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

Published two monthly.

Single copies, 50c; Yearly subscription, $2.75; Two years $5.00.
BUSINESS MANAGER: 168 Day St., Sydney 2000. Phone: 26-2161

Printed by D. B. Young Pty. Ltd., 168 Day Street, Sydney, 2000, at 21 Ross Street, Forest Lodge, 2037.
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Author’s Challenge
THE STRIKE MOVEMENT IN AUSTRALIA has reached a postwar record. In 1970 there were 2738 strikes involving 1,367,000 workers and the loss of 2,393,700 man-hours, compared with the previous postwar high of 1949-50 when there were 1276 strikes incurring a loss of 2,062,888 manhours. The present movement received tremendous impetus from the penal powers strike of May 1969, an action which has paralysed the system of compulsory arbitration, opening the way for new offensives by the workers.

The situation poses a number of questions. Firstly, what is the nature and importance of the situation, including the crisis in arbitration? How much have we succeeded in influencing this movement with the concepts advanced in the Communist Party’s 22nd Congress document Modern Unionism and the Workers’ Movement? Has experience confirmed views we advanced some 18 months ago? Secondly, what is the significance of the present movement in the light of our attempts to raise the political understanding of the working class? What place does this movement occupy in the party’s tactics and strategy for radical social change?

The party can draw considerable credit from its action in calling
in January 1969 for a confrontation of the penal powers and an offensive against arbitration. As a result of the workers' action in May 1969, the arbitration system as it has been progressively refined for the previous 60-odd years will never be the same again. This makes the present period significantly different from any other period in the history of the labor movement. The State, employers, the Labor Party, we and other sections of the Left are all re-appraising their positions, trying to find a viable solution to the problems of change, each from a particular standpoint.

There is an almost desperate striving by the government, employers and sections of the Labor Party to find a way out of the crisis of arbitration. Unfortunately, the Left in the trade union movement has expended little energy or thought to place before the workers the kind of concepts and perspectives that would take the situation out of the stalemate created by the May 1969 actions to new offensive positions that would make it even more difficult for the ruling class to advance alternative measures aiming to serve the same purpose as compulsory arbitration.

In government circles wiser counsel has prevailed against a view that confrontation with the trade unions on penal powers should be used to precipitate a federal election. This threat has diminished, and the next phase centres on the discussions being held by the National Labor Advisory Council in which it is hoped that some measure of agreement might be reached in finding a solution to the problem.

It has been left to the Labor Party to put forward a considered alternative to the present arbitration system. This alternative, the brainchild of J. B. Sweeney and Clyde Cameron, the Shadow Minister for Labor and National Service, has considerable significance for the Left.

These proposals seek merely to reform, and not to replace arbitration as a system of regulating industrial relations. Basically, the proposals combine a recognition of the trend towards collective bargaining and the winning of over-award payments, with the concept of negotiated industrial agreements within industries showing an above-average rate of profitability. These proposals would be ratified under an amended Arbitration Act and made subject to penalties for breaches on either side. Recovery of any fines imposed, however, would be taken out of the hands of the arbitration system and made recoverable by recourse to ordinary civil law, thus attempting to remove some of the odor associated with arbitration.

The authors attach many other conditions to these industrial
agreements. They would have to be ratified by a plebiscite of the trade union membership, and where a division appeared about whether such an agreement should be signed or not, a case for and against would have to be circulated among all members. The agreements are intended to operate for a maximum of three years, with leave reserved for either party to re-open any question. Strike action will not be permitted on any of the questions agreed upon and contained in the agreement, but the workers will be free to take strike action on matters not included. This is the essence of the Sweeney-Cameron proposals.

As can be readily seen they do little more than reform the existing system of arbitration and conciliation. The proposals are designed to contain the movement of the workers within the acceptable limits of the capitalist framework. I have heard it said and argued that in order to be concrete on this question we should spell out a comprehensive alternative system of industrial relations. I hold that this is neither possible nor desirable. Rather it seems to me that we should be elaborating theoretically the evolution of industrial democracy and its relationship to the democratic needs of the class as a whole.

Capitalist industrial relations are but a part of the whole question of industrial democracy. This cannot be seen in isolation from such questions as the multi-national corporation in contemporary imperialism and its role in certain industries. Other related matters are the question of trade union structures and trade union democracy, the role of factory and workshop organisation, and the important concept of workers' control and self-management. Because of Australia's relative isolation, the ramifications of the multi-national corporation are not seen as clearly as they should be. Consequently, little research has been done on these relations.

Posing the problem of the influence of the multi-national corporation, Malcolm Warner, of the London School of Business Studies, writing in the journal New Society of October 1970, asked:

What will be the pattern of collective bargaining in the age of the multi-national corporation? Will trade union organisation, strategy and bargaining patterns, centred on the nation-state, be appropriate to the extraordinary concentration of industrial power now emerging?

Warner goes to say that already the foreign output of American-based trans-national companies is greater, on one estimate, than the output of any nation except the US and the USSR.

I refer briefly and, of course, quite inadequately to this aspect, only because it is not as pressing as the main problems I want
to discuss. But there is mounting evidence of the impact and influence of the multi-national corporation on the political, economic and social concepts of the trade unions and the working class. For example, I have it on good authority that the Australian Government had been forced to protest officially to the US Government against an agreement that had been negotiated by an international corporation in WA on the ground that it adversely affected national economic planning.

My argument against spelling out or defining an alternative to arbitration is based on the belief that if we do attempt this we immediately restrict the horizons and manoeuvrability of the working class and pave the way for and facilitate new methods of containment of the workers' struggles. For the trade unions to exercise a role in the radical transformation of capitalist society they must be left free, unfettered by any restrictions, in order to expand the scope of their struggle against capital. This does not mean that they will ever be free from restrictions under capitalism but it does mean that it is not our responsibility to define the limits of their activity, but rather to lead the attack on all attempts at containment by a continuing offensive against the "sacred rights" of the capitalist class.

For this purpose rather than spell out an alternative system of industrial relations we should elaborate certain principles that can be justified theoretically and practically in the minds of the masses. I suggest the following:

1) We are for collective bargaining as a form of industrial relations — collective bargaining backed by industrial strength of the workers, setting out to include representatives of the rank and file as well as the officials in the negotiations.

2) We are for industrial agreements, preferably on an industry basis and made for the shortest possible duration.

3) We are opposed to the inclusion of any form of sanctions or penalties for any breach of the agreement, either on the part of the employer or the workers. Any breach of agreement by the employer can be adequately dealt with by the unions and workers involved, while any breach by the workers should be subject to resolution and/or discipline by a code drawn up and decided upon by the workers themselves.

4) Workers and unions should be completely free to use their industrial strength to deal with questions not involved in the agreement, to join with other workers on matters of a broader social character without jeopardising the terms of the agreement.
5) These broad principles should be advanced together with an elaboration of the concepts of workers' control and self-management.

On the question of workers' control, I think we must say that we have not yet reached first base in clarifying this concept among workers. This arises in part, I believe, because there is little or no conviction among the left of the trade union movement. We are well aware, of course, that the trade union officials among the party opposition scoff at the concept, branding it as Trotskyist, anarchist, left-adventurist, and so on. But if we have made so little headway, we do need to ask ourselves if it is realisable or is it some idealistic concept that has no basis in the objective conditions.

In my view the problem does not lie in the concept being impracticable or even unacceptable to the workers, but in our inability to break through the conservatism and the lack of appreciation of the radical changes that are taking place around us in the whole field of industrial democracy. If the left trade unions fail to recognise that tremendous changes are taking place calling for radical solution and the projection of radical concepts, then certainly the employers are taking the movement for workers' control seriously.

The February 1971 issue of the conservative Establishment journal Rydges commences an article dealing with the worker-control movement by saying “Massive world-wide pressure from employees for a voice in management of industrial undertakings amounts to the biggest takeover ever”.

The article quotes from Professor Kenneth Walker's “Industrial Democracy”, the main paper delivered to The Times Management Lecture for 1970.

Ever since the vision of democracy captured man's aspiration and he began to put it into practice in the political sphere he has also had a dream of extending democracy to economic life, and into the organisation in which he performs his daily work.

In its most militant form (this dream) has expressed various ideologies based on an interest-group view of society and has formed part of programmes for the transformation not only of industrial organisation, but of society itself.

Recently, too, the main publications of two of the world's largest multi-national oil corporations were turned over to the radical views emerging on the problems of this society. The two publications are Esso's The Lamp (No. 4, Vol. 52) and Pegasus, the British publication of Mobil Oil. American social worker Sol Marzullo, writing in Pegasus states:

We cannot ignore the reality that all institutions, all of them (law, School, government, business) must become responsive to change not simply to
pacify the critics, but to enlarge the horizons and the quality of life of mankind.

Other similar expressions of concern abound in the employers’ journals and statements

In using these illustrations I am not suggesting that these institutions and organisations of capitalism are accepting these trends and appearing to adopt them. On the contrary, unlike most of the left in Australia, and particularly the left in the trade unions, they are recognising the potential of the demands for workers’ control and trying to understand them with a view to finding answers from their point of view of how to contain them.

Within Australian industry today there are emerging trends for greater democracy and worker participation. It is interesting to note, for instance, that of the number of industrial disputes in 1969, 684 were concerned with wages, hours and leave. In other words, straight economic issues. In the same year 1025 disputes, or more than 50% of the total, were concerned with working conditions and management policy. Without the specific knowledge of these latter conflicts, I think it is logical to assume that they were defensive struggles. But what is more important is the nature of them.

Even within what is essentially a spontaneous movement certain limited experiences are emerging that express this “new” in the working class striving for an expansion of their rights, for a say in the process and against the soul-destroying alienation that is taking place in the labor process.

An interesting study in trends of industrial democracy can be made in an examination of the postwar developments in three advanced capitalist countries — West Germany, Italy and Japan. Each of these countries in its own particular way and from both employer and trade union point of view has entered into different experiments in industrial relations. In Italy and West Germany the old trade union industrial relations that existed under fascism were completely broken, allowing for a fresh start with the aim of devising methods of both advancing and containing the workers’ struggle against capital. In Japan, too, the present situation arose, not on the basis of what existed in the past, but as a spontaneous development in the struggle for democracy and their new-found “free” trade union organisation. A study of industrial democracy in these three advanced capitalist countries is important from a number of points of view. Firstly, because they have not been hung-up with practices of the past and in a certain sense they were able to start afresh, so that new patterns of industrial relations have been developed.
In West Germany, one finds so-called workers' participation. Even though the practice has been distorted, becoming a system of class collaboration, this concept had its origin in the revolutionary years of the 1848 period, when provision for it was written into a draft constitution. Although the draft was rejected some forms of the ideas were put into practice by the workers, to the extent that factory works councils gained legal recognition. From here on the concepts became distorted and the process of containment through collaboration began, and finally in 1916 the establishment of workers' councils became compulsory for a wide range of industry, as part of the war effort. The workers' councils were disbanded by the nazis, but in 1945 the military government of the occupying powers again permitted the election of workers' representatives in the factories and the Allied Control Commission gave them formal recognition. These organisations have been turned into organisations of class collaboration by such methods as denying the works councils the right to call strikes. But the germ of the original concept remains buried beneath the reformist concept and practice of co-determination.

In Italy, the more flexible and looser structure of the trade union movement (given even the existence of multiple national trade union centres) has allowed for massive national campaigns to be developed. It has been possible to mobilise the class as a whole around specific demands involving not just workers in one industry but workers (unionists and non-unionists, blue and white collar) in a national movement after a period of intensive ideological preparation providing the motivation for the action. The Japanese unions and workers have developed their "spring offensive" programs which move large sections of the working class on a broad front.

I don't raise any of these examples as models to be copied here, but only to emphasise the fact that many Australian problems arise from the fact that our trade union conceptions and apparatus have been moulded by over 60 years of existence within the framework of arbitration.

If it is true that we are, in a certain sense, at the crossroads and on the threshold of what could be a qualitatively different situation, then we need to develop initiatives in projecting new ideas for work, trade union structures and organisation, including rank and file organisation at factory and trade union levels. There is a need for us to examine what is new and developing in the spontaneous movement and to elaborate theoretically the significance of it.
Some Features of the Trade Unions

1. Decline in Union Membership

THE PERCENTAGE that members of trade unions are of the total number of wage and salary earners is shown in Table 1 for the period from 1946 to 1969. The feature it shows is that from 1956, although the total number of trade unionists had increased by 81%, their percentage of the total number of wage and salary earners had fallen by 11% from 61% to 50%. This is lower than the 51% of 1921. Or putting it another way, if the 61% of 1956 had have been maintained, the trade union movement in 1969 would have had 355,580 more members.

An examination of the reasons for the decline is outside of the terms of this analysis, but there are obvious areas for attention. One is that only 40% of the females in the work force are members of trade unions, as compared with 60% of the males. Another is the big expansion of the tertiary section of employment. Another is the need to increase the appeal of the trade unions for the younger workers who are a significant and increasing part of the work force.

Table 2 shows how the membership of a few unions has moved between 1954 and 1969, on the basis of figures provided by the unions cited. The year 1954 was taken as a start as it was the first one in which a 61% of the wage and salary earners was reached. The year 1969 was taken as the end because it was the last full year for which figures were available at the time of writing.

From Table 2 it can be seen that the metal unions have increased their membership to varying degrees. This was to be expected in a period of big expansion of the manufacturing industries and the employment in them. The increase in the membership of the Boilermakers and Blacksmiths' Society is attributable to...
the big increase in the use of welding on construction work and machine structures. The increase in the membership of the Electrical Trades Union is attributable to the big expansion of the use of electrical plant and equipment. The fall in the membership of the Building Workers’ Industrial Union is typical of some unions where certain changes in the character of the industry have reduced the growth of employment in their area of coverage despite the expansion of the industry.

2. Pattern of Trade Union Size

The pattern of the size of trade unions according to membership is shown in Table 3, and it reveals two features.

The first feature is the slow decline in the number of individual trade unions from 375 in 1956 to 309 in 1969; a decline in 13 years of 66, or 17%. At this rate of decline it could take about another 50 years to even halve the present number of unions to 150. This fragmentation of the trade union movement produces a number of problems which it could well do without, such as demarcation arguments, duplication of work, difficulty of co-ordinating activity, multiple administrative costs, the hunting of employers by packs of union officials, and limitations on the setting up of the research and other facilities required to cope with today’s problems.

Amalgamation into bigger units is the obvious solution to the fragmentation, for around 25 trade unions would appear to be enough to serve the needs of wage and salary earners for industrial organisation. There are however powerful obstacles to amalgamation such as the vested interest of officials in their own positions, conservative thinking, the power structure of the trade union movement, and its historical development. There are certainly no obstacles so far as the rank and file are concerned, for the ballots for the amalgamations which have taken place up to date have been carried by overwhelming majorities.

A serious hindrance to the amalgamation of federal unions is the Commonwealth Arbitration Act, for there is no procedure in the Act to facilitate amalgamation. In fact the word does not appear anywhere in it. The only provision in the Act is for the registration of individual unions, so any unions which desire to amalgamate have to expend hundreds of man-hours of intense effort on complex technicalities in order to achieve it.

The second feature is the large percentage of the total membership which is covered by a small number of big unions as compared with the small percentage covered by a large number of small unions. This can be seen from Table 4, which shows that in
1969, the 25 biggest unions covered 63% of the total membership, while all the other 284 unions covered 36%.

3. Decision-making Process

The collective decisions of the trade union movement are made in two ways. One is by means of the biennial Australian Council of Trade Unions Congresses, the decisions of which are binding on affiliated unions. The other is by means of decisions of the Interstate Executive which meets regularly between Congresses, the decisions of which require the endorsement of a majority of the six metropolitan Trades and Labor Councils for them to become binding.

The Councils are then expected to give life to the decisions through their affiliated unions. The Councils therefore play a key role in the collective decision making and implementation process of the trade union movement in relation to the decisions of both the Congress and Executive. So how the composition of the Councils is determined has a direct bearing on that process. This is determined by their formulae for the number of delegates to which a union can be entitled on the basis of its affiliated membership. These are given in Table 5, together with the formula for the A.C.T.U. Congress, and it reveals two features.

The first feature is that five out of the six Council formulae are closed ones, for they have a cut-off point for entitlement to delegates. On the other hand, the formulae for the S.A. Council and the A.C.T.U. Congress are open-ended, for there is no cut-off point. In general the formulae favour the smaller unions to varying degrees, and to the highest degree in the two Councils of the most highly industrialised States of New South Wales and Victoria, where they put control of those Councils in the hands of the rightwing.

Moreover the situation can be self-perpetuating because any change in a formula cannot be made without the agreement of the small unions whose collective vote on a Council, because of its size, would determine whether any change would be made.

It was dissatisfaction with the formula of the Melbourne Trades Hall Council which was the main reason that prompted 26 big unions to refuse to pay their affiliation fees in 1967 until it was changed to give what they would regard as a more equitable representation. This difference has not yet been resolved. The Melbourne formula is the most restrictive of the six because its cut-off point is at a maximum of four delegates over 1,000 members. A number of unions have a much bigger membership than this. The A.E.U. for example had 29,920 in Victoria as at December
1970, but according to the formula would only be entitled to the same number of four delegates as would a union with 1,001 members.

The balance of voting forces on the Melbourne Council demonstrates in its most extreme form the point which has been made about the decisive character of the collective vote of the smaller unions. For example, at the time of the break, 34 small unions paid a total of $2,936 in affiliation fees and were entitled to 83 delegates, while 2 big unions paid $2,926 in affiliation fees and were entitled to 8 delegates.

The formulae were first worked out when the trade unions were much smaller than they are today, and they have not changed much since then. The Melbourne formula has not changed since 1915, although its affiliated membership has increased from 40,000 in 1915 to 264,000 in 1970.

This criticism is not meant to argue that the big brigade should just roll over the smaller unions, but on the other hand the tail should not wag the dog. Such a situation is not good for the health of the trade union movement, so it should be corrected in an equitable way.

Because the Council's formulae favour the smaller unions this, generally speaking, puts a conservative stamp on the collective decision-making process of the trade union movement, particularly when in addition some of the bigger unions are also conservative thinkers. The smaller unions, which comprise two-thirds of the total number of unions, with few exceptions have to devote most of their energy to keeping alive under the pressure of present-day conditions. They are therefore naturally more in favour of the safety-first maintenance of the status quo rather than the blazing of new paths.

The second feature is that the closed formulae of the Councils impose a built-in penalty on the amalgamation of trade unions. For example, when the A.E.U., the B. & B.S. and the Sheet Metal Workers become amalgamated, the number of delegates to which the new single union will be entitled in all the Councils except South Australia will be no greater than the number to which any of the three single unions was previously entitled. This will not be the case in representation at A.C.T.U. Congresses because its formulae are open-ended.

4. Organisational Basis

The policy of the A.C.T.U. on the desirable form of union organisational structure is that of industrial unionism. That is, for all employees in a particular industry to belong to a single
union covering that industry. In actual practice, however, the organisational structure of trade unions in Australia has followed two different lines of development. This can be seen from the membership of the 25 biggest unions, which is given in Table 6.

One line of development has been the formation of an industrial type union, as represented by the Printing Industries' Union, the Textile Workers' Union and others, which cover the majority of blue-collar trade unionists engaged in the particular industry.

The other line of development is that of the conglomerate union, as represented by the Amalgamated Engineering Union, the Australian Workers' Union, the Miscellaneous Workers' Union and others, the members of which are engaged in a number of different industries. This form is the product of the history of the development of trade unions and the economy of Australia.

The importance of the conglomerate form is demonstrated by the fact that the top 7 biggest unions, and 9 out of the 25 biggest, are conglomerate unions. Moreover, the trend for them is to become larger. The biggest of them all is soon to be formed by the amalgamation of the A.E.U., the B. & B.S., the Sheet Metal Workers, and then the F.E.D. & F.A. This will create a new union with around 200,000 members by the time the full amalgamation has been consummated.

The existence of the big well-established conglomerates makes the achievement of a single union for some industries a long-term prospect, because in order to achieve industrial unionism it would be necessary to break up the conglomerates and allocate their members to appropriate industrial unions. To even pose such a proposition is to show its unreality. For such a radical restructuring of the trade union movement would have to be acceptable to the members of the conglomerates, and they are unlikely to accept the necessity until there was a radical restructuring of Australian society as a whole.

This is not to argue against industrial unionism as it is clearly the desirable ultimate objective. There is also no obstacle to its achievement now in some suitable areas where there are no conglomerate unions, as for example in the building and maritime industries, but for the obstacles which have been examined earlier on.

So far as the conglomerates are concerned, they are here to stay. So the main question surely is not one of trying to force the Australian trade union movement dogmatically into one mould, but rather of assessing what forms of organisation can best serve the interests of the working class at a particular stage of history.
### TABLE 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Members</th>
<th>Percentage of Wage and Salary Earners</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Members</th>
<th>Percentage of Wage and Salary Earners</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1946</td>
<td>1,262,658</td>
<td>59.5%</td>
<td>1958</td>
<td>1,811,200</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1947</td>
<td>1,339,457</td>
<td>62.9%</td>
<td>1959</td>
<td>1,850,700</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1948</td>
<td>1,455,800</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>1960</td>
<td>1,912,600</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1949</td>
<td>1,520,900</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>1961</td>
<td>1,894,600</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>1,605,300</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>1962</td>
<td>1,950,500</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>1,690,300</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>1963</td>
<td>2,003,500</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1952</td>
<td>1,637,500</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>1964</td>
<td>2,054,800</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1953</td>
<td>1,679,800</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>1965</td>
<td>2,116,200</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1954</td>
<td>1,787,500</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>1966</td>
<td>2,123,500</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1955</td>
<td>1,801,900</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>1967</td>
<td>2,151,300</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1956</td>
<td>1,811,400</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>1968</td>
<td>2,190,700</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1957</td>
<td>1,810,200</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>1969</td>
<td>2,239,100</td>
<td>50%</td>
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</table>

(Commonwealth Statistics)

### TABLE 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Legend</th>
<th>Union Membership</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dec. 1954</td>
<td>AEU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75,978</td>
<td>26,326</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec. 1969</td>
<td>87,967</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gain or loss</td>
<td>+11,989</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gain or loss</td>
<td>+15.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Union membership returns)

### TABLE 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Unions in Group</th>
<th>% Total Unions</th>
<th>Group Membership</th>
<th>% Total M'bers</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Unions in Group</th>
<th>% Total Unions</th>
<th>Group Membership</th>
<th>% Total M'bers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under 2,000</td>
<td>266</td>
<td>70.93</td>
<td>132,698</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>Under 2,000</td>
<td>202</td>
<td>65.37</td>
<td>109,300</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2,000 to 5,000</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>11.20</td>
<td>126,736</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>2,000 to 5,000</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>12.94</td>
<td>135,800</td>
<td>6.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5,000 to 10,000</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>5.87</td>
<td>153,548</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>5,000 to 10,000</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>4.85</td>
<td>108,600</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10,000 to 20,000</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>4.26</td>
<td>211,937</td>
<td>11.7</td>
<td>10,000 to 20,000</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>6.15</td>
<td>268,400</td>
<td>12.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20,000 to 30,000</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2.67</td>
<td>235,043</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>20,000 to 30,000</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2.59</td>
<td>188,500</td>
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<tr>
<td>30,000 to 40,000</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2.67</td>
<td>350,672</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>2.27</td>
<td>250,200</td>
<td>11.2</td>
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<td>40,000 to 50,000</td>
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<td>0.80</td>
<td>136,062</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>40,000 to 50,000</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.62</td>
<td>266,100</td>
<td>11.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50,000 and over</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1.60</td>
<td>464,712</td>
<td>25.6</td>
<td>50,000 and over</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>4.21</td>
<td>912,200</td>
<td>40.7</td>
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</table>
| Total | 375 | 100% | 1,811,408 | 100% 

(Commonwealth Statistics)
### TABLE 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Unions</th>
<th>1966 (Total = 375)</th>
<th>1969 (Total = 309)</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percentage of Total Number</td>
<td>Percentage of Total Membership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>346</td>
<td>92.2%</td>
<td>34.5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>7.7%</td>
<td>65.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>5.1%</td>
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<tr>
<td>356</td>
<td>94.9%</td>
<td>47.5%</td>
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### TABLE 5

<table>
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<th>State</th>
<th>Affiliated Membership</th>
<th>Delegates Entitled</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>Affiliated Membership</th>
<th>Delegates Entitled</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Victoria</td>
<td>20 to 200</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>N.S.W.</td>
<td>Less than 500</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>201 to 500</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>500 to 999</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>501 to 1000</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>1000 to 2999</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1001 and upwards</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>3000 to 4999</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Over 5000</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.A.</td>
<td>1 to 250</td>
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<td>W.A.</td>
<td>Up to 250</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>251 to 750</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>751 to 1250</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
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<td>2251 to 3500</td>
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<td>2251 and over</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q'ld</td>
<td>First 1000</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Tas.</td>
<td>Up to 100</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Up to 2000</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Over 8000</td>
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<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2001 and over</td>
<td>6</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**ACTU**

- First 1,000 members or part thereof — 1 delegate
- Each subsequent 2,500 members or part thereof — 2 delegates
- Each metropolitan Trades and Labor Council — 2 delegates
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Union Name</th>
<th>Membership (July 1969)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Australian Workers Union</td>
<td>160,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Amalgamated Engineering Union</td>
<td>86,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australasian Society of Engineers</td>
<td>75,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federated Miscellaneous Workers Union of Australia</td>
<td>73,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federated Ironworkers' Association of Australia</td>
<td>66,259</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federated Clerks' Union of Australia</td>
<td>65,000 (W)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electrical Trades Union of Australia</td>
<td>62,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospital Employees' Federation of Australia</td>
<td>60,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Printing and Kindred Industries Union</td>
<td>53,415</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transport Workers' Union of Australia</td>
<td>50,000</td>
</tr>
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<td>Australian Railways Union</td>
<td>48,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federated Municipal and Shire Council Employees' Union of Australia</td>
<td>48,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australasian Meat Industry Employees' Union</td>
<td>44,495</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building Workers' Industrial Union of Australia</td>
<td>44,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australian Textile Workers' Union</td>
<td>41,596</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federated Liquor and Allied Industries Employees' Union of Australia</td>
<td>40,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amalgamated Postal Workers' Union of Australia</td>
<td>40,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shop Assistants' and Warehouse Employees' Federation of Australia</td>
<td>39,876 (W)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australian Bank Officials' Association</td>
<td>38,000 (W)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clothing and Allied Trades Union of Australia</td>
<td>35,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vehicle Builders Employees' Federation of Australia</td>
<td>35,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New South Wales Teachers' Federation</td>
<td>33,757 (W)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Boilermakers' and Blacksmiths' Society of Australia</td>
<td>32,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheet Metal Working, Agricultural Implement and Stovemaking Industrial Union of Australia</td>
<td>31,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative and Clerical Officers' Association, Commonwealth Public Service</td>
<td>27,000 (W)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: (W) denotes white-collar unions.

*(A Handbook of Australian Trade Unions and Employees' Associations. D. W. Rawson and S. Wrightson. Canberra.)*
Philippe Devillers

Cambodia, Laos and the Vietnam War

BY 1970 THE NLF AND HANOI were ready to fight a protracted war—until the Americans were ready to accept the full independence of Vietnam—which meant that they had to give up their military offensive and shift their activity from the countryside to the cities. This meant that the war was maintained at three levels: militarily at a low level; politically, winning the right-wing, centre and religious people of the cities by propaganda to the idea that the Americans were enemies who wished to destroy Vietnam; and diplomatically, winning recognition of the Provisional Revolutionary Government by China and the Soviet Union and obtaining their backing throughout the world. The Americans understood it as a directive to proceed to a brush-war or small-unit strategy, but in fact the new policy was the result of a compromise between the pro-Soviet and pro-Chinese wings in Hanoi not to proceed to protracted war but to wait.

Nixon, to placate American public opinion, was obliged to announce the proposed withdrawal of American troops. Thieu and Ky realised that when the American Army left, and it would probably leave fairly quickly, they would be left with a demoralised army, a demoralised population and with the NLF winning the cities. So they asked the American troops to remain until the end of 1971 at least. The American generals therefore said that they would have to remain in their bases until at least 1971 and probably even until 1972. They relied on the Vietnamisation programme. The object of this is by killing about 35,000 people in search and destroy missions to smash the infrastructure of the NLF and thus the Vietcong. The strategy of the military is to completely isolate North from South Vietnam by chemical defoliation, saturation bombing, to bomb Laos and the Ho Chi Minh trail so that front line cadres cannot be reinforced and to withdraw from Vietnam as slowly as possible.

However, Washington, for political reasons, wanted them to withdraw from Vietnam as quickly as possible. At the beginning of 1970 the idea was that they could not withdraw if they did not first mop up the Cambodian sanctuary from which supplies and propaganda were coming. So they decided both to mop up Cambodia

Philippe Devillers is a French political scientist and acknowledged expert on Indochina, who was a visitor to the National Anti-War Conference held in Sydney in February. This article is the second part of a talk he gave at the Politics Department of Monash University. (The first part appeared in ALR No. 30).
and boost the Vietnamese army’s morale by giving them the job. Apparently, and I have this from a good source, this decision came as a complete surprise to the State Department and the CIA in the United States. It was entirely the decision of the military command and CIA in Saigon and the Saigonese.

The Cambodian affair was created after a bourgeois revolt against Sihanouk which had specifically Cambodian causes. The notion was to make Cambodia a really neutral country which would intercept North Vietnamese supplies and ally with South Vietnam, thus making it a pro-South Vietnamese neutrality. But when Lon Nol conducted the coup he was immediately isolated and the pro-North Vietnamese and pro-Sihanouk party struck back. The Americans had to come in to save Lon Nol. This created a completely distinct operation in Indochina. The Vietnamisation program had its own timing but now the Americans and the Vietnamese are committed to keeping the Lon Nol regime in power.

The Cambodian operation has become the major one in Indochina. Because of this the American position at the Paris peace talks has been since early 1970: either the NLF and Hanoi recognise the Saigon government and talk with it and agree to a mutual withdrawal, in which case the Americans would endeavour to bring about peace; or, the NLF and Hanoi refuse these terms and the Americans proceed to withdraw at their own pace depending on the effectiveness of Vietnamisation, in which case they would do nothing to secure peace and ultimately the NLF would have to come to terms with Thieu and Ky. The Cambodian affair has now become a mode of bringing pressure on the other side to recognise the Thieu and Ky government which is supported by Lon Nol.

I will now turn to the military situation. The Laotian situation is not linked to that of South Vietnam. There is no prospect of any great battle or great confrontation in South Vietnam for months and years to come. The South Vietnamese army occupies the country by compromise with the local people. The peasants want to be left alone. The NLF has changed the character of the struggle to a political one and there will only be a political struggle for years to come. So the military affair is Cambodia which becomes a gigantic new sanctuary for a new peoples army, the People’s Army of Cambodia. The main interest of China and Vietnam now is to build this army up against Lon Nol. The Ho Chi Minh trail is being used to equip this Peoples Army, and already three-quarters of the territory of Cambodia is controlled by it. They follow the Sihanouk government in exile in Peking. If the Americans do not intercept the Ho Chi Minh trail which is supplying Cambodia and Laos they
will face a new communist state in Cambodia very soon, because the People's Committees and People's Army are controlled by the communists and their allies. This is why they have extended the war: to keep the whole of Indochina safe for them.

On the other hand, a withdrawal of American troops has to take place because Nixon has to face a presidential election in 1972 and if he has not withdrawn all combat troops by the time the convention is held in July 1972 he will be in a very shaky political position and may not win the election at all. He has either to win the war or withdraw by the end of 1972. The North Vietnamese must be forced to the table by that date. In the meantime he has to continue to say that Vietnamisation is proceeding well and to withdraw troops without losing the war. He will, therefore, intensify the operation in Laos and Cambodia in order to cut the trail. Last May I heard it said in Washington that if "these guys" don't understand there are other means of making them understand. We cannot preclude a resumption of the bombing above the MacNamara line and the possibility that tactical nuclear weapons will be used. The Americans say that they will bomb North Vietnam if there is any response to the intervention in Laos. It also appears that the American military command will resist the withdrawal on the grounds that they have to extend the war.

The other side have now proposed a limited cease-fire between themselves and the Americans, Australians and other allies provided that a firm date for withdrawal is fixed. If a date is set, even 1981, then there will be an immediate cease-fire and an exchange of prisoners. It is to cloud this that Nixon has started the emotional campaign about the treatment of American prisoners. Even had he set a remote date for withdrawal all prisoners would have been returned.

So now the Americans and the Saigon government have on the table at Paris precise demands for a political and military settlement and the question is why the Americans won't talk about these proposals. There is only one explanation: They are not at all sure that the Vietnamisation process is going well. They wish to keep their troops there as long as the Vietnamisation programme is unsuccessful. There is also the consideration of the political and domestic situation in the United States. If Nixon were re-elected in 1972 he would continue to support the regime but if not then he could blame the Democrats for the disaster of Indochina and the failure of Vietnamisation if he can hold out until then. So the proposal of the other side for a cease-fire is ignored to gain time until 1972 and to win the war. However, the other side have also realised that he must gain time and are acting accordingly.
The CPSU in Congress

THE 24th CONGRESS of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union brought 4,963 delegates to Moscow from all corners of the vast and varied Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. The Congress reached all its decisions unanimously — a remarkable achievement when one considers the weighty and complex questions before the gathering.

The period between the Congresses had seen such events as the intervention in Czechoslovakia, the armed clashes with China, war in the Middle East, big developments in Vietnam and talks on disarmament. On the home front there had been the economic reforms, clashes in the field of literature and art and the delaying of the Congress for a year beyond the term laid down in the Party rules. The Congress elected a Central Committee of 241 members and changed the Party rules to provide for Congresses every five years instead of four. Yet the Congress was able to decide unanimously “fully and completely to approve the political line and practical activities of the Central Committee of the CPSU and to approve the propositions and conclusions contained in the Report of the Central Committee of the CPSU”. The same resolution, incidentally, stated that “The Soviet people wholeheartedly and unanimously support the Party’s home and foreign policy”.

There were present 102 foreign delegations from 91 countries. CPSU General secretary L. I. Brezhnev added a new dimension to unanimity when he stated in his concluding speech to the Congress:

We were once again able to convince ourselves that the foreign comrades unanimously approve the course of our party, its principled marxist-leninist line in the world Communist movement.

The inaccuracy of this claim is obvious without even studying the speeches of the foreign delegations, some of whom politely spelled out the fact that there were differences. But the fact that the claim was made indicates the importance attached to international support for CPSU policies and the large attendance of foreign parties. About 90 Communist Parties were represented.

Dave Davies is a member of the National Committee of the Communist Party of Australia, and Victorian Correspondent of Tribune. Together with Laurie Aarons he attended the 24th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union held in Moscow in March. Dave Davies is fluent in the Russian language.
including parties not present at the 1969 International Meeting of Communist and Workers’ Parties, such as those of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, Korea and Japan.

Other parties attending generally came into the categories of socialist, nation-liberation, or nationalist parties. Some examples were the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam, the Laotian Patriotic Front, Socialist Parties from Japan and Chile, the Arab Socialist League from the UAR and Ba’ath parties from Irak and Syria. International gatherings of anti-imperialist forces can be of value, but a number of factors tended to reduce the usefulness of the CPSU Congress as an international forum. Speeches were rather formal, couched in jargon and coded remarks. Appreciated by the Soviet party leaders and delegates were condemnation of China, expressions of fidelity to “proletarian internationalism based on marxism-leninism” and pledges to fight “anti-Sovietism”. Not so well received were calls for “proletarian internationalism based on mutual respect, equality, and non-interference in each other’s internal affairs” or statements implying that the party in question had good relations with the Chinese Communist Party.

Yet justified criticisms concerned with national interest and the seeking of hegemony should not obscure certain realities about the USSR, which were reflected by the large international attendance at the CPSU Congress. At the least, the existence of the USSR as a counterweight to the United States gives much greater scope to movements for national liberation, for peace and for socialism.

Revolutionaries gain nothing by writing off the USSR as an anti-imperialist force or by seeing their way forward per medium of denouncing the Soviet Union, a diversion which, like its opposite, detracts from the central task of developing a viable strategy for socialist revolution in one’s own country. Yet the latter involves making an independent assessment of the USSR and stating one’s opinion appropriately.

The 24th Congress in general could be described as a stabilising, balancing Congress, seeking to maintain the status quo in the leadership and to curb various “extreme” trends which could upset the equilibrium of the present set-up. As such, the Congress reflected the absence of a sharp political or economic crisis within the country and indeed a certain confidence (with qualifications) of the leadership. Certainly there were no abrupt turns in policy or sensational leadership changes. The only changes in the Politburo, for example, were an extra four members raising the number on that body to 15, with no-one being dropped.
An important factor in the relative political stability of the USSR is the continuing development of the economy, with a gradual rise in living standards. The 10 year period since I had last been in the USSR, for example, had brought a number of positive changes.

There are changes which can be seen even by the superficial observer. Certainly Moscow is not the USSR but it is fair to say that the virtual absence of the previously large proportion of shabbily dressed people — particularly elderly, reflects progress which is taking place throughout the country. Evident too is the outward growth of Moscow and the replacement of old areas by modern flats. Shopping is a little better, but is still a time-consuming process. There are a number of new, apparently efficient self-service stores but not enough.

Two of the most significant changes in the last 10 years have been the change from the 6-day to 5-day working week, (hours are close to 40 per week) and a relatively large rise in the minimum wage. In the last Five-year Plan period, for example, the minimum wage rose from 40 to 60 roubles per month. (A rouble is virtually equivalent to an Australian dollar at official rates.) Prices by and large appear to have remained stable. Some obsolescent consumer goods have been reduced in price. The most outstanding price rise is that on hard liquor, with vodka going up from three to four roubles a bottle and cognac soaring to extremely high prices. This was a purely administrative measure to combat heavy drinking. Casual conversations with ordinary people indicated to me a general recognition that materially life was better, although there are complaints about shortages, prices, and the difficulties of shopping for quality goods.

Underlying the rise in living standards has been a considerable increase in the industrial level of the country. Examination of the economic statistics show that the Soviet Union has one of the highest growth rates in the world, although many targets set down in the Program of the CPSU and in the directives for the Five-year Plan 1966-70 were not attained.

But for all the economic achievements, the prestige of the Soviet Union as a harbinger of a new way of life, an inspiration for revolutionaries, has in the main declined. This has occurred in spite of Soviet aid to, for example, Vietnam and, Cuba both of which have fired the hearts of revolutionaries and progressives throughout the world. And imperialist propaganda aided by the "revisionists" do not account for the decline in attractiveness and prestige, especially in advanced capitalist countries. This aspect
is highlighted by the fact that although the United States maintains its clear lead in material production, the kind of society in that country increasingly appals people throughout the world. No longer do rightwing spokesmen point to the United States as the beacon for other capitalist countries — on the contrary it has become the world's awful example. On the other hand, masses of people in the west know that the Soviet Union has made considerable progress in living standards, science, education and social services but in general are not attracted by the Soviet model of socialism.

The external attitude to the USSR runs parallel with attitudes inside the country. Certainly in the USSR one meets many very fine people. The high level of culture among considerable sections of the population is impressive, reflecting as it does high standards of education. But the full potential of the socialist economic base is not being realised. Labor morale clearly leaves a great deal to be desired and is the subject of a big campaign in the mass media. There is a heavy emphasis on efficiency, increased sense of responsibility and improved labor discipline. Alongside the understandable and justified desire of Soviet people for better material living standards after decades of shortages there is a pre-occupation with everyday affairs, with the acquisition of consumer goods and a considerable apathy towards politics. These trends seem to be more marked among industrial workers than among intellectuals.

Within the general stability reflected by the Congress, there are clearly areas of concern to the CPSU leadership. There is a certain anxiety that the rise in living standards should continue, since this is an important factor in a general acceptance of policy. The events in Poland last December clearly made an impression in other countries and while nothing on that scale has taken place in the USSR, there are reports of relatively minor upsets in some provincial towns on economic questions. There was a considerable emphasis on consumer goods at the Congress, as well as a number of speeches from "rank-and-file" Party members thanking the Central Committee of the CPSU for their "constant concern for the welfare of the workers".

The "Balanced" nature of the CPSU 24th Congress is well illustrated by attitudes to past Congresses, notably the confirmation of the 20th Congress of 1956 and the pointed omission of specific mention of the 22nd Congress of 1961. Re-affirmation of the 20th Congress is a welcome sign and an answer to speculation that Stalin was to be "re-habilitated". But this too must be qualified. Re-affirmation of the 20th Congress was made at an
interesting point in Brezhnev’s report — in the section dealing with Soviet relations with China. He said: “It will be recalled that the Chinese leaders have put forward an ideological political platform of their own which is incompatible with Leninism on key questions of international life and the world communist movement and have demanded that we should abandon the line of the 20th Congress and the Program of the CPSU . . . Our party has resolutely opposed the attempts to distort Marxist-Leninist teaching . . .”

The choice of this point to re-assert the 20th Congress may indicate a certain compromise, since it arises here in a defensive way and without elaboration of the historic significance of that Congress. The trend of the present leadership is to keep the “thaw” and the ferment in Soviet politics which characterised the late fifties and early sixties within definite limits.

The CPSU Program was re-affirmed in a similar back-handed way. It was adopted at the 22nd Congress when the unmentionable Nikita Sergeivitch Krushchov was in the leadership and is very much played down these days. It might be remarked in passing that the retention of the Program, in a half-hearted way but without amendment is yet another example of the Congress policy of letting sleeping dogs lie, because there are some sections of the Program clearly requiring revision, even from the point of view of current policies. For example, the Program states:

In the current decade (1961-70) the Soviet Union, in creating the material and technical basis of communism, will surpass the strongest and richest capitalist country, the U.S.A., in production per head of population . . .

There are other similar references, as well as specific figures for production targets which have not been achieved or clearly cannot be achieved. And this is without debating the vital question of whether the emphasis should be on the quantitative competition with capitalism or on the building of a qualitatively new system of human relations.

Throughout the Congress, the policies followed under Krushchov were referred to by the code word “subjectivism” or “subjective errors”. And the complete obliteration of all traces of the person of Krushchov is little short of miraculous when one recalls the historic contribution of that remarkable man in the decade after Stalin’s death when he was THE top leader.

The name of Krushchov has been erased because, in spite of weaknesses, he was the man closely associated with “the thaw” that period in Soviet history which saw a rise of great hopes for the future of socialism, a mass stirring which was a promise for democratisation but a threat to bureaucracy. Figuratively speaking,
the former inmates whom he gave the job of dismantling Stalin’s labor camps were getting ideas that other structures too were of a restrictive character and had to go.

Although it was promised by the new leadership that his policies would be continued, changes were made. Sobriety was restored to some areas where it was needed (maize was put back into its right place) but this was accompanied by other changes. A symbolic example. The 22nd Congress decided (unanimously) on the erection on Red Square of a monument to the victims of the “personality cult”. No such monument is yet to be seen. But a granite bust of Stalin stands on a pedestal over his grave by the Kremlin wall behind the Lenin mausoleum alongside other past prominent Soviet leaders.

Literature and art are sensitive areas in Soviet politics and pronouncements on these subjects are often a guide to general policies. The key paragraph in Brezhnev’s speech in the section on literature and art was:

However, we must not lose sight of the fact that in the development of our art there have been complicating factors. There were some who sought to reduce the diversity of present-day Soviet reality to problems that have irreversibly receded into the past as a result of work done by the party to overcome the consequences of the personality cult. Another extreme current among individual writers was an attempt to whitewash past phenomena which the party had subjected to emphatic and principled criticism, and to conserve ideas and views contravening the new, creative elements which the party has introduced into its practical and theoretical work in recent years.

The first trend referred of course to such writers as Solzhenitsyn and it was no surprise that here and in other references they were condemned. But the criticism of the other “extreme current” — interpreted as referring in particular to the die-hard Stalinist Kochetov — is of interest. It is a further indication of the desire of the CPSU leadership to maintain a balance, to avoid if possible literary scandals of which they have had more than enough in recent times. Some satisfaction at the criticism of the extreme Stalinists and the “balance” is justified, but the nature of the balance must be kept in mind. That is, art and literature are obviously still to be the subject of official edict and censorship. And the line of going quiet on Stalin is part of a general trend of emphasising the continuity of Soviet history, ironing out and glossing over the sharp changes and “distortions”.

Criticism of two extremes in the Brezhnev report does not mean that both will be treated equally in practice. Ultra-conservatives such as Kochetov and Shevtsov are published, are not expelled from the Writers’ Union and are not subject to the kind of vitriolic press articles directed against Solzhenitsyn. The future may see some
curbing of the ultras in the interests of cooling debate, but not their suppression or persecution.

In addition, the comfort in the Brezhnev report tended to be iced over by the subsequent speeches of two writers Mikhail Sholokhov and Alexander Chakovsky. It was rather tragic to see a talented writer like the former acting the demagogue, including in cheap jibes against the Austrian marxist Ernst Fischer and putting in commercials about royalties on books written long ago. But his hard line did not lose him his place on the Central Committee.

Editor of Literaturnaya Gazette A. Chakovsky stated agreement with the “profound evaluation” of the situation given by L. I. Brezhnev, but went on to take a harsh, authoritarian line. He became an alternative member of the C.C. So that if these two men are to be the leaders of the literary establishment, any hopes stemming from Brezhnev’s ostensibly balanced remarks must be qualified.

What, then, has happened to the “thaw”? Certainly there is little chance of a return to full-fledged Stalinism, although the list of people imprisoned or exiled for political dissent is long and growing. Progress continues in a number of ways, despite difficulties. Solzhenitsyn, for example, was expelled from the Writers’ Union, condemned in vitriolic terms in the official press — even linked with foreign reaction. His books are not published and former works are removed from libraries. Yet he continues to write, supported by people like the celebrated ‘cellist Mstislav Rostropovitch. His works are widely read in Samizdat (typed or roneoed copies). Rostropovitch was confined to the Soviet Union for a period for his espousal of Solzhenitsyn’s cause, but as far as is known, no other reprisals have been taken.

A bi-monthly journal The Chronicle of Current Events has been coming out regularly since late 1968 in Moscow and it must be assumed that the authorities know who is responsible. Apparently the consequences of closing it down are too high a price to pay for the advantage gained. It is, of course, true that scientists get a certain latitude because of their importance in the economy, but public opinion is undoubtedly a factor. People’s hopes cannot be kindled and easily doused.

What is the future for democratic transformation in the USSR? I have yet to read or hear a coherent and convincing answer to this question. The official Soviet view that everything is being done by the Party to ensure the development of socialist democracy does not convince in view of the clashes in this area, and the fact
that the Party leadership itself is immune from public criticism.

But the lack of widespread debate in the Soviet Union among those with views different from those of the leadership has meant that only scrappy, often naive views of the future are produced. All that can be done here is to sketch some of the political, economic and social forces pressing for change and those resisting it.

Some observers place their hopes on the younger generation who are well-educated, and who it is hoped, will not fit in with bureaucracy, with restrictions, but will see that the development of their country calls for free and open discussion of all questions. Rising levels of education are not compatible with lists of banned books or grandiloquent speeches full of “unbreakables” “indestructibles” and “eternals”. In practice, bans and taboos are often ignored. As already pointed out, strict enforcement of these would lead to severe dislocation of the country’s economic and social life. In particular, the sciences cannot develop within a straight-jacket of a rigid official ideology (known by the acronym of “diamat”) and shades of Lysenkoism.

Such hopes for the young generation have a good foundation, but other factors operate to take the edge off the young generation as a force for democratic change. One factor for conformism and conservatism comes from progress itself. A growing proportion of young intellectuals come from families of industrial workers and peasants and the resultant social lift partially at least engenders acceptance of the status quo. In addition, the Soviet education system, good as it is, is not distinguished by its encouragement of independent thought and debate. Cynicism is also widespread. After all, no-one earns a good living by disagreeing with the chiefs. And even if what you learn in “diamat” lessons is not much use at chemistry lectures it is worth your while to pass in “diamat” and to be able to use the phraseology when required. This is without mentioning the strong direct pressures put on people to conform. These tend to fragment, even atomise those with dissenting views who disagree with each other on what course to take.

The censored press produces some peculiar effects among people with disagreements with the present leadership. While remaining firm socialists (it is ridiculous to suggest that the “dissidents” favor a return to capitalism or are ideological agents of the imperialists) some tend to react one-sidedly to propaganda and begin to believe the opposite of what they are told. Hence some of the naive ideas about life under capitalism, since in rejecting the exaggerations some reject much of the truth. They are thus ill-equipped to cope with the reality of the advanced capitalist countries, whether
observed directly or through the distorting lens of the BBC or Voice of America. Lack of information and debate severely hampers their ability to formulate a realistic program.

Deeply entrenched methods of working and thinking which thrive in conditions of restricted debate are a powerful conservative force. It has been suggested that this was an important factor in depriving the economic reforms of some of their force. Carrying out directives and plans handed down from a central ministry and earning a bonus for fulfilment feels safe. More responsibility and initiative in the hands of local managers and executives means venturing into the unknown. Link this feeling with the reluctance of top bodies to delegate functions and progress is difficult.

In any society the middle levels of the bureaucracy are a conservative force and this appears to be the case in the USSR. A transition to a self-managing society, free from petty controls and censorship would mean the loss of power and some privilege of an important stratum and in the meantime, the top leaders rely on this stratum for the everyday running of affairs. Some say that the power of the middle bureaucracy is decisive and cite examples of necessary, progressive decisions from on top being bogged down on the way to full enactment. While there is something in this view, I feel it is exaggerated, involving among other things the old Russian belief that the man on top is allright — it's his underlings who are the trouble.

"Bureaucracy" is often criticised in the USSR when it gums up the works, and makes blunders. Muddlers, those associated with red tape, minor or middle officials who are pompous or inhuman towards the public, petty snobs — come in for stiff criticism in the press and particularly in satirical journals such as *Krokodil*. Top leaders can get a round of applause at Congresses for words of criticism of the petty bureaucrat. But they themselves are immune. It is here in the Central Committee and particularly the Politbureau that the real bureaucracy — the rule of those in office — and the real power resides.

Speculation naturally arises as to whether change can be initiated from this direction. Could another Khrushchov come forward, perhaps in conditions of a difficult situation requiring serious change? No-one should wish a crisis situation on the Soviet Union in the hope of positive change, as there is no guarantee of change proceeding this way. It may be some time before the future becomes clearer. For the present, further development of the processes already under way is the most likely course. The 24th Congress of the CPSU did little to change this situation.
The Revolution in Latin America

As elsewhere, the revolution in Latin America, a vast continent with a great variety of conditions, is revealing very distinctive features and diverse views on the way forward.

One view is that typified by Carlos Marighela, and we publish here a part of his *Minimanual of the Urban Guerrilla*, and a *Manifesto* presented during the occupation of the National Radio of Sao Paulo, Brazil, on August 15, 1969.

Although conditions are very different indeed in Australia, *ALR* feels that the line of reasoning of all revolutionaries deserves our study, whether in Latin America, Asia, Africa, or in other developed capitalist countries. The following biographical notes were supplied by Alastair Davidson, who also translated the *Manifesto*.

CARLOS MARIGHELA was expelled from the Brazilian Communist Party during its Sixth Congress in December 1967 for having defended the theses of the Havana Congress of the Organisation of Latin American Solidarity in July-August of that year. He was then political secretary of the State Committee of Sao Paulo, and had succeeded in having the leading members of that committee accept the thesis that armed struggle was needed to fight the embourgeoisement of the Party as well. In February 1968, the communist group in Sao Paulo, under the leadership of Marighela, published a *Declaration* presenting themselves as an “open and dynamic group” independent of control “from within and without Brazil” and proposing a strategic plan which through urban guerrilla warfare and sabotage could lead to the creation of armed nuclei destined to become eventually a revolutionary army.

The undertaking was not confined to paper: throughout 1968, numerous bank robberies throughout the country and bombings of the offices of the military dictatorship and United States property showed that an armed struggle had effectively begun. An arms factory was attacked by a group of 40 men and three times pay-trains were expropriated at Rio and Sao Paulo. At the end of 1968 the government decided to prohibit press reports of Marighela’s activity. In the meantime captain Lamarca and his cell had joined straight from the ranks of the army.

In a *Message to the Bolivian People* at the beginning of 1969 Marighela underlined that the struggle of his group was the continuation of the action of Che Guevara and would have to become a vast movement of resistance against the dictatorship. High officials in the government admitted on February 12 that Brazil was in the course of “an advanced phase of revolutionary war”. In August, after the letter we publish below, the American ambassador was kidnapped, having the same effect on the world as the first victories of Fidel Castro. On November 4, 1969 Marighela was assassinated in Sao Paulo, being 58 when he died.

A DEFINITION OF THE URBAN GUERRILLA

THE CHRONIC STRUCTURAL CRISIS characteristic of Brazil today and its resultant political instability, are what have brought about the upsurge of revolutionary war in the country. The revo-
volutionary war manifests itself in the form of urban guerrilla warfare, psychological warfare, or rural guerrilla warfare. Urban guerrilla warfare or psychological warfare in the city depends on the urban guerrilla.

The urban guerrilla is a man who fights the military dictatorship with arms, using unconventional methods. A political revolutionary and an ardent patriot, he is a fighter for his country’s liberation, a friend of the people and of freedom. The area in which the urban guerrilla acts is in the large Brazilian cities. There are also bandits, commonly known as outlaws, who work in the big cities. Many times assaults by outlaws are taken as actions by urban guerrillas. The urban guerrilla, however, differs radically from the outlaw. The outlaw benefits personally from the action and attacks indiscriminately without distinguishing between the exploited and the exploiters, which is why there are so many ordinary men and women among his victims. The urban guerrilla follows a political goal and only attacks the government, the big capitalists and the foreign imperialists, particularly North Americans. Another element just as prejudicial as the outlaw and also operating in the urban area is the right-wing counter-revolutionary who creates confusion, assaults banks, hurls bombs, kidnaps, assassinates and commits the worst imaginable crimes against urban guerrillas, revolutionary priests, students and citizens who oppose fascism and seek liberty.

The urban guerrilla is an implacable enemy of the government and systematically inflicts damage on the authorities and on the men who dominate the country and exercise power. The principal task of the urban guerrilla is to distract, to wear out, to demoralise the militarists, the military dictatorship and its repressive forces and also to attack and destroy the wealth and property of the North Americans, the foreign managers and the Brazilian upper class.

The urban guerrilla is not afraid of dismantling and destroying the present Brazilian economic, political and social system, for his aim is to help the rural guerrilla and to collaborate in the creation of a totally new and revolutionary social and political structure, with the armed people in power. The urban guerrilla must have a certain minimal political understanding. To gain that he must read certain printed or mimeographed works such as; Guerrilla Warfare by Che Guevara; Memories of a Terrorist; Some Questions about the Brazilian; Guerrilla Operations and Tactics; On Strategic Problems and Principles; Certain Tactical Principles for Comrades Undertaking Guerrilla Operations; Organisational Questions; O Guerrilheiro.
The urban guerrilla is characterised by his bravery and decisive nature. He must be a good tactician and a good shot. The urban guerrilla must be a person of great astuteness to compensate for the fact that he is not sufficiently strong in arms, ammunition and equipment. The career militarists or the government police have modern arms and transport and can go about anywhere freely, using the force of their power. The urban guerrilla does not have such resources at his disposal and leads a clandestine existence. Sometimes he is a convicted person or is out on parole and is obliged to use false documents. Nevertheless, the urban guerrilla has a certain advantage over the conventional military or the police. It is that, while the military and the police act on behalf of the enemy, whom the people hate, the urban guerrilla defends a just cause, which is the people's cause.

The urban guerrilla's arms are inferior to the enemy's, but from a moral point of view, the urban guerrilla has an undeniable superiority. This moral superiority is what sustains the urban guerrilla. Thanks to it, the urban guerrilla can accomplish his principal duty, which is to attack and to survive. The urban guerrilla has to capture or divert arms from the enemy to be able to fight. Because his arms are not uniform, since what he has are expropriated or have fallen into his hands in different ways, the urban guerrilla faces the problem of a variety of arms and a shortage of ammunition. Moreover, he has no place to practise shooting and marksmanship. These difficulties have to be surmounted, forcing the urban guerrilla to be imaginative and creative, qualities without which it would be impossible for him to carry out his role as a revolutionary.

The urban guerrilla must possess initiative, mobility and flexibility, as well as versatility and a command of any situation. Initiative especially is an indispensable quality. It is not always possible to foresee everything, and the urban guerrilla cannot let himself become confused, or wait for orders. His duty is to act, to find adequate solutions for each problem he faces, and not to retreat. It is better to err acting than to do nothing for fear of erring. Without initiative there is no urban guerrilla warfare.

Other important qualities in the urban guerrilla are the following: To be a good walker. To be able to stand up against fatigue, hunger, rain, heat. To know how to hide and to be vigilant. To conquer the art of dissembling. Never to fear danger. To behave the same by day as by night. Not to act impetuously. To have unlimited patience. To remain calm and cool in the worst conditions and situations. Never to leave a track or trail. Not to get discouraged.
In the face of the almost insurmountable difficulties of urban warfare, sometimes comrades weaken, leave, give up the work. The urban guerrilla is not a businessman in a commercial firm nor is he a character in a play. Urban guerrilla warfare, like rural guerrilla warfare, is a pledge the guerrilla makes to himself. When he cannot face the difficulties, or knows that he lacks the patience to wait, then it is better to relinquish his role before he betrays his pledge, for he clearly lacks the basic qualities necessary to be a guerrilla.

**How the urban guerrilla lives and subsists**

The urban guerrilla must live by his work or professional activity. If he is known and sought by the police, if he is convicted or is on parole, he must go underground and sometimes must live hidden. Under such circumstances, the urban guerrilla cannot reveal his activity to anyone, since that is always and only the responsibility of the revolutionary organisation in which he is participating. The urban guerrilla must have a great capacity for observation, must be well informed about everything, principally about the enemy's movements, and must be very searching and knowledgeable about the area in which he lives, operates, or through which he moves.

But the fundamental and decisive characteristic of the urban guerrilla is that he is a man who fights with arms; given this condition, there is very little likelihood that he will be able to follow his normal profession for long without being identified. The role of expropriation thus looms as clear as high noon. It is impossible for the urban guerrilla to exist and survive without fighting to expropriate. Thus, within the framework of the class struggle, as it inevitably and necessarily sharpens, the armed struggle of the urban guerrilla points towards two essential objectives:

(a) the physical liquidation of the chiefs and assistants of the armed forces and of the police,

(b) the expropriation of government resources and those belonging to the big capitalists, latifundists and imperialists, with small expropriations used for the maintenance of individual urban guerrillas and large ones for the sustenance of the revolution itself.

It is clear that the armed struggle of the urban guerrilla also has other objectives. But here we are referring to the two basic objectives, above all expropriation. It is necessary for every urban guerrilla to keep in mind always that he can only maintain his existence if he is disposed to kill the police and those dedicated to repression and if he is determined—truly determined—to expropriate the wealth of the big capitalists, the latifundists and the imperialists.
One of the fundamental characteristics of the Brazilian revolution is that from the beginning it developed around the expropriation of the wealth of the major bourgeois, imperialists and latifundist interests, without excluding the richest and most powerful commercial elements engaged in the import-export business. And by expropriating the wealth of the principal enemies of the people, the Brazilian revolution was able to hit them at their vital centre, with preferential and systematic attacks on the banking network that is to say, the most telling blows were levelled against capitalism’s nerve system. The bank robberies carried out by the Brazilian urban guerrillas hurts such big capitalists as Moreira Salles and others, the foreign firms which insure and reinsure the banking capital, the imperialist companies, the federal and state governments—all of them systematically expropriated as of now.

The fruit of these expropriations has been devoted to the work of learning and perfecting urban guerrilla techniques, the purchase, the production and the transportation of arms and ammunition for the rural areas, the security apparatus of the revolutionaries, the daily maintenance of the fighters, of those who have been liberated from prison by armed force and those who are wounded or persecuted by the police, or to any kind of problem concerning comrades liberated from jail, or assassinated by the police and the military dictatorship.

The tremendous costs of the revolutionary war must fall on the big capitalists, on imperialism and the latifundists and on the government too, both federal and state, since they are all exploiters and oppressors of the people. Men of the government, agents of the dictatorship and of North American imperialism principally, must pay with their lives for the crimes committed against the Brazilian people.

In Brazil, the number of violent actions carried out by urban guerrillas, including deaths, explosions, seizures of arms, ammunition, and explosives, assaults on banks and prisons, etc., is significant enough to leave no room for doubt as to the actual aims of the revolutionaries. The execution of the CIA spy Charles Chandler, a member of the US Army who came from the war in Vietnam to infiltrate the Brazilian student movement, the military henchmen killed in bloody encounters with urban guerrillas, all are witness to the fact that we are in full revolutionary war and that the war can be waged only by violent means. This is the reason why the urban guerrilla uses armed struggle and why he continues to concentrate his activity on the physical extermination of the agents of repression and to dedicate twenty-four hours a day to expropriation from the people’s exploiters.
MANIFESTO to the Brazilian People

As supporters of revolutionary war, we are engaged in it, in Brazil, with all our strength. The police accuse us of being terrorists and thieves, but we are simply revolutionaries who conduct an armed fight against the present Brazilian military dictatorship and North American imperialism. Our objects are:

(1) To overthrow the military dictatorship, to annul all its decisions since 1964, and to form a popular revolutionary government.

(2) To expel North Americans from the country, to expropriate the companies, assets and property of these people and their collaborators.

(3) To expropriate the large landowners, liquidate large land holdings and to transform and improve the living conditions of peasants and workers and middle class, at the same time stopping the policy of increasing taxes, prices and rents.

(4) To abolish censorship and institute the liberty of the press, of criticism and of organisation.

(5) To take Brazil out of the position of a satellite of US foreign policy and make it, on the world arena, an independent nation, re-establishing diplomatic relations with socialist countries and with Cuba at the same time.

To fight the military dictatorship and attain the objects which we have listed above, we receive neither arms nor aid from abroad. Our arms are captured in Brazil from the police and the army barracks. Or they are consigned by revolutionary soldiers to the revolution when they desert from the armed forces of the dictatorship, as Captain Lamarca and the valiant sergeants, corporals and soldiers who accompanied him on the withdrawal from Quitauna garrison did. We hope that similar operations will continue, causing despair and demoralisation among the thugs and reinforcement of the revolution.

As for money, it is public and notorious that the revolutionaries rob banks and expropriate those who enrich themselves through brutally exploiting the Brazilian populace. The legend of Moscow, Peking and Havana “gold” is finished. The bankers can’t complain since in the last year alone they have accumulated earnings of 400 billion old cruzeiros. While matters proceed like that for them, bank employees earn a very low salary or have to work twenty five years to reach a salary which is double that of poverty. The government, for its part, cannot say anything, given that a minister as corrupt as Andreaza owns flats worth a billion old cruzeiros and receives bribes from foreign companies.
The dictatorship accuses us of attacks on people and murders, but
does not admit having murdered Marco Antonio Braz de Calvalho,
“Escoteiro” Nelson, Jose de Almeida, Sergeant Lucas and many
other patriots. And it does not wish to admit that prisoners are
tortured by pau de arara, electric shock and other methods which
would make Nazis redden with envy. The methods which the
Brazilian military dictatorship uses to fight and repress the people
are unworthy and barbarous methods, destined to defend the
particular interests of the military people in power and those of
big capitalists, big landowners and US imperialism. On the other
hand, the methods the revolutionaries adopt to fight the military
dictatorship are legitimate and inspired by patriotic sentiments.
No honest man can accept the dishonour and monstrous nature
of the regime instituted by the armed forces of Brazil.

The struggle has begun: in a year of armed activity we have
succeeded in inflicting severe punishment on the enemy, and it
already has to count its dead and recognize, albeit through gritted
teeth, that revolutionary war exists. From the beginning of opera­tions to today, armed groups have continued to expropriate banks,
national and foreign and bank capital’s insurance companies, making
a wide breach in the Brazilian bank network. And in the future
they will proceed to expropriate great businessmen, imperialist
enterprises and federal and state governments. Among the actions
already carried out by the armed groups and comprising the
heroic guerrilla operation which freed Sergeant Antonio Prestes and
other comrades from Lemos de Brito jail in the middle of Rio de
Janeiro; the execution of the North American Captain Chandler,
a Vietnam war criminal who was sent to Brazil as a CIA spy
(another proof that revolutionary armed groups defend our
sovereignty and protect national interests); and demonstrations
against Rockefeller especially in Rio, Sao Paulo and Brasilia, in
which students played a particular part which shows that the
Americans are repudiated in Brazil and can count on the support
of the dictatorship only. But this is a dictatorship whose policy
of national betrayal has become too open to be hidden or masked by
the gorillas.

The revolutionary war which we are making is a prolonged war,
which demands the participation of everybody. It is a ferocious
war against North American imperialism and against the Brazilian
military dictatorship which acts as an agent of the United States
in our country. It is the continuation of the heroic struggle of Che
Guevara to free the whole of Latin America which he started in
Bolivia. It is a deep struggle, which proposes the complete trans-
formation of Brazilian society. All the armed revolutionary groups which are fighting must continue the urban guerrilla, as we have done systematically to date.

We must attack from all sides with many different armed groups, in small numbers, separated from each other and even without mutual contact with the aim of dispersing the government forces which are hunting us. We must gradually increase our actions in the urban guerrilla, with a series of unexpected actions, so that the troops of the dictatorship cannot leave the urban perimeter without leaving the city unprotected. Such a situation, disastrous for the military dictatorship, would allow us then to let loose the country guerrilla contemporaneously with the already uncontrollable city rebellion. In order that the masses participate in the struggle against the military dictatorship and for the liberation of the country from the United States yoke our next step must be the struggle in the country.

This will be the year of rural guerrilla. This is the hour and the moment of the peasantry whose instinct in knowing the terrain, cunning in facing the enemy, and capacity to communicate with the exploited, oppressed and humiliated of the whole country, constitute together a terrible revolutionary weapon. To arouse the countryside, engage in the struggle for land, to liquidate the large landholders, to burn their plantations, to butcher their animals to kill the hunger of the hungry, to squat on land, to execute the grileiros (strongarm men) and the North Americans allied to the grileiros in the sale of land and dirty business which harms national interest, to carry onto the large landholdings of the country the same worry and terror in which the military, the imperialists and the dominant classes of the city already find themselves, these are the objectives to reach in the second phase of revolutionary war.

Without abandoning the urban guerrilla, the revolutionary armed groups must help the development of the rural struggle through their heroic activity.

Our efforts must converge on the building and reinforcement of the armed alliance of the workers, peasants and their alliance with the students, the intellectuals, the priests and the women. This alliance is the pedestal of the rural struggle and from the rural guerrilla will emerge the Peoples Liberation Army of Brazil.

For the unity of the Brazilian People.
Down with the military Dictatorship.
Out with the Americans.
Ideology — a Static Definition of Reality

IDEOLOGY HAS BEEN APPROACHED from two perspectives, the first treats the concept neutrally as the mode of organisation of perceptual information (external reality, including ideas) while the second treats ideology within the framework of an objective reality that is knowable, ideology being seen as a distortion of this reality.

Weber\(^1\) can be approached as a representative of the first school of thought — ideology is viewed as a system of beliefs about reality, ethically neutral, held either individually or by a group. Weber sees ideas coalescing around interests via ‘elective affinity’ but has no systematic theory of ideology. The relationship of ideas and beliefs to particular social characteristics is placed in a value-free context. Weber identifies particular ideas that are congruent with particular social formations (e.g. the protestant ethic and capitalism) but there is no value judgement placed on the content consciousness (language) and may serve as a brake to consciousness.

\(^1\) Although Weber has no explicit theory of ‘ideology’, because the development of his notion of the interplay between ‘ideal and material interests’ has been described as a ‘dialogue with Marx’s ghost’ (a dialogue particularly with the ghost’s notion of ideology), followers of Weber have regarded him as having reformulated the theory of ideology. Thus Weber’s ‘theory of ideology’ may be found in his discussions of the relation between ‘ideal and material interests’ in Gerth, H.H. & Mills, C.W. (eds.), *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*. New York, Oxford University Press, 1947 and Weber, M., *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*. London, Allen & Unwin, 1930.
of the beliefs themselves, rather they are treated as social facts and a part of the total social context. On the individual level this approach is characterised by the concept formation notions expressed by Piaget. Piaget\(^2\) holds that the child stamps his spontaneous concepts with his own personality and has his non-spontaneous concepts affected by adults. Again the use to which these concepts are put or the nature of the input is not ethically questioned.

These approaches view the organisation of beliefs about reality as ends in themselves for study, they pass no judgements in relation to the congruence between perceived reality and 'absolute' reality. It is a relativistically oriented study which seeks to explain human action within its own relative frame. Barnes takes this ethically neutral system to its extreme, stating that "an ideology is a belief system that is internally consistent and consciously held".\(^3\)

Marx\(^4\) is the major proponent of the second orientation, an orientation which states that reality is knowable but ideology is a purposive distortion of this reality. This concept of ideology is based on an interest theory of social action which states that the context is not neutral but responsive to a particular formulation of reality ordered and organised by a particular dominant interest group.

From this viewpoint the expression of a total reality is ordered by reference to a partial reality which masquerades as the total and serves to organise reality through a pre-existent frame. Lefebvre\(^5\) suggests six characteristics of this conception. Firstly ideologies start in fragmentary, partial reality; they refract (not reflect) reality via pre-existing representations, that is in 'acceptable form'; ideologies distort praxis by constructing an abstract, unreal, fictitious theory of the whole; ideologies are (a) general, speculative and abstract (b) they represent determinate, limited and special interests; they have some basis in reality but can only be evaluated post facto; finally in this view ideologies mediate between praxis and

Effectively, the partial reality provides the meaning framework within which all new information (in fact all information) is filtered


\(^4\) The concept of ideology is found in most of Marx's works; a good exposition however, can be found in Marx, K. & Engels, F., *The German Ideology Parts I & III* (trans. R. Pascal), New York, International Publishers Co., 1947.

and ordered. Ideology is thus the context, ordered and organised by a particular interest in the guise of general interest, of partial reality in the guise of total reality, a totalised totality that integrates meaning under a dominant and pervasive system. In this sense ideology is a reification, an extrapolation of a limited range of values from the total range, an investment of this chosen range with the qualities of the total and a resolving of the total as an expression of the partial. This view does not see ideology as unreal but sees it as the real expression of a biased or unreal content. Individuals and groups can experience reality within this limited context, thus ordering their perceptions of reality on the basis of an untrue and distorted frame.

Mannheim’s conceptual schema may be viewed as serving an integrative function which at once reorganises and broadens the total concept in such a way that both the above approaches are comprehended. Mannheim makes two distinctions within his approach to ideology. The anterior condition of all ideological expression is formulated as the ‘particular’ and ‘total’. Seen as a historically developing condition the particular relates to one idea within a total context of ideas while the general can be viewed as the total context itself.

This condition is seen by Mannheim to precede that of ‘specific’ and ‘general’ formulations of ideas in action. ‘Specific’ ideology relates to the ideality of a definite group, raised to the status of objective validity and seen by that group as the datum from which views of opponent groups may be assessed as distortions of this reality and consequently labelled ideologies. This view is seen by Mannheim to precede the recognition by all groups of the relativity, of their own reference frames. In this final phase, labelled ‘general’ by Mannheim, there is a reflexive recognition by each group that not only are its opponents’ views ideological but its own are open to the same construction.

If relativism is considered to be the total context, all formulations of the field hold equal validity in terms of the knowing subject, i.e. they are true for him. However, the subject is object for any other’s totalisation of the fields so that the relationships within the field are unique to each subject. This means that there is no basis for reciprocal recognition of an identical field and every statement about the field by every subject within the field holds validity only

7 Ibid., pp. 57-62.
8 Ibid., pp. 67-74.
in terms of the author of the statement. Consequently for explanatory purposes every explanation is of equal value, but this reduces the notion of explanation to idiosyncratic description. Each phenomenon is unique and therefore explanation is impossible.

So far relativism has been posed as the mutually exclusive alternative to absolutism. This separation is in the frame of Aristotelian logic and in these terms is not possible to resolve within itself. Resolution of this dilemma is only possible by recourse to an alternative form of reason—dialectical thinking. This provides a transcendent synthesis which retotalises both absolute and relative frames of reference within a new epistemology which is designed to avoid the rigidly oppositional thinking of the Aristotelian system. If the initial assumption is one of change rather than stasis then the law of identity does not apply. From the assumption of change, reality must be viewed as in constant process, i.e. it is at all times, becoming other than it is. Consequently reality is seen as a becoming totality.

From this approach epistemology is concerned with the meaning of expressions — the way expressions are ordered in their changing context. Each act of ordering the context in a particular way provides at once a partial and transitory formulation of reality. This act of ordering is a totalisation of the field in such a way as to invest it with particular meaning. Because of the basic assumption that change is the condition of the environment, the particular totalisation is one moment which has no continuity — the act of totalisation is at the same time providing the conditions for de-totalisation and thus necessitating a retotalisation if meaning is to be continued. On the other hand, a totality is a finality, the process of which is frozen into a unitary, objective frame. Given that the basic assumption is change then a totality is inevitably a distortion of process and a false representation of reality as object. This formulation of reality corresponds to Marx's concepts of reification.

Marx identifies reification as the result of a projection of


11 The following account of Marx's notion of 'reification' draws on Lefebvre, H. Op. Cit., pp. 48-49.
object qualities onto what is essentially a voluntary human construction. Thus categories are given the qualities of things; they become in-itself-others and are viewed as possessing individual existence beyond their construction. That is they are viewed as entities of themselves. From this point of view the notion of say, 'consumer' is reified if the concept is invested with qualities that provide it with an existence of itself, divorced from the context of the category. 'Consumer' as a concept is essentially only the form that an abstracted series of qualities takes and is hypothetical construct. To then view the people who may be subsumed under this category as 'consumers' and to act towards them as interchangeable units, each a perfect substitute for the other, is to abstract the people and relate only to the category.

The whole concept of reification retains the implications of distortion which are characteristic of the Marxian notion. For the analysis of society it is necessary to retain the distortion component in any conception of 'ideology'. Weber, and those theorists who view ideology in an ethically neutral context, divest the concept of any explanatory power and reduce it to mere description of concept formation. From this point of view there is no necessity to have a concept of ideology at all.

In the Marxian tradition ideology is used to debunk alternative conceptions of reality in terms of their divergence from that definition of reality posed as objective within the Marxian frame. This necessitates an approach which assumes an objective reality which may be known and is based in an absolutist epistemology oriented towards the discovery of the truth. In effect this approach turns the concept of 'truth' into a reific object, with a particular formation being expressed as an absolute. Truth is regarded as timeless, independent of context, contained within itself, an absolute formulation of a static reality. As soon as the concept of ideology is introduced however, the 'reality' of all formulations must be assessed as ideological, thus introducing a relativistic content to the apparent absolutist frame. The Marxian reality may be assessed as a partial reality masquerading as total and consequently made to appear as an arbitrary choice in the same manner as any other ideology. This is an inherent problem in the traditional Marxian analysis of ideology. Weber's approach may be justifiably criticised by Marxists as pure description while the Marxian approach may be criticised by Weberians as avoiding the inherent problem of relativism; consequently a new synthesis is required to transcend

both these problems.

With an epistemology that is concerned with meaning (i.e. the subjective context placed on object formations by an active other) relativism is built into the framework and both the absolute and relative context are apprehended as constituents of one becoming reality. This formulation also includes the assumption of change as the systematic context of social reality. In terms of meaning there is no single timeless reality: it is the apprehension of an object's expression in a context which invests the object with meaning. An epistemology concerned with this has relativism at its basis; that is, it is concerned with the definition of an object via its relation to a particular context—the way in which meaning is ascribed.

Taking this view of epistemology, it is still possible to analyse society within the framework of ideology as distortion. Thus while relativism is retained, the analytic value of the concept of ideology has not been sacrificed. Ideology may be viewed as reification—which is the static principle of order through which all information is processed—so that a partial formulation of reality is raised to the status of an eternal comprehensive system. Reality takes the form of totalisation, detotalisation and retotalisation where the knowing subject actively comprehends his environment by projecting a system of order. In effect the author invests the external environment with a subjective condition and at the same time re-introjects this project as understanding. This operates to provide a context of meaning whereby the subject ascribes external objects with particular values and orders the perceived field in terms of the relationships of these values as a method of comprehension. This process involves activity on the part of the knowing subject who thus totalises his field. At the same time this particular ordering of the field adds a new element to the field—the projected meaning—and consequently a new integration of the field is required. This is the process of detotalisation which necessitates retotalisation. Thus totalisation, detotalisation and retotalisation are inextricable moments of a single praxis and underly the concept of the becoming nature of reality.

Ideology is a denial of the becoming nature of reality and is the imposition of a single static framework which is a totality that freezes the process of totalisation, detotalisation and retotalisation. Being a static reality, ideology distorts the real process.

\[13\] From the references above it is clear that Mannheim was aware of the validity of these counter-criticisms and unsuccessfully attempted synthesis of the two schools. While he recognized the need for a frame of reference with in-built propensity for change, he never employed such a frame nor did he realise its full implications.
Capitalism and the Mass Media

UNTIL THE EARLY YEARS of this century Australian mass communications comprised essentially the press. Press proprietors, including metropolitan press proprietors, were not big businessmen. The amount of capital required to start up a new city newspaper was very small, compared with today, when a figure of ten million dollars would represent a bare minimum. Newspaper proprietors were almost as numerous as newspapers.¹ This last is a point of some significance, especially when one considers that today the remaining Big Four city press rings (Herald and Weekly Times Ltd., Melbourne; John Fairfax Ltd., Sydney; Australian Consolidated Press Holdings Ltd., Sydney; News Ltd., Adelaide-Sydney) completely control the surviving fifteen big-city dailies, as well as the several weeklies (e.g. Consolidated Press's Women's Weekly etc.) and specialist papers (e.g. Fairfax's Financial Review).²

Although even in those days the press as a whole spoke prevailingly for some section of the Establishment, there were few, if any issues, on which the press spoke entirely with one voice on behalf of one class. The situation was to some extent competitive and also the press owner, or owner-editor, was not for the most part so heavily involved with his backers and clientele as to render the notion of an Australian 'free' press as utterly ridiculous as it is today.

But today the liberal tradition of 'independence' of press ownership and 'freedom of the press' as a specially important case of freedom of speech, continues on in the equation of this independence and freedom with its antithesis, monopoly one-class ownership of the right to public communication. The liberal phrases remain the same, the historical reality is strikingly different. To begin with, economic survival in industrial and post-industrial society depends upon bigness. This helps to explain why press interests moved in on commercial radio during the nineteen-twenties and thirties and on commercial television during the nineteen-fifties. These are plain ordinary examples of horizontal monopoly trends in capitalist enterprise, although radio and television

² See H. A. Mayer, op. cit., and Annual reports of the Australian Broadcasting Control Board.

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are subject to the provisions of the Broadcasting and Television Act 1942-1969 — according to the letter of the law at any rate. For example, Section 92 of this Act provides that a person (or company) shall not have a shareholding, voting or financial interest exceeding five per cent in more than one commercial television licence in the same capital city, more than one commercial television licence in the same territory, or more than two licences in the whole of Australia unless these interests were held prior to 17th December, 1964.

Yet it does not seem to strike people generally as odd that no government body exists to regulate and oversee press activities in the public interest comparably to the Australian Broadcasting Control Board in the fields of commercial television and radio, nor that nothing approximating a genuinely independent press outlet (i.e. one independent of both government and big business) exists, whereas in radio and television we have the Australian Broadcasting Commission, the latter, be it said, by the skin of our teeth.

Corporate capitalism always colours even those institutions embedded in the context which represent tendencies towards a degree of responsible socialist planning. Influences of this nature stem objectively from the economy, and subjectively they seep in through the top echelons of social institutions, whose leadership can unfortunately be fully relied on to function as well trained and organised cadres within an integrated neo-capitalist system.4

However, the existence of some of the provisions of the Broadcasting and Television Act, of the Australian Broadcasting Commission, and even — saving the mark — of the Australian Broadcasting Control Board, at least makes it possible to hope that the potentially very powerful medium of television will not inevitably follow the pattern set by the metropolitan daily press, wherein from a position in 1903 where 17 owners controlled 21 dailies serving a national population of approximately 4 million people, today, two thirds of a century later, a stage of monopolisation has been reached where only 4 owners entirely control the 15 metropolitan dailies serving a national population of approximately 12 million people. In noting these developments it should of course not be forgotten that in fact the commercial press rings have the lion's share of the already existing horizontal monopoly trend in

3 It has occurred to Professor Mayer. See H. A. Mayer, op. cit., Chapter 16: “Press Reform?”
4 Unfortunately not only among commercial managements. See Elizabeth Riddell’s article “Reluctant Limelighter”, in The Australian; November 21, 1970.
metropolitan commercial television and the important commercial radio networks (e.g. the predominant ownership and complete control by John Fairfax Ltd. of the leading Macquarie Broadcasting network, which netted a record profit last financial year, mainly from canned pop music — for along with every other of Australia’s 114 commercial radio stations it does not employ even one professional musician on a full-time basis).  

But, in addition to the serious problems thus presented to Australian musicians, actors, producers, writers, cameramen and in fact artists and skilled communicators, technicians of all kinds, it is also very relevant to ask, what is the real cost to the Australian people of this mass media monopoly trend? What has brought this trend about, and how do we find the means to finally overcome it?

A suggested explanatory model

According to the surplus-value theory of the relations of production under capitalism, nineteenth century capitalism depended for its success on what was, in effect, a permanent legally sanctioned garnishee of the worker’s wages.

In the nineteenth century, monopoly growth was largely horizontal, towards neighbouring, similar industries — while in the twentieth century the ‘vertical’ monopoly — the engulfing of the successive production and distribution stages within whole sectors of industry, has come into its heyday. Moreover, the era in which this latter type of monopoly growth has been successfully superimposed has been the age of the flourishing and diversification of the mass media, the ‘electric’ age, as McLuhan has been pleased to call it, or the age of radio, television and automated printing. The mass media group of industries has displayed conspicuously the monopoly trend characteristics of capitalist enterprise taken more generally.

The metropolitan daily press relies heavily on advertising, which contributes on average about two-thirds of its revenue, and since all the commercial television and radio operators are almost entirely dependent upon advertising for their revenue, with luxury consumer advertising bulking even larger here than in the case of metropolitan dailies and most weekly magazines. Just as some heavy industries supply producer goods to the manufacturers of consumer goods, so the mass media industry is seen as existing to supply a special kind of ‘distribution’ service to meet a special kind of demand from the mass distributors of capitalist production.

6 Personal communication from Mr. G. J. Goodwin, President, Professional Musicians’ Union.
The mass media controllers are in fact marketing not merely marketing power itself, but also the services of a socially automated persuasive machine for operating drastically upon the individual's scale of economic preferences so as to distort his pattern of wants in the interests of corporate capitalist profitability. That is, they undertake to maximise profits for the big corporations at the expense of the consumer, and therefore, in the long run, of the community—but in such a manner that the process is not perceived essentially in this form by the consumer or the community.

Hence it emerges from a sociological analysis that just as the nineteenth century capitalist was able, by centralising ownership of the means of production in his own hands, to exploitatively coerce the unorganised and relatively defenceless worker, so the twentieth century corporation has been able to acquire an unsuspected politico-economic longevity by similarly centralising the means of public social communication, in order to persuasively influence the today equally unorganised and if anything more defenceless consumer.

Many well-intentioned people, including not a few on the Liberal side, have expressed shocked disappointment at the failure of moral conscience implied by the Federal Government's shelving of the Vincent Report7 since the adjournment of the abortive debate of April 1964 following the tabling of the Report in the House in December 1962. The reason lies in the big businessman's concept of what a television licence actually is for. Why, for example, would one reasonably expect the commercial television operator or his representatives to strive towards, and even seek to have economically protected, a local industry of social communications, when the mass communicator's intention from the outset, in alliance with the big business advertisers and their agents, is to transmit social communications of basically three kinds only:

1. escapist fantasy (promoting audience 'entry' response)
2. social-stereotype indoctrination (promotion of 'other-directed', group-subservient, mass conformity response)
3. affluence-expectancy inculcation (promotion of the purchasing consummation response pattern in terms of a persuasively inculcated scale of economic preferences) —

and when types (1) and (2) already come in a cheap package deal in the standard American format, and in such a form as to smooth the path for the advertising agent's type (3) message as well

7 A Senate Select Committee constituted of four Government and three Opposition members and chaired by the late Senator V. S. Vincent. This Committee sat in all States and heard evidence from scores of witnesses.
as — if not better than — any noticeably different Australian format is likely to do?⁸

Sociological models and field-survey evidence from the US

One way of viewing the evidence and arguments above, and empirical research findings of investigators (omitted here for lack of space—Ed.) is as a statement of how the dynamics of capitalism — and, a fortiori, neo-capitalism, — necessarily generate mass alienation. In the pioneering and middle stages of developing capitalism, objective and subjective alienation accompanied each other. The worker was aware of his chains, and also of his misery. This left some hope of his joining with others to take action in defence of his own and his family's right to live. Today, however, the degree of objective alienation has proceeded to an unprecedented stage, so that an embourgeoise working class is scarcely any longer aware of the iron totalitarianism of the ideology being brought to a beautiful point in the modern television commercial, which holds out ever more alluring promises of self-fulfilment while the commercial racket which it serves enjoins the acceptance of an unprecedented degree of authoritarian conformism, both as docile economic consumer and as subservient subject of a one-party state masquerading as a parliamentary democracy.

On the other hand, it has often been argued by social psychologists, especially in the United States, that the mass media cannot come to wield a powerful influence in a profit-motivated social system, because it will be in the interests of the mass communicators and their sponsors to pander to the status quo. Thus, so the argument runs, their activities can, and do, only make for the re-entrenchment of a prevailing set of social norms.

Since the mass media are supported by great business concerns geared into the current social and economic system, the media contribute to the maintenance of that system.⁹

A similar argument has been advanced by Joseph T. Klapper,¹⁰ Director of Social Research for Columbia Broadcasting System — echoed in Australia, when needed, in respect of commercial television, by Mr. Arthur Cowan, General Manager of the Federa-

⁸ For a fuller explication of the foregoing, see R. Thomson: "The effects of mass media on mental health in the community"; in Mental Health in Australia; Vol. 1; No 3; July 1965.


tion of Australian Commercial Television Stations. The media simply 'give the public what the public wants', which is mainly entertainment, for the same sort of reasons as lead the automobile industry to make and sell to the public the kind of car the public wants.

But who tells the public what it wants? According to an imposing array of data gathered in US field survey studies conducted mainly in the forties and fifties, it is the peer-group "opinion-leader" who effectively does this. In what was perhaps the most ambitious of these field surveys, Katz and Lazarsfeld purported to show that in personal decisions such as changes of intention on how to vote, what food or clothes to buy, what particular film to go and see, the subjects only utilise mass media communications, including persuasive communications, for informational purposes. The subjects' decisions appeared to be "legitimised" far more by their looking to prevailing opinion in their own groups, be these family, work, school, leisure or other friendship groups, than by messages from the mass media. And prevailing opinion in the peer-group, they claim their findings would imply, is determined very largely by the group's "opinion-leader" and opinion-seeker except — very significantly — in the area of voting decisions, i.e. in the formation and maintenance of political affiliations, where persuasive influence in primary-group nets was found to trickle down from subjects in higher social strata. The implications of this finding should have been looked at more closely, and in the light of this it might also be worth taking a second look at the theoretical implications of the arguments of Lazarsfeld and Merton, and of the research findings of Katz, Lazarsfeld, Berelson and their colleagues.

Firstly, mass persuasion along certain lines can quite effectively change group norms in certain directions without ever in the least appearing to subjects as counter-normative. For example, mass persuasion can be used, and obviously has been used to immense effect, in order to develop a convergence of class norms to an overall petty bourgeois norm of commodity-orientated material affluence-expectation and status-seeking behaviour. Tendencies of

this kind are present in all classes in all societies, but in different degrees.

All that mass persuasive techniques do in the service of capitalism is to secure and maintain a propagandistic hegemony for a new religion of mechanistic materialism and an ideology of affluence. This does not appear as 'counter-normative' to their middle or working class groups, or to the leaders of opinion in these groups, for the material benefits offered are in fact endowed with some reward properties. It is merely that the worker as consumer is not encouraged to perceive what he has to sacrifice from his quality of life to obtain these rewards.

This 'bread and circuses' technique, which is the oldest ruling-class confidence trick in history, does not give offence or arouse hostility and resistance in the community in the way that, for example, police coercion typically does. But because it arouses little suspicion, induces a general social somnolence and stifles protest at its very source, does this mean that the technique is unsuccessful? Not at all. Because it is aimed precisely at constantly re-entrenching the power base of the ruling class. On the other hand, to say that it does not at the same time produce very great changes in individual and social consciousness is patently absurd. For example, have the techniques of mass persuasion been influential in altering the public image of appropriate forms of behaviour in relation to annually recurring ceremonial occasions and festivals such as Christmas, Easter, Mother’s Day, St. Valentine’s Day, etc., or have they not?

Secondly, to observe that personal decisions are mainly recalled as following interpersonal discussions, and not direct reception of messages from the mass media, is an idle exercise when the mass media elite, as representatives of their class, are able in advance to prescribe the areas of behaviour in which decisions are to be made, and the range of choice that exists for these decisions. The interpretation made by Klapper, for example, of the Katz-Lazarsfeld research findings is thoroughly fallacious because it equates some findings on quite trivial personal decisions of a private nature with proof that decisions of a major social and political importance are made at the grass roots level by “opinion-leaders” for their followers in all social strata, sanctifying the American liberal’s myth of “government of the people, by the people, for the people”.

What is being said here, amongst other things, is that it is in the last resort nonsensical to attempt to study the mass communications industry and its social effects without reference to the question
of national, and ultimately international, domination of the industry by powerful vested interests. And the role of governments in such a consortium is not to control but to service the industry and its backers.

For this reason it is also necessary to treat with caution the arguments of Marshall McLuhan\textsuperscript{12} to the effect that it is the inherent nature of mass communications, especially of the electronic-mosaic medium television, to dissolve all the restrictions on man's possibilities for total involvement with his environment, because of the constant quest after the mass market and especially the mass youth market of itself compelling the mass communicator and the mass advertiser to endorse and facilitate the rise of counterculture, counter-consensus and counter-hegemony — although there is a possible strategy implied in all that which should not be overlooked by the activist leaders of Australian mass media workers and their associations struggling to build counter-structures to offset the present hegemony of capitalist ideology fed to us as a daily diet through the mass media outlets.

To give an example, whereas television is often viewed as a means by which an elite can enforce conformity it can also act as a medium for expanding people's perceptions of the world and to this extent it is a liberating force. The former view tends to be held by conventional socialists who are mesmerised by the concentrated control of mass media; the latter would be the argument of the McLuhanites who would argue that control is irrelevant, for it is the medium itself which brings about the change.\textsuperscript{13}

Or, as McLuhan himself puts it, — "The medium is the message". Is it, in fact? The statement has a grain of truth, and maybe a precious one at that, but put so it is ultra-simplistic. One could perhaps separate this grain of truth if one said that while technological changes and consequent power struggles within the ranks of previous elites have by no means automatically delivered power into the hands of the workers or the ordinary people, they have at any rate raised this possibility, which has then depended for its realisation on the readiness, efficiency and indigenous power base of the popular leadership. (There is also the important question of how to overcome contradictions within a potential power base so as to actualise it as a historical reality, i.e. the problems of resolving differences between longer established progressive forces and various sections of the New Left in capitalist society today.) Electronics, computers, automation and television may indeed potentiate social revolution through the emergence of profound

\textsuperscript{12} Marshall McLuhan: \textit{Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man} 1964.

\textsuperscript{13} D. Altman: "Students in the electric age"; \textit{Arena}; 21; 1970; pp.3-18. For an example of the point of view criticised by Altman, see Dick Thomson: "On understanding McLuhan"; \textit{Australian Left Review}; 1969/4 (August-September):
qualitative changes in social relations of all kinds. These media
certainly bring a message of potentially far reaching change and
imply the historic necessity of such change at this stage. However,
the media themselves can only underwrite the change: they cannot
by their nature be of themselves equivalent to its undertaking. An
idea may be revolutionary, but an idea does not by itself make a
revolution. Revolutions have to be made by men.

In the shadow of the Satellite

Satellite relays make feasible an enormous centralisation of the
means of world communications, and quite evidently no doubt
remains that almost overwhelming control of this system rests in
the hands of US imperialists. “The medium is the message”, no
doubt about that. But not all the message, surely. Is there not
the additional implication of the complete and final extinction of
the big ‘national capitalists’, in Australia and other ‘western’
societies, at the hands of the very much bigger and more powerful
‘international’ capitalists of the United States?

These external contradictions pose both a threat and a promise
to workers in the Australian mass media industry, and therefore in
the final analysis to the Australian people whose interests are
vitally affected by what goes on in this whole area of industrial,
political and sociological struggle. Similarly with the rising levels
of technology forcing up the levels of community education, even
if in the early stages this is mainly in the narrow area of technical-
vocational preparation, and also with the insatiable need of the
“admass” machine itself to train more and more sophisticated
consumers, it is necessary for the mass media ideologues at least
to maintain the illusion of projecting a liberal image to their
customers, especially to their best buyers, the youth.

This constant striving for ‘liberalism’ inevitably must heighten
the internal contradictions of the whole mass-com system, because
essentially, as stated earlier, the role of the mass media enjoins
upon its workers, especially in the higher echelons, the necessity
to operate as back-up troops, for the attack on individual conscious-
ness and autonomy which is spearheaded by the advertising agents
who, for example, have brought the television commercial to a
formidable level of efficiency within a few short years.

Intellectually, advertisements subconsciously influence a journalist towards
recognition of the interdependence between advertising and news publishing,
and of course between his salary and advertising revenue. This situation,
while it may not affect his thinking in a direct manner, certainly becomes a
factor in his general ethical outlook.14

14 Allan Ashbolt: “The structure and functioning of mass communications in
Australia”, in Report From Mass Communications Conference, Sydney, Metro
The goal of all these commercial endeavours and adventures is the continuing legitimation of capitalist values and structures by teaching the increasingly privatised individual consumer a carefully selected series of appropriate incentives and stimulus-response connections, and effectively preventing him from discriminating the reward-potential of alternatives outside the range of corporate convenience, while at the same time ensuring that he preserves the illusion that he enjoys complete freedom of choice. It has already been suggested that this commercial sleight of hand amounts to a supplementary means of the corporation boss’s extraction of surplus-value from the community, this newer method being increasingly used to modulate the older and nowadays more conflict-arousing forms of political repression and industrial coercion. In response, economism in itself can at best achieve a fairer share-out of production it cannot alter the relations of production however, still less the material form of production.

As the distortion in the pattern of consumption increases, however, the objective marginal values of the incentives for the subject tend towards zero (this representing R. D. Laing’s stage of ‘normal’ alienation); and then later the subjective marginal utilities also. At this stage there is an increasing risk, from the capitalist’s point of view, of the subject becoming aware of the dis-incentives operating for him within the capitalist system. As the objective degree to which such disincentives become reflected subjectively in individual and communal consciousness, so does the likelihood of subjectively realised alienation mount. This then gives rise to possibilities for the revival of industrial, political and class consciousness, some of which we have already begun to witness in action. These restrictions are experienced doubly by workers in the mass communications industry itself. Some may sell out cheerfully enough perhaps, but most, it is suggested, do not.

It is to these workers and their leaders that we must look for the planning of structural reforms and effective, workers’ control and management in their own industry. But not only that. For these workers collectively man a potential range of pivotal command posts in the next necessary stage of community education in social responsibility. But if such a strategy of workers’ control is to succeed, a broad base of support will be needed. This can only be built by some form of left-progressive coalition of workers, students and other intellectuals willing and bold enough to plan and execute the transition from a reformist to an authentically syndicalist, and if necessary, finally a revolutionary strategy.
WITHIN THE WORLD OF MARXIST THEORY western Marxism has developed in richness and responsiveness to reality to the very extent that it has disengaged itself from the scholastification and dogmatization of Marx's thought by the Soviet diamat. But at this moment there has emerged within western Marxism itself, an interpretation of Marx which shows no intense theoretical quarrel with the diamat but rather turns against the whole of western Marxism within which it was nurtured, an interpretation of Marxism as a 'science', an interpretation which summons up the whole nexus of dogmatics associated with the centrality of *Das Kapital*, economic determinism, antihumanism, and dialectical materialism as Marxist philosophy. Do we have in this interpretation whose centre is Louis Althusser, dogmatism returned in disguise inveighing against western Marxism's non-scientificity, Hegelianism and humanism, a dogmatism that argues for Marxist 'science' from the standpoint of Marxist 'science'?

To be sure this circularity is the difficulty encountered in reading Althusser: he argues from the standpoint that is to be argued and is it any wonder then that his nominated adversaries crumble in the face of his arguments? Their conceptual complex which views

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1 By western Marxism we mean those schools born out of Lukacs' *What is Orthodox Marxism?* Theoretically it inaugurates a disengagement of Engels' dialectics of nature from Marx's work proper.


* We say READING *Reading Capital* and not REVIEW of *Reading Capital* because it is the reviewer's opinion that the book is too important to be 'reviewed', because for the reader that is to prejudge it. It has to be READ in the reviewer's opinion, and in this article he says why he thinks so.

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Marxism as a theory of freedom, as the realisation of Reason, as the critique of alienation; a self-admitted non-scientific complex was born in the very struggle of freeing Marxism from its scientistic interpretation. For western Marxism scientism is positivism incarnate and its whole critique was a critique of positivism! Marx himself provides the framework with which to understand positivism whatever its form as ideology and with this the ideological function of science itself could be demonstrated. This was transparent in the case of Soviet Marxist science. Theoretical truth (non-ideology) could only be established through a retreat from ideology (scientific or otherwise) into anti-positivism, that is in the suppressed tradition of Western critical philosophy itself. It was easy then to see how Marxism inherited this tradition and how it could be turned against the ideological dogmatics of the diamat. Theoretical emancipation from ideology occurred in critical (philosophical-social) theory.

Perhaps it is this very retreat that has persuaded western Marxists to bypass or overlook recent developments in the philosophy and historiography of science. These developments have produced an understanding of the phenomenon of scientficity that renders the anti-positivist critique of science obsolete to the extent that the critique was only a critique of the positivist self-conception of science, a conception obsessed with methodology and principles of verification (and falsification). Science had been taken at its empirical word, its positivistic mode of conceptualisation brutalised reality into conformity with its a priori conceptualisation (that is, it identified it operationally and expressed its quantitatively) and failed to disclose it in its rich and contradictory character. Science was anti-dialectical, and ignored its social-transcendental interest in controlling and dominating nature and thereby man, from the standpoint of Marxist critical theory.

But Althusser does not revive an old feud for this time both the positivist self-conception of science and Marxism as critical theory are ideological, that is Althusser's argument is not conducted from the standpoint of positivist Marxist scientism (though it would seem to have a spiritual affinity with it) but from the standpoint of the recent non-positivist conception of scientficity, a standpoint that western Marxism has not hitherto confronted. But unlike Marcuse who has the unique privilege of having been attacked from both (or all) sides, Althusser is gaining a considerable and disciplined following within the west itself and this becomes

2 The most readily accessible exposition of this view is contained in Herbert Marcuse One Dimensional Man. Chapter 6. It is a theme strongly argued by the Frankfurt school.
baffling when his standpoint can easily be mistaken for an old one. Could this following be a new rush of dogmatism and scholastification? Is it instead a new plunder of Marx's thought for a 'structuralist sociology'? (We all know that plunderings by positive sociology and their subsequent distortions of Marx's thought has been the subject of prodigious attack by western Marxists.) But neither is the case.

For the impact of Althusser is located precisely in his conception of science (or scientificity if we would still confuse it with the positivist self-conception). It would be easy to discredit Althusser for his apparent failure to define what he means by 'science' and for failing to give a definite distinction between science and ideology, for these are indeed the fundamental concepts of Althusser's whole work. However, a concerted study of Althusser will show this distinction to be well founded and precise given the complexity and originality of the conception of science being forged — a conception of science that submits to no discrete definition and which is in principle anti-empirical! But to establish this apparent paradox as in fact theoretically adequate is none other than to understand Althusser. We come to see how Marxism is a science because we have established the true character of scientificity itself. For Althusser Marxism is a science in a way that the anti-positivist critique has never been able to disclose in spite of its apparently thorough critique of science.

So for a start Althusser's Marxist science is not a new social science (as a 'structuralist sociology') more adequate to the professed principles of social science (in the way that the plunder of such Marxist concepts as 'class', 'alienation' and 'reification' was thought to make it more adequate). Dialectical materialism is its name (but not the dialectical materialist conception of society and nature as founded by Engels and inscribed in the diamat), rather it is properly understood as Marx's theory of theory or meta-theory, Marxist philosophy in the narrow sense. But, Althusser argues, it was never properly formulated by Marx himself but rather operates in a 'practical state' in Marx's definitive work, Capital, and as Lacan gave psychoanalysis its proper theoretical formulation which Freud could not do:\(^3\) Althusser takes it upon himself to articulate for Marx his theory, to bring it out of its practical state into theoretical consciousness. And he shows that the theory Marx worked with was never a methodology in an explicit sense but rather a conception of scientificity appropriate to its object. Additional to raising to theoretical consciousness Marx's own theory

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and coincidental with it, Althusser for the first time elevates to conceptual form what the object of Marx's theory was. This is the whole difficulty we have in reading Capital, that a double discovery was made, the discovery of a new object for theory and a new conception of scientificity while neither was properly conceptualised or given conscious theoretical form. Althusser disengages and then reestablishes what he calls the 'discourse-object unity' of Capital and shows that it is necessary to do so if we are to read Capital rather than read into Capital philosophical conceptions that derive elsewhere, specifically from the Young Marx.

Perhaps it would be a circular argument from the standpoint of western Marxism however if the conception of science that Marx worked in was not fundamentally compatible with the recent non-positivist critique of the positivist self-conception of science being produced. Althusser indicates to this critique — "look into Capital, there it is already, ahead of its time!" Of course it was always there in all the great founding moments of science, in Galileo, Lavoisier and so on, but the positivist self-conception could not see it. For the latter Galileo and Lavoisier were scientists but not Marx — and here western Marxists would agree — but for opposite reasons. Marx must now join Galileo and Lavoisier because, despite the uniqueness of the object of his science (being non-natural) his approach was scientifically adequate to his object. The positivist self-conception of science has as it were, confused science with the study of a particular type of object (the natural) and has always thought of scientificity in terms of the naturalness of its object, that is, it confuses science with its practice on a particular type of object. Of course social science adopts the methods of the positivist conception and applies them to a fundamentally different object, but methods appropriate only to a particular type of object (the natural). Small wonder that the anti-positivist critique of social science as the reduction of the human world to the form of the natural-quantitative, is so successful.

We can insist that it is the very character of scientificity that in its epistemological source the possible questions it asks of its object be open in principle and not intimidated by guarantees (as inferred by some formalised Subject/Object relation) as to the form of its answers; that only then does it establish its methods and criteria of apodicticity and proof appropriate to the level at which the questions are asked. Compare the positivist conception which identifies science firstly with its method which demands that questions be formulated appropriate to the method and not the object. Kuhn's The Structure of Scientific Revolutions which is at the centre of the new developments in the historiography of

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science in the English-speaking world, shows that scientific revolu-
tions are founded on intuition and intelligence and not on the
application of pre-ordained scientific methods such that if we
identify science only as what he calls 'normal' or established science,
we cannot understand revolutionary discovery in the history of
science. As Althusser shows too, scientific discovery arrives rather
as a surprise than as the goal of scientific reasoning. It is
established reasoning that does not permit the asking of ‘open’
questions, that is, it does not permit scientific discovery except
in the form of ‘puzzle solving’ for which guarantees are already
set up. A new conception of reality may produce questions which
rest latent for centuries (as Aristarchus founded long before
Copernicus) but its questions become scientific not when a method is
provided but when a theory as a theory of its object is produced.
Science is not born when a new question is asked but only when a
theory of its object is produced, only then can we say a new object is
discovered as a new object, when it is given theoretical form (or
as Kuhn would say, a paradigm). The asking of an open question
only becomes a scientific discovery when a theory of its object
is produced and only then do principles of proof and apodicticity
(i.e., method) follow appropriate to that theory (as phlogiston theory
was not the theory with which Priestley could ask questions of
de-phlogisticated air). This often means that such a radical
revision of the previous theory (or paradigm) that in fact a new
theory takes its place, a rupture so deep that even new episte-
mological principles must be worked out.

On insisting that such a rupture took place in Marx against
his Early Works as well as Classical Political Economy, Althusser
is justified in regarding the Early Works as ideological and not
scientific precisely because he thought in an empirical idealist
theory (or problematic) which epistemologically set up guarantees
for the questions he asked. To discover the cornerstone of the
objects of his science, surplus value, Marx had to produce a
theory of the concept of his object which the anthropological
framework of both the Early Works and of Classical Political
Economy could not provide him. An epistemology which insists
that it disclose man's self-formative processes would both guarantee
an answer and fail to discover surplus value.

If then a science, what of the relation of theory to practice?
The theoretical solution of, say, Lukacs, and the theoretical non-
solution of Marcuse cease to be relevant. Althusser insists that
Marx's theory is practical because it is true, not that it is true
because it has succeeded in practice. When Marcuse claims that

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6 Reading Capital. p. 59.
theory preserves the truth, though practice may deviate from its proper path, he is referring to what seems to be an established 'truth' which leaves the theoretician only to speculate on what has become of the 'proper path'. This may deem Marxism as a critical social theory but not as a science, a practical science in a similar way to which natural science is practical (that is, not because we can find a use for its discoveries but because it approaches its object in a practical way and not as it ought to be). Science tells us what its object is and not what it ought to be. Natural science becomes ideological when it is no longer practical in this sense, when it seeks guarantees for what its results ought to be. A theory which examines society from the standpoint of its socialist ought-to-be and goal (western Marxism and Soviet scientism respectively) is not scientific regardless of its methods because its questions are not open. So theory and practice remain categorically different and mutually irreducible. There is no unification on the side of practice for that would destroy the possibility of science and no unification on the side of theory for that would be to renounce politics, there can only be a genuine unification in the individual. This is how Marxism is a revolutionary theory but only its scientificity can make it a theory of revolution. The latter does not produce an impatient unification because it recognises the specificity of revolutionary practice.

Perhaps it is at this point that we find Althusser lacking. His analysis of the production of knowledge correctly allocates for such processes as intuition an original place in the processes of knowing, as the irreducible elements of scientific discovery. But he speaks only of the individual Marx midst the raw materials of his productions. Kuhn saw the need to postscript his second edition on this very point, but integral to understanding both scientific discovery and the practice of normal science, the social context must be included as contributory, that is, science is only practised in a scientific community. For us, what community would practise Marxist science, the bourgeois establishment? Althusser would doubtless answer with the Party and that would leave interest in the science to some pre-scientific political commitment. But other than that Althusser has not established the contextual factors which define the epistemological sphere which establishes intuition as rigorous to the practice of its science and not as mere guesswork or wishful thinking. It is in a community that any science its practised and not through adherence to theoretical principles alone. It is easy to see in the natural sciences though their communities are more homogenous and esoteric, that the community confirms the practice once a science is founded, it provides both a definition

of its knowledge and gives intuition, etc., its pre-epistemological direction. The only guarantee that bourgeois social science could not take up Marxist science willy nilly lies in the community which provides the basis of practical judgement about the raw materials of its knowledge.

But this is not to assert that a certain 'interest' guides knowledge other than the interest of scientificity itself, that asking of open questions which alone lead to scientific knowledge. But then do we forsake the critical-emancipatory character of Marx's theory for cold science? We could defend Althusser by saying these omissions of the 'spirit' of Marxism are returned at the level of Party membership where they return mediately in the spirit of the community that practises the science while it does not exist immediately in the theory.

But this is needless because we can go straight to the spirit of Althusser's Marxism in the science itself. Through science itself there is always a nexus of (scientific) knowledge and revolution for the object of Marxist science in its real existence contains within itself the potential for revolution. That is, bourgeois social science need not be internally governed by an interest for social control but rather its epistemological principles foreclose it from knowing its object because it has no proper theory of its object. The world (whether social or natural) cannot be submitted to determined change unless it is scientifically known. The inescapable problem of determined judgment, of decision, can be exercised only from knowing what one judges and decides to act upon. What could be less dogmatic and less scholastic?
I wondered if you could tell me a little bit about your early life, your education and how you became a socialist.

Yes. Well my early life was a petty bourgeois life. My father was an astronomer, my mother was the daughter of a wealthy wholesale butcher—and I grew up in this bourgeois atmosphere. I went to kindergarten with Dick Cassidy. I went to Melbourne Grammar School when Stanley Bruce was the captain of the school and I was at Melbourne University when Menzies was in full flight there.

However, before I got very far with the Melbourne University I became a socialist. I started on this road in 1910 when for the first time in the Commonwealth the Labor Party won an Election, a federal election. I went to have a look at the election results posted on the newspaper offices fronts on a huge board. Both the Age and the Argus in Collins Street had these boards and that was the way you got the changes in the election results at that time. Well, I was standing outside the Argus office in Collins Street looking at the results and the results showed that the Labor Party, this new thing, had unmistakably won the election. In front of me I heard two people, a man and woman comment on the latest figures on the board and the woman said “Labor’s won—what happened” and the man said, in a horrified tone “Capital will leave the country”, and the woman equally horrified said, “Oh”. In subsequent years, in 1912 I had some socialist writing in the Trinity College, Melbourne University, magazine Fleur de Lys, and in the following year I became one of the two editors of

*Australian Left Review* publishes the first in its series of interviews with Australian socialist pioneers. This interview with Guido Baracchi was conducted by Alastair Davidson in 1964. It will be followed by a second interview dealing with Baracchi’s memories of the early years in the CPA and international communist movement. We hope to publish interviews with the late Sam Aarons and others in future issues.

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the magazine and also secretary of their debating society. What they called the Dialectic Society.

In the last number of *Fleur de Lys* that I edited I had one socialist article of a very flippant character and one sort of you might say, liberal article on the habits of the young men in college in relation to all the young girls that you came in contact with. The combined effect of this was to create a fairly considerable row. As far as the Dialectic Society was concerned, they chose each year somebody that they called a Prelector, who was called on to give an address.

They used to try and get the Governor and about four other speakers to criticize his address. Well, they chose me as Prelector and after this I arranged a debate in which I invited Dr. Maloney a federal member in Melbourne, to participate as there were elections coming on, I’ve forgotten exactly what the subject was—but it was to do with the elections. Anyway the Warden of Trinity, a rigid conservative Ulster man—he wouldn’t have a bar of Dr. Maloney on the Trinity College premises—declined to allow him, as soon as he heard of the invitation, to participate in the debate. However, I took a hall over in Parkville, just across the road, and arranged to have the debate there and invited Maloney again. He said he’d come.

**Did you have much knowledge of the writings of socialists at this time?**

I didn’t have much knowledge of marxian socialism. The only knowledge I got was from the lecturer in political economy at the Melbourne University. They didn’t have a chair at that time. It was a very poor subject and the lecturer wasn’t a professional economist, he was a lawyer called Kelly and he gave a few (less than half hour talks) on Marx which really hadn’t much to do with his subject at all. He sort of didn’t know anything about it and all I really knew of Marx, beside his name, and one or two minor things, was this very misleading stuff I got from Kelly. On the other hand, the reading that brought me along the socialist road above all others was Shaw and Wells and it was via these two that I progressed towards socialism. Anyway the meeting for the Dialectic Society was a very good meeting. I just forgot there was a Labor woman candidate who came there and spoke as well for the party. But she was just a blow-in and she just gave a brief speech. Maloney said some words in support of her as well in his more general remarks.

This meeting was held in defiance in a way of the Warden outside the precincts of the college. It created a stink too like
the magazine had. The upshot of all this was that at the end of the year Trinity College Social Club held a special meeting and a vote of censure was moved on me for producing an issue of *Fleur de Lys* out of harmony with the tone of the college. This resolution was duly carried.

Well at the very end of the year I got advice from the Law Professor at the Melbourne University, an English liberal of the old school and he said, “Look, I’d get out of this for a little while. Why don’t you, if you could manage it, go over to London School of Economics and do a short course there, say a three months course even”. And he said, “I know the director, Pember Reeves, who was once in New Zealand, very well and I’ll give you a letter to him.”

Well I was able to go there and I jumped at this idea.

Getting over there I came in contact with the Fabian socialists right away. Graham Wallace was lecturing on public administration, Sidney Webb would sometimes come down there and talk. I once participated in a debate there in which Bernard Shaw took part. There was quite a strong Fabian socialist influence.

**You had not heard of Lenin or Trotsky at all.**

No. I had not heard of Lenin or Trotsky at all. I’d heard of a number of other European socialists but the Russian socialists I had not heard of at all. I might just have heard of Plekanov. I’d heard of Kautsky. I’d heard of Jaures. I’d actually heard Jaures speak.

**Before he was assassinated?**

Yes. He was killed just on the outbreak of the war. I left Australia at the very end of 1913 and on the way to England I went through Paris and there I heard Jaures speak. I heard another quite famous and very different sort of speaker speak at that time, rather lecture, and that was Bergson.

Well then the period I was in England, between the end of the year and the outbreak of the war I came across other influences. I came across the socialists and their printed paper the *New Age* and a man called Orage was the editor.

This *New Age* and its guild socialism, National Guild they preferred to call it, took me away from the Shaw-Wells and Fabian Socialism.

There were various ideas about the state’s role — the unions were going to look after the producers and the state was, in some period going to be the representative of the consumers.
Well anyway this partnership of state and union was brilliantly expounded in the New Age. It got me in quite a bit, along with one or two other Australians at the time—Vance Palmer was one of them, and Palmer knew these New Age writers quite well and there were others too, there was a man called Sinclair who was lecturing English at Melbourne University. He was a radical parson and he ran a paper called Fellowship where for a while he propagated guild socialism. Anyway I had these Fabian influences and that's what you could class the New Statesman, the first number of which appeared in 1914. I can remember running around to their offices to get the first number of the New Statesman.

This paper had considerable interest for me. But I much preferred the guild socialism of the New Age, to the more Fabian type of socialism of the New Statesman.

That was about the condition I was in when I left England about a month before the war and went to the continent on the way back to Australia.

I went through Germany to Vienna and I was in Vienna a fortnight before the war broke out and I would have been there when it did break out, except for the fact that I had an uncle in Italy who had some holidays. He lived in Rome and he asked me to come down before my ship was going and spend time with him, and then go on to Australia. So I got out of Vienna in time to avoid the outbreak of war while I was there and I left Italy from Naples on the last day of July—perhaps the 1st of August 1914.

Going through Germany and Vienna I hadn't the faintest idea that we were on the verge of the First World War. Not the faintest. Although I was sufficient of a socialist to have predicted it was coming, the actuality of the thing got me completely unaware. Actually the ship I was on entered the Red Sea when the war broke out.

I spent time on the boat in preparing the Prelection. I decided to give it on the subject of guild socialism, which was relatively unknown in Australia at that time. I called the lecture 'The Last Word in Socialism'. It was a dubious sort of a title in a way.

I had in the preparatory statement made a few remarks slightly, I wouldn't say adverse, to the war, but not calculated to stimulate recruiting. Then I got onto the general question of Guild socialism, but the opening remarks were along the lines of being more
interested in peace organisation than war organisation. They might be said to be the beginning of my anti-war developments.

You haven't mentioned any socialist among your acquaintances. You didn't know people like Bob Ross . . . ?

I knew Bob Ross very well, but afterwards. At this time, 1914, I didn't know many socialists in Australia outside academic circles. There was Maloney, I got hold of him. He might be called a socialist, but I got hold of him because he was Labor member for Melbourne. But people like Bob Ross I only met them a very few years after that. My father on the other hand knew Bob Ross quite well, because he used, from time to time, to lecture on astronomy at the Hall of the Victorian Socialist Party in Exhibition Street and he did say that he did quite a bit of lecturing for various bodies on astronomy, talks on the moon and so on, and he said that the best audience that he had in Victoria was that audience, Bob Ross's party.

He used to tell me about the Socialist Hall and the socialists there, but I didn't know them personally at all until later.

When did you become an organised member of the party?

Just a few years later, in the latter part of 1914 when I gave this Prelection address. This happened as a kind of evolution, natural for me during the war. By 1916 I'd got considerably hostile to a lot of things in connection with the war. The conscription referendum came on at the end of 1916. I did in an organised way play a very prominent part in that. I was still more or less working in the university circles, but I did get very hostile to conscription. At the end of 1915 I had already met a socialist woman and become close friends with her. That was Katharine Susannah Prichard.

I was progressing towards the organised stage and by 1917 I was beginning to hot up.

At that time in the Melbourne University the principal debating society for the students was the Historical Society. They used to meet in the Biology Theatre. Just outside the theatre was the university lake, now only a memory. Bob Menzies was quite active in the Historical Society where the debates took place. A professor was quite active too. He was often in the chair. He was anti-catholic and used to get the goats of a number of liberal catholics like Harry Minogue, who was also a guild socialist, and Higgins was active in this society.

You knew him well?
Oh very well, I was on the editorial board on the M.U.M. with him. In the beginning of 1917, along with Higgins and Minogue I was appointed onto the editorial board of the M.U.M. The editor was a girl, who was not on the left at all, but always used to give the left a pretty good go.

This magazine and the Historical Society combined got me further on the socialist path.

In the Historical Society I was already taking a class struggle line and I had Higgins, who later became a communist, getting up and saying that he though that that was a hopeless way of looking at things.

**How did you become committed to the idea of class struggle. What brought you to this—had you read something . . .?**

I had heard of it in a negative kind of way from people like Wells and I’d read a few pamphlets, socialist pamphlets and even the Communist Manifesto by this time. Although I hadn’t swallowed the Communist Manifesto whole—I was still impressed by the idea by the history of class struggles and I spoke along these lines in the Historical Society.

**Were you reading law at that time?**

Yes at that time I was reading arts and law.

In this society I developed a bit further along class struggle lines. Every magazine I had anything to do with seemed to get into trouble and the M.U.M. wasn’t an exception. In it I had the first of a series of three articles (the other two never appeared) on Guild Socialism. I also had a book review which was a very uninhibited sling-off at a number of professors, especially the Anatomy Professor, Dickie Barrie who had produced in war time a symposium of views, “The Newer Imperialism” the book was called. I had a terrible go-in at this and I always felt that although I got into trouble officially about something else in the magazine, that it was this particular thing that got the proff’s goat. I copped it more for that than the other thing.

However, I began this series of articles on Guild Socialism just in the same way as I had begun the Prelection address with a reference to the war. The first sentence in the article was, “The War Is Not Primarily Our Affair.” This created a terrible stink. I got carpeted by the Professorial Board. There was a great flow of letters to the press on the subject in which at one stage I joined in and ended up by saying in this letter that I would be
better convinced of the patriotism of the students if more of them enlisted and the patriotism of the professors if they took up knitting socks. This sort of thing got me in worse than ever of course and finally it got to such a stage that the hostile overwhelming majority of students decided they were going to dunk me in the lake.

They chose the night when I had to open a debate at the Historical Society, which as I said bordered the university lake. I was informed what was going to happen but I couldn’t get out of it. When I got fairly near the lake there were at least a couple of hundred students blocking the way and I had to walk through them. I did walk through them. I got as far as the Biology Theatre and they were a bit slow. I walked up the steps and got nearly as far as the top of the stairs and if I had got into the auditorium I would have been alright. But they suddenly realised that they were letting the quarry slip through their fingers and then came the last minute rush to grab me just about on the top step and hauled me down and stuck me on top of one of the two great blocks of stone on either side to the entrance to the theatre and asked me what I had to say for myself. However, they finally pulled me off this and shoved me towards the lake. It was the middle of winter and they got to the edge of the lake and then they gave me a mighty push. If they’d have wet their own feet they would have done a better job of me. Then I had to go back to the Historical Society theatre and open up the debate.

I was dripping wet and I got some sympathy and a cold out of it too and that was pushing me further along the socialist road.

Just one point, Menzies wasn’t there that night. He wasn’t in the theatre and he wasn’t in the crowd outside. Higgins somewhere or other had written that Menzies was there but I’m quite confident he wasn’t there. I had an excellent view of the crowd outside I would have spotted him in a moment. I am sure that he was not there. Also he said at the time, “I detest Mr. Baracchi’s views but I think that he ought to be allowed to express them” which was pretty good from him in wartime.

There was great hostility in the university among university students to people who were against the war?

There was, yes there was a very very great hostility. There was on the other hand of course a minority, a small minority, who were not against the war, but would like everyone to have a free go on the subject. But the great majority were bitterly hostile to any sort of criticism on anything connected with the war at all.
LENIN: A STUDY OF THE UNITY OF HIS THOUGHT

GEORG LUKACS' SHORT STUDY of the thought of Lenin written in February 1924, just after Lenin's death has been well worth the republishing. At the time he wrote Lukacs had come strongly under the influence of Hegel and he performs something of a dialectical dance around his subject. Lenin is presented as an outstanding example of the revolutionary dialectical thinker who sees the main trends of the time behind specific events, a thinker able both to comprehend the revolution as the fundamental problem and to apply this understanding concretely to day to day happenings.

The memoir is interesting also as an indication of the perspective in which Lenin's achievements were seen by Communist contemporaries. There is a succinct summary of the stages by which Lenin proceeded from a recognition of the long-term revolutionary role of the Russian working class and of the peculiar weaknesses of the Russian bourgeoisie (which all Russian marxists shared) to an assertion of the counter-revolutionary role of the bourgeoisie, imposed on it by the approach of the proletarian revolution. Conclusions that Lenin drew from this, such as the need for the proletariat to dissociate itself from the bourgeoisie in the struggle against tsarism and to establish its independent class aims, determined his revolutionary strategy and tactics until 1917. Lukacs then discusses three cardinal aspects of Lenin's thought on the revolutionary party, on imperialism and on the state.

The chapter on the vanguard party of the proletariat is of particular interest, if the question of the relevance of Leninism for the international revolutionary movement is to be considered. In Lukacs' discussion it becomes apparent that a merging of the Leninist and Stalinist models of the party had already begun by 1924. He states that Lenin's idea of party organisation contains as fixed poles, the strictest selection of party members on the basis of their proletarian class consciousness and solidarity with all the oppressed, and, further, that the Menshevik concept of organisation weakened both poles, reduced them to compromises and created a confused tangle of different interest groups. The whole burden, however, of Lenin's relentless attack on Menshevik organisational principles was that they essentially reflected the bourgeois ideology of the Mensheviks, as expressed in the compromising and frequently confused reformism of their programme and tactics. Equally, Lenin always recognised that strict selection of party members on the basis of their class consciousness was no guarantee against sectarianism, as was shown in his long and rather unsuccessful struggle to convince the working class, semi-anarchist otzovist members of the Bolshevik faction that they should combine legal with illegal work. For Lenin, the question of organisation was always dependent on that of policy.

One of Lukacs' observations on the proletarian party has a markedly Stalinist flavour. He says that if the proletarian party is not organised so that the correct
and appropriate class policy is assured, the allies who flock to the side of the proletariat in a revolutionary situation can bring confusion instead of support. This implies that by definition a rightly organised party will not allow incorrect views to prevail: if incorrect views do prevail (that is, views disagreed with), one can argue that the party is wrongly organised. In the historical context, the role of allies in a revolutionary situation is indeed a crucial one and can influence the way in which power is seized by the revolutionary class and with what slogans and what political programme, but the organisation of the party will not assure the correctness of the class policy, only understanding by the revolutionaries of the historical process in which they are involved will do that.

The extent to which Bolshevik ideas on organisation varied in the years from 1903 to 1917 in response to changing political conditions was suggested by Lenin in *Left Wing Communism* when he spoke of the rapid succession in that period of different forms of the movement, legal and illegal, peaceful and stormy, underground and open, circles and mass movements. It is not generally known that in March 1907 when the Social Democratic party had a mass membership and still enjoyed a semi-legal existence as a result of the 1905 revolution, there was a re-organisation of the Petersburg City organisation, supported by the Bolshevik faction, under which the city conference (not committee), elected directly on the basis of one delegate for fifty members, became a standing body numbering some hundreds and meeting at least twice a month. Elections for conference were to be held every six months. The Stolypin coup of June 1907, ushering in a period of savage repression, put an end to this interesting experiment in open democratic organisation of the revolutionary party.

Lenin carried on his most ferocious polemics against the Mensheviks from 1908 to 1914 on the question of the nature of the party. The significance of these polemics lies less in the particular issues on which they were fought than in the conflicting analyses made by the two factions of the balance of class forces and the weight of bourgeois influence upon the working class. Believing as he did, that the adoption of a reformist programme by the Social Democrats threatened the revolutionary orientation of the proletariat, he devoted all his energies to combating this. The area in which battle was joined was that of tactics and organisation of the party, whether it should remain an underground revolutionary body or seek to achieve a legal existence with a mass membership and form part of a united opposition to the autocracy. The question whether the party was to follow a course of revolutionary opposition, or be essentially reformist, or combine both tendencies within itself was of critical importance for the orientation of the class. The weakness and paucity of independent mass institutions, including those of the working class, in Russian society was illustrated in the emasculated trade union movement. The half life to which labour organisations were condemned after they were made legal in 1906 meant that the unions never provided alternative centres of reformist influence to the revolutionary political parties, as they did in Germany. The major struggle between revolutionary and reformist alignments was fought out within the Social Democratic party itself.

The point to which Lukacs frequently returns is Lenin's capacity to grasp all facets of a political situation, the ability to combine a concrete analysis with awareness of all new tendencies arising from the situation. A clear example of this ability may be seen in Lenin's explanation of the rising militancy of the working class after the mass shooting of workers on the Lena goldfields in 1912.
Rejecting the arguments of those who described the strikes as a struggle for the right to form trade unions, he wrote, “It is this general lack of rights typical of Russian life, this hopelessness and impossibility of fighting for particular rights, and this incorrigibility of the tsarist monarchy and its entire regime, that stood out so distinctly against the background of the Lena events as to fire the masses with revolutionary ardour.” It was indeed the incorrigibility of the tsarist regime, resisting reform and revolution alike, which accounted in large measure for the Russian workers, interested in the first place in the economic struggle to improve working conditions, deciding to follow the slogans of the revolutionary Bolsheviks, which combined the demand for the eight hour day with the overthrow of the autocracy.

The arid and frequently repeated estimate of Lenin’s contribution to revolutionary theory and practice as being that of a technologist of revolution and the disinterment of the stinking corpse of the Stalinist model of the party in order to pronounce the Leninist concept of organisation irrelevant today can come only from those who have never understood the dialectics of revolutionary thinking or who need to justify their own abandonment of a revolutionary position.

DAPHNE GOLLAN


DANIEL GUERIN’S BOOK is much inferior to anarchist sympathiser George Woodcock’s Anarchism. Besides including only half the material Woodcock does, omitting an index and being written in a sloppy and ambiguous style, it is as extremely tendentious as Guerin’s previous books about the French Revolution have been.

It is true that Guerin promises to let the anarchists speak for themselves by quoting copiously, but his main aim is to claim for the anarchist movement the creation of the notion of workers’ self-management and to deny that the terrorism of the late nineteenth century was really central to anarchism. So, where there are pages in Woodcock on the propaganda by the deed favoured by many anarchists in 1880-1914, there is practically no detailed investigation in Guerin of Costa, Brousse, Pouget, Ravachol, Henry, Cafiero and Malatesta. The object in claiming authorship of the workers’ self-management system is implied in the concluding sentences of the preface:

“Throughout this little book the reader will see two conceptions of socialism contrasted and sometimes related to one another, one authoritarian, the other libertarian. By the end of the analysis it is hoped that the reader will be led to ask himself which is the conception of the future.”

Everything is subordinated to this over-all wish to show 1) the commitment of anarchism to concepts of participatory democracy, and 2) to show the affinities between radical marxism and anarchist currents. Noam Chomsky emphasises this last point in his lengthy introduction. Since this means both twisting the historical facts and misunderstanding the theory of anarchism, Guerin cannot start with a chronological historical account and instead says lamely

“In place of a historical and chronological sequence an unusual method has been adopted in this book: the reader will be presented in turn with the
main constructive themes of anarchism and not with personalities”. (Compare Woodcock’s approach).

It is true that there is a vogue for anarchism at present as Horowitz and Krimerman and Perry’s excellent anthologies show, and no doubt Monthly Review has political objects in publishing this book. It is also true that all socialists must work together to overthrow capitalism. But to work out a suitable basis for joint action with anarchists, we must start with a real understanding both of anarchism and of the historical relations between marxism and anarchism and not attempt to gloss over the differences. Guerin is quite happy to include a lengthy account of Bolshevik persecution of anarchists and perfidy vis-a-vis Makhno, which is quite true (although Makhno was not the white knight that he suggests he was), but there is no account of the evolution of marxism as an anti-anarchism.

Marx worked out his ideas in the German Ideology, coming to terms “with his erstwhile German philosophical conscience”, by a critique of Stirner, Grun, Hess and other anarchists. He reached his first exposition of his beliefs in a critique of Proudhon’s Philosophie de la Misere and he later evolved his views on organisation needed by revolutionaries in a lengthy dispute with Bakunin in the First International. It is clear that philosophical anarchism and philosophical marxism do not meet. Let anyone read Stirner’s Der Einzige, the object of Marx’s ridicule and derision, and then let him decide whether anarchism is merely the libertarian form of socialism and that the dispute between marxism and anarchism was ever merely one of means. The fundamental dispute appears more to be that for Marx man is primarily a social being and for the anarchist lie is the supreme egoist described by Stirner, for whom there are no beliefs which are not shackles. It is not by chance that Stirner is a source for Nielzche and Sorel for Mussolini.

This tendentiousness about generalities is matched by a carelessness and bias in treating particulars. If it can be easily shown that far from being democratic, anarchism can be shown to be anti-democratic individualism, it can be more easily shown that the Discorse on Inequality is not at the root of anarchist thought, that the factory councils of Turin led by Gramsci were at best partly inspired by anarcho-syndicalism (which some anarchists have argued is not anarchism at all), and that Makhno not only “moved the hearts” of the Ukraine but also “removed many of the heads”.

The Postscript is perhaps the most irritating section of the book. Here in May 1968 Guerin addresses a plea to the students of Paris which suggests that you “are libertarian socialists without knowing it”, which savours of a helter-skelter “getting with it” which insults both the anarchists and the students. Anarchism has a long and rich tradition which goes back at least to Godwin, who was rediscovered by Kropotkin over a century after he wrote. It also has a record of resolute struggle for a new society. It is by starting with the facts of this history that we can work out a common basis of endeavour. What Guerin does is present us with an account of anarchism as it ought to be. In such a form it may be attractive to the unthinking and unread, though it never existed. Monthly Review must bear the responsibility for publishing a book which ignores the cardinal point of marxism that marxism begins with the facts, understood as historical — products of course — but not with what men think of themselves.

What Marighela’s article (a fact of today) also, published in this review, tells us is that it may be anarchist terrorism which is still of relevance.
AMERICAN LABOR AND UNITED STATES FOREIGN POLICY, by Ronald Rado$h.

PLACING EMPHASIS on the "labour lieutenants of the capitalist class, channels of reformism and chauvinism", Lenin wrote at considerable length about the relations between the labour movement and imperialism. In this work, a brilliant young "new left" historian takes up the problem of the continuous support given by the leaders of organised labour to US imperialism in this century. Radosh traces the position of US labour leaders on the 1898 war with Spain, the First World War and the Bolshevik Revolution, down through recent events such as the Cuban Revolution, the US invasion of the Dominican Republic in 1965, and the Vietnam War.

For the general reader, the book's greatest appeal will almost certainly lie in the chapters devoted to US labour as the cold war ally of the CIA and the State Department. The author extensively discusses the shadowy figure of the fanatical anti-communist Jay Lovestone, who for many years has headed the secretive Department of International Affairs of the American Confederation of Labor — Congress for Industrial Organisations (AFL-CIO).

The record of this Department includes actions such as helping to split the French and Italian union movements in the immediate postwar period, using strike-breakers and hired thugs to assure the unloading of US arms in Marseilles and other European ports in 1949-50, promoting a general strike in British Guiana in 1963 in an effort to depose Dr. Cheddi Jagan's elected government, training Brazilian unions to help right-wing army generals to overthrow the elected government of Joao Goulart in 1964, gathering hard intelligence, and educating thousands of foreign unionists in its own uncompromising brand of anti-communism and setting them loose with money and other forms of assistance to fight native unions with left-of-centre leadership. At all times, it has given unqualified support to the arms race and fervently approved of the counter-revolutionