in various ways the smooth integration of youth into the labor force.

Schools do this in a general way by habituating students to the structures and norms they will later encounter in the work-place.

In particular, schools legitimate inequalities by certifying them as differences of merit. They "create and reinforce patterns of social class, racial and sexual identification among students". They "foster types of personal development compatible with the relationships of dominance and subordination in the economic sphere". And they "create surpluses of skilled labor sufficiently extensive to render effective the prime weapon of the employer in disciplining labor - the power to hire and fire". (11)

Bowles and Gintis go into a good deal of fine print to test their propositions about the functioning of schools, and spend more energy in explaining the production of inequality than on any other question. Conventional accounts of schooling argue that schooling is, to an important degree at least, meritocratic, that it does sort people out according to their "ability"; and they justify the streaming and testing of students on the ground that a complex industrial economy requires highly developed and finely graded skills. Against this, Bowles and Gintis argue that the "... association between length of education and economic success cannot be accounted for in terms of the cognitive achievement of students", and that tracking is "only tangentially related to social efficiency". (103) Both the meritocratic ("ability") ideology and the hierarchies of school life are much more easily explained, they insist, by the over-riding task of the school - to reproduce the capitalist relations of production.

There is also a good deal of detailed work associating the structures of family, school and work with patterns of personal development and consciousness. Here again, they point to "the long shadow of work", tracing the reach of the capitalist organisation of production through the social system and into the individual's life.

Change in the schooling system

Bowles and Gintis trace the sources of change in the US education system to the changing character of the tasks set it by capitalism, and to the tensions in its relationship with the capitalist society around it. Internally, the schools are wracked by "... the incompatibility of the egalitarian developmental, and integrative functions" allocated to them. At the same time, the schooling system and the productive system "possess fairly distinct and independent internal dynamics of reproduction and development .... ". Hence the "... ever-present possibility of significant mismatch arising between educational production and the economy". (236)

They argue that this chronic tension was acute when there is a re-structuring of the production process. In the concrete example of the 1960s and 1970s, they find three such historical moments. The first was in the decades before the Civil War, a period of "labor militancy associated with the rise of the factory system, growing economic inequality and the creation and vast expansion of a permanent wage-labor force". (234) The second was at the turn of the 20th century, a time of the "joint rise of organised labor and corporate capital", of "... the integration of rural labor - both immigrant and native" into that system. (234-5) The third revolved around the "integration of three major groups into the wage-labor system: uprooted Southern blacks, women and the once respectable, solid members of the pre-corporate capitalist community - the small business people, independent professionals, and other white-collar workers." (235).

Each of these periods of reorganisation of the relations of production has been associated with a reorganisation of the relations of educational production too. The first was "the era of common school reform". The second was the progressive education movement with its concerns of "efficiency, co-operation, internalisation of bureaucratic norms, and preparation for variegated adult roles." (235) The third was the recent period, from the sixties to the present, a period of "educational change and ferment". (235) The history of education in that capitalist society "reveals not a smooth adjustment of educational structure to the evolution of economic life, but rather a jarring and conflict-ridden course of struggle and accommodation." (251)

They argue that accommodation proceeds by "two distinct but parallel processes". (236) One is "pluralist accommodation", the "relatively uncoordinated pursuit of interests by millions of individuals and groups as mediated by local school boards, the market for private educational services, and other decentralised decision-making units". (236) The other appears only at points of crisis. Then:

The capitalist class - through its use of police power of the state in suppressing capitalist alternatives, through its use of generalised political power naturally, extending its control over production and investment, and through its extensive control over the financial resources for educational research, innovation and training - has been able to loosely define a feasible model of educational change, one which appeared reasonable and necessary in the light of the "economic realities" of the day. (238)
Education and socialism:

Bowles and Gintis conclude by drawing out the implications of their argument for deliberate intervention in the politics of schooling and capitalist society.

They begin by attacking current "alternatives" - free-schooling, de-schooling, variants of progressive schooling, compensatory schooling. However, they recognise the ambiguities, and divergent possibilities in these movements. They are especially to the point in discussing the contradictory pressures upon teachers who want, on the one hand, to provide children with an experience of spontaneity and creativity, yet feel checked and frustrated at every turn by the organisation of schools and of society.

Their message to those teachers is clear: "Schools cannot be considered repressive merely because they induce children to undergo experiences they would not choose on their own" (272), and teachers who would wish away this contradiction between individual and community will be "pushed aside in the historical struggle for human liberation". Freedom and individuality arise, they insist, "only through a confrontation with necessity, and personal powers develop only when pitted against a recalcitrant reality". (272)

The failure of successive waves of school reformers stems from the fact that:

*The social problems to which these reforms are addressed have their roots not primarily in the school system itself, but rather in the normal functioning of the economic system. Educational alternatives which fail to address this basic fact have served to deflect discontent, depoliticise social distress, and thereby have helped to stabilise the prevailing structures of privilege." (246)*

Properly understood, the economic system is driven by forces which are the basis of a revolutionary program. On the one hand, capitalism has begun to lose its capacity to provide for material welfare, and with it loses a prime claim to legitimacy. Its despotic hierarchies of production have become ever-more inefficient as they embrace greater and greater proportions of the workforce. As the state has expanded to accommodate capital's expanding needs and temper its endemic turbulence, social problems have become increasingly politicised. Its spread throughout the globe has produced its own nemesis in nationalist and anti-capitalist revolution. On the other hand is capitalism's chronic repression of its own potentials:

*United States society offers all the material, technical, and organisational preconditions for a new stage in human liberation, but its economic institutions prevent progress from taking place." (15)*

There are some suggestions as to how teachers and militants in education can exploit these possibilities. Press for the democratisation of schools and colleges. View that democratisation as a part of the struggle to break the correspondence of the relations of production and the relations of education. Reject simple anti-authoritarianism and spontaneity; freedom is the recognition of necessity. Join and lead the movement to create class consciousness. Combine a long-range vision with victories today; learn and practise the "revolutionary reform".

What's to be said about such a book? The most obvious thing about it - and the best - is its unremittingly political stance. It is a book written by two people who combine a deep engagement in active political struggle with hard and well-directed analysis, and the book shows it in every page. It handles complex ideas and issues ranging over a considerable field of social life, yet is never opaque, difficult or abstruse. It moves constantly and easily between theory, analysis, and political discussion.

Education is a difficult subject for analysis. Events coming under that heading obviously range from the most "macro" and structural to the most "micro" and experiential. It is precisely this which requires the analyst to work towards an account which matches the continuity of the subject. It's just not possible to get education right with economic theory or sociological concepts or bits and pieces of psychology or phenomenology or whatever. That is why their argument will be either a revelation or a mystery to most educationists who are well and truly locked within their isolated sub-disciplines, focussed on either educational psychology or school-and-society or educational administration or the history of education or any one of a dozen other specialisms.

It is precisely their unwaveringly political perspective which has permitted Bowles and Gintis to make some decisive steps forward in the analysis of education. There is no one part of their argument which breaks new ground - with the possible exception of their strenuous and ingenious demolition of the myths about education and equality. What does distinguish it from any previous analysis by Marxists is, first, the tremendous impetus and grasp it gains by beginning not just with production, or even with capitalist production, but from an understanding of the ceaseless and contradictory growth of capitalism; and, second, by its constant treatment of capitalist production relations as social relations. No reified bases and superstructures, no abstract "forces", or "structures" without people, will be found here.

As for the book's failings: there may be points of detail and evidence which attract criticism. Some of the key arguments - such as that on inequality - are mounted with the aid of technical instruments that
we're not qualified to inspect. With that qualification, it seems clear to us that the book is unlikely to run into serious trouble at this level. Nor, for the time being, will it meet successful theoretical criticism. The book represents a starting point for the journey to the next stage of understanding. We want to suggest two areas where the further examination of the book might begin.

Bowles and Gintis know that "the economy produces people", but the question is: how? They discuss this process in terms of the acquisition of certain traits and attitudes, and the learning of modes of self-presentation. Their evidence, drawn mostly from bourgeois social science, serves them well at several points. But they never go beyond the problematic to which such evidence relates. Talking about the development of people under capitalism in terms of "traits" or "attitudes" is to repeat the well-recognized failings of socialisation theory. It forgets that people are active agents in their own production; it neglects the social dialectic and tends rather to see individuals as a kind of bundle of impulses or needs, and behavior as merely the expression of them. It emphasises a rather superficial level of personal formation and consciousness. And, finally, it doesn't recognise the ambiguous and contradictory nature of much of the content of our experience. Sennett and Cobb talk about "the hidden injuries of class". It is a phrase which captures a dimension which seems lost in Bowles' and Gintis' analysis, except at the level of very general talk about oppression, liberation and so on. Unless we are very sharply aware of how oppressed people participate unwittingly in forming the chains that bind them, and the tensions that this participation leads to, then we are less well able to estimate the power of the political. That is why their analysis is so immensely attractive. But it may also be, at bottom, polemical.

This factor enters their discussion of education via the problem of education and the production of "skills". Again their attack on this part of the meritocratic ideology is beautifully mounted. Its basis is the argument:

that the mental-skill demands of work are sufficiently limited, the skills produced by our educational system sufficiently varied, and the possibilities for acquiring additional skills on the job sufficiently great so that skill differences among individuals who are acceptable for a given job on the basis of other criteria including race, sex, personality, and credentials are of little economic import. (114)

They go on to note that "Workers' skills are an absolutely fundamental element in economic growth, but skill differences do not explain the lack of progress towards social justice". (114) True. But does the character of the skills to be acquired have an important influence in determining the way the education system is arranged? And to take the question one step further back, does the character of the presently-existing means of production play an important part in shaping the skills to be produced?

The contending classes do not in normal times directly confront one another - they stand in a relation which is mediated by a world-as-built.

Of course, when viewed historically that world isn't given - it's the fruit of our predecessors in the class struggle, and it embodies the past. But (and this is the crucial point) it also shapes the future in a pervasive and penetrating way. Those machines, and the science and technology which has risen with them, do demand skills and knowledge in quite definite forms. What's more they shape our ways of relating to others and ourselves which make them a crucial ingredient in the production of both the relations of production and of culture in general. What we're dealing with is not only a contest between human beings revolving around the means relations of production. They stress the political problem of turning labor-power into labor as the driving force behind the constant creation and recreation of capitalist relations of production. Their attack on the "industrial society" school (which thinks that some abstract force called "industry" shapes human affairs), on the technological determinists, and on some brands of left political economy, is well made. But they do not explicitly consider the way that the means of production made by one generation shape the social relations of the next. It is important to remember that the whole material world, the world of human artifacts, the "world-as-built", not only expresses the social arrangements of one generation but shapes those of the next. Bowles and Gintis under-estimate the power of the material, and correspondingly over-estimate the power of the political. That is why their analysis is so immensely attractive. But it may also be, at bottom, polemical.

A second area - the foundations of their analysis. In his talk at the Sydney political economy conference Ian Gough saw contemporary British accounts of capitalism as falling into one of two schools. On the one hand is the "capital theoretical" analysis, stressing the internal logic of the development of capitalism from the stage of primitive accumulation to the present stage. On the other hand is the "class theoretical" analysis, beginning with the social formation and the centrality of class conflict in it. Some distinction like Gough's is useful in placing Bowles' and Gintis' work decisively in the second school. As we have already suggested, it is this perspective which gives their work its tremendous vigor, flexibility, and grasp of apparently contradictory and disparate events. But by the same token it seems to lack a way of locating the present stage of US history which goes beyond predominantly political categories.

Their emphasis on capital-as-social-relation, as against capital-as-objective-force further enters deeply into their discussion of technology and the
of production - it is rather a dialectic between social beings as mediated by a culture (or cultures) shaped in part by the material circumstances of production. Bowles and Gintis are strong on the former; but, in our opinion, their argument is deeply marked by what amounts to a neglect of the latter.

Another way of making our points is to say that we suspect Bowles and Gintis of being a-historical at crucial points in their analysis, and rather neglectful of the power of capitalist culture. If we're right about this, we can expect that some important parts of their analysis would be up for revision - their discussion of divisions in the working class, of skills, and of the way education institutions related to these, for example. We can't hope to suggest what these modifications might look like, but we can see that they would produce a less optimistic, we might almost say, voluntaristic, political perspective.

Finally, what are the implications for research in Australia? The usefulness of Bowles' and Gintis' work to us flows from the similarities between the US and Australia. Both are industrialised capitalist formations, with similar distributions of production among different sectors, and with economies divided in roughly the same way between corporate, state, and small capital areas. Neither society has a feudal past. Both have experienced large-scale, ethnically-diverse migration, although there are of course differences in the pattern and timing of migration. Both bourgeoisies enjoy a well-established hegemony, and achieve it through similar institutions (such as the education system) and ideologies (such as individualism and meritocracy).

But the analysis of education in Australia must take account of some important differences. Perhaps the most important of these is the peculiar relationship which Australia has had with the British metropolitan and imperial economy, and the way this relationship has permeated the form and timing of the growth of social institutions such as schooling. Linked with this is the much more developed and interventionist Australian state, which has played a much larger role in the production of education than has the American. Important differences have arisen since the second world war, with the growth of the imperial economy of the US (on the one hand) and the impact of US and Japanese capital which have relocated Australia within world capital (on the other). The Australian working class is better organised than the American, but faces the particular problem of social democracy. It is less weighed down by racial cleavages than the American working class.

Our system is more centralised; bureaucratic methods of control play a larger part, ideological methods a correspondingly lower one. The Australian education system has been less divided than the minutely-graded American one. The hierarchy of tertiary institutions is shorter here, but more exclusive.

The role of the state is much more apparent here. The Australian schooling system is less well integrated into the economy and society, despite its current re-adjustment.

The work towards a political economy of Australian education has hardly begun, but it will proceed more quickly if it takes Schooling in Capitalist America as its point of departure.

FOOTNOTES
3. See the article by Gero Lenhardt in Kapitalistate No. 3, Spring 1975; and the work by Altvater and others which Lenhardt cites.

Dean Ashenden & Brian Abbey.

The Russian Revolution of 1917 revealed to Marxists two new facts: that proletarian revolution could begin elsewhere than in developed capitalist states, and that the resulting non-capitalist socio-economic structure could be maintained, in the face of world capitalist opposition for a lengthy historical period. And that was all that it did reveal.

Yet, from these two facts were deduced a number of conclusions: that socialism could be built in one country; that the Russian model of party and revolutionary state had a universal form; that a world party, expressed first in the Comintern, could and should subsume all national parties into a single monolithic bloc as a model and basis for a future world soviet system.

As Stalin's authority became supreme and as the Comintern became Stalin's voice these views were further developed into a comprehensive, all-embracing ideology, producing in turn, a system of communist parties conformist and devoid of critical analysis, committed to the view that the defence of the Soviet state had priority over the development of revolution elsewhere, so negating the responsibility...
of Communist Parties to think and act creatively and concretely in the specific conditions and forms of revolutionary change in their own countries. All the basic questions of revolutionary strategy had been settled by the Soviet experience.

As a result "everything done by the USSR in its internal and external policies was declared to be absolutely and permanently identical with the interest of the revolutionary struggle considered internationally or in any part of the world. There could be no contradiction between the former and the latter. Any claim that there could, became sacrilege for Communists." (Claudin - The Communist Movement Part 1, p.77).

Claudin was a member of the Political Committee of the Communist Party of Spain from 1947 to 1965, when after sharp divisions in the leadership on policy, he was expelled. Writing as an independent Marxist, he confronts his own past as an integral part of that of the communist movement and makes a critical evaluation of the theory and practice of the communist movement since 1917.

Claudin believes that the errors and contradictions which developed reached a climax in 1956 when 'Krushchov's report (to the 20th Congress, CPSU) begins the stage of the general crisis in the communist movement (Vol. II, p.644). The inability or unwillingness of the movement to undertake a real analysis of the phenomenon of "stalinism" was, he believes, a measure of the depth of the crisis.

The book commences with an analysis of the United Front and Popular front movements in Germany, France and Spain. In all cases the author believes that the effectiveness was destroyed by the dogmatic method and opportunist style of United Front and Popular Front activity. On the one hand he claims that in both France and Spain in the 1930's, the United and Popular Fronts were designed to keep the popular movement within bounds acceptable to the western bourgeois democracies with whom an alliance of the Soviet against the fascist powers was the main objective. In this way the revolutionary potential of the mass movement was dissipated.

On the other hand, the movement took a left sectarian form as exemplified by the position taken by Thorez whom he quotes: "There is only one method of seizing power .... the method of the Bolsheviks, the victorious insurrection of the proletariat: the exercise of the dictatorship of the proletariat and Soviet power."

"Thorez", Claudin comments, "could have pursued a different approach, seeking unity with other progressive forces, in the following terms: "In Russia, a backward country, (the communists) proceeded in a certain way, and established a ruling authority in which power is exercised by a single party. France is a quite different sort of country, industrialised and with other traditions and other forms of the working class movement; it may be therefore that there is another road open to us."

Such a position, comments Claudin, was impossible for Thorez to take in view of the monolithic structure of the movement. "To do so he would have had to be a revolutionary Marxist, who, like Lenin, was seeking the particular path to be followed by the revolution in his country."

The subordination to the dogmatism and opportunism of the Comintern line was disastrous, he claims, both in France and Spain, leading to the defeat of the progressive movement in both countries and objectively assisting the Nazis.

In China, the Comintern's United Front policy persisted until 1946 when Stalin, still seeking to maintain an entente with the USA, was urging the Communist Party of China to seek an agreement with Chiang Kai Shek, which would involve disbanding the Red Army and dismantling their quasi-state apparatus.

In Germany, the possibility of a united working class opposition to Nazism was rendered impossible by continuing to categorise the Social Democratic leaders as "Social Fascists" and presenting social democracy as the left-wing of Nazism. Not until the mid 1930's when it was already too late, did the Comintern reverse this divisive policy which had been seen at its worst when the "social fascism" thesis led the Communist Party of Germany to participate alongside the Nazis and the Stahlhelm in the referendum of August 1931 against the Social Democratic government of Prussia.

The result which was welcomed by Pravda, 1st August 1931, as "the greatest blow that the working class has yet dealt to Social Democracy", in fact "made it possible to present the Communists as being "allies of the Fascists", in the eyes of a large part of the working class". (Part 1, p.163).

Passing to the post-war period Claudin deals at length with the "Tito heresy" of a different path in the building of socialism and the policy of maintaining a degree of independence of the monolith. The economic blockade of Yugoslavia, the vilification of the "Tito clique" and the judicial murders of Rajk, Kostov, Clementits, Slansky and others as part of the campaign against "nationalist deviations", did incalculable harm to the communist cause, that was not really mitigated by the subsequent posthumous rehabilitation of the victims, and was reinforced by the invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968.

Seeking for the fundamental causes of the departures from Marxist principles Claudin finds them in the failure of the C.P.S.U., the Comintern and Cominform to recognise that their "schema" of world revolution was in some respects in conflict with reality.

The failure to appreciate the depth of national feeling and the deep roots of reformism amongst the masses and the continuing affirmation of the approaching internal collapse of capitalism despite
its obvious recovery in the 1920s, and its subsequent restructuring along lines of state monopoly capitalism, led to policies that isolated the communists in the working class movement and eroded their mass position.

However the central issue to which the principal argument of the book is directed is that of "Socialism in one country" which appeared only after Lenin's death and became the mainspring of Communist activity for succeeding decades. The subordination of the needs of the world revolution, as Claudin sees it, to the state requirements of the U. S. S. R. had a number of consequences to some of which reference has already been made. The assumed universality of the Soviet model, the need for unquestioned acceptance of Soviet policy and the resulting conformism, theoretical submission and sterility of other parties with different backgrounds and experience to the C. P. S. U., especially in the developed countries, reduced most communist parties to positions of relative insignificance.

Furthermore, the theory of revolution did not adequately encompass the colonial and semi-colonial world. Although Lenin had given some thought to the question and, in his usual observant and flexible manner was beginning to recognise in the period before his death that the whole issue of colonial revolution in relation to the world revolution generally, needed re-assessment (Better Fewer but Better), the approach of the Comintern and Cominform was bedevilled by two assumptions that proved erroneous:
(a) that a successful colonial liberation movement could result only from revolution in the developed countries;
(b) that socialist transformation involved "Europeanisation" and would necessarily be based on the Soviet model.

Stalin and the Comintern adhered to these concepts as both Stalin and Trotsky had done in their polemical dispute on the Chinese revolution.

In the event, the Chinese proved both of them to be wrong and established a theory and practice of revolution that became a new "heresy" in Moscow.

The other major issue dealt with by Claudin is the alleged betrayal by Stalin of the revolutionary possibilities inherent in the situation in 1944-5 immediately following the second World War.

He argues that Stalin subordinated everything to his project of reaching an agreement with the United States in particular, to dividing the world into Soviet and United States spheres of influence, and that he used the enormous authority he was now able to wield, to induce or coerce the Communist parties to accede to the restoration of bourgeois power in France and Italy, to allow the British and Americans to crush the revolutionary uprising in Greece, and to attempt, as has been already said, to press the Communist Party of China to accept a settlement that could have been acceptable to the U.S.A.

When his plans began to miscarry because of U.S. monopoly of nuclear weapons and the general offensive of imperialism in the "cold war", the Peace movement was launched, amongst other initiatives, according to Claudin, as a counter to the united front of the capitalist powers, an attempt to use the general anxiety about nuclear war to mobilise support in the capitalist world for Soviet foreign policy.

On this question Claudin makes no assessment of the position created by the exclusive U.S. possession of nuclear weapons, nor does he assess the consequences for the revolutionary movement of a possible defeat of the USSR in a war resulting from encouraging the armed resistance forces to make a bid for power in Western Europe.

The scope of Claudin's book is vast. He attempts to deal with the theoretical and practical issues within the communist movement over the last half-century. The theme that the revolutionary movement has been diverted by subordination to the state interests of the USSR, and by a rigid and dogmatic revision of Marxism in which Stalin played the dominant role, has some similarity to Trotsky's critique.

However, whilst agreeing with some of Trotsky's criticism on specific questions, he believes that Trotsky, like Stalin and most other Marxists of the period were committed to the "schema" of world revolution that failed to correspond to the reality revealed by developments since 1917.

As a consequence, the Communist movement today is confronted with a theoretical and practical crisis, expressed in its sharpest form in the Sino-Soviet schism.

It goes without saying, in view of the above summary of his theme, that he sees the USSR not as a developed socialist country, but a state in which Communist Party power has resulted in "a new culture, conformist, petty bourgeois and merely instrumental in character", an opinion that to some extent agrees with Chinese critiques of Soviet society.

Most of the issues Claudin raises are relevant to the present debate on the future of the communist movement especially in the developed capitalist countries. As the Communist Parties of France and Italy approach state power, the revised concept of the "united front" which envisages political pluralism and a departure from the "dictatorship of the proletariat" as it operates in the USSR, are matters on which there are deep differences within the communist movement.

Claudin's critique, whilst providing valuable insights into specific issues, has a curious unreality when one observes the contemporary world.

It is true, of course, that Stalin's primary concern, at any rate after the mid 1920s, was for the interests
of the Soviet state, and that the Communist parties regarded the defence and preservation of the "fortress of socialism" as a political duty that transcended all others. In one sense this "loyalty to the USSR" helped to isolate the Communist Parties especially in the developed countries where nationalism and reformism were strong. On the other hand, the Russian Revolution had an enormous impact and the continued existence of a proletarian state however "deformed" was a new and potent influence on world affairs. It established new priorities in national and international politics which attracted the support of large sections of progressive opinion. In mobilising this support around issues of real significance in their own countries the indigenous communist parties played an essential role. It is fashionable to dismiss this long period of struggle against great odds as unprofitable and mistaken "Stalinism", but this is only a part of the picture.

Similarly with the national liberation movement. The Russian Revolution and the existence of the Soviet state was the catalyst of the movement that has created the Third World and intensified the crisis of imperialism. In today's world it is idle to pretend that the roles of the USSR and China in the African and Latin American countries are not of vital importance in their movement towards national independence.

It would be hard to conceive of successful revolutions and the continued existence of small states with socialist foundations as in Vietnam and Cuba, not to mention the developments in Mozambique, Angola and Southern Africa generally were this not the case.

Is the Communist movement in a state of crisis? Certainly the concept of a monolithic world soviet system based on a single model belongs to the past, even though overtones persist in the attitude of the CPSU to parties with an independent position, and the dogmatic adherence to the myth of Soviet infallibility in some parts of the communist movement. The problem of the kind of relations that need to exist among communist states and parties is still unsolved.

But the growing and deepening crisis of imperialism has already resulted in weakening its world position, of ending U.S. dominance in world politics and in strengthening the position of the communist and liberation movements.

Whilst Claudin deals with issues of real significance to the revolutionary movement, his own alternative schema must raise serious doubts. Were the conditions ripe for social revolution in Western Europe in 1945?

Was the peace movement only an extension of Soviet foreign policy? Did it divert the mass movement from the real task of revolution?

Does the fact that the USSR still falls short of being a model socialist democracy, and that this is reflected in its foreign policy and in the part it seeks to play in the world communist movement, invalidate its role in the movement towards socialism?

The fact that these questions are raised point to the principal merit of this book. It is the first attempt at a comprehensive confrontation with the past of the communist movement as a whole.

Its analysis and conclusions deserve the critical examination of Marxists.

- Bill Gollan.
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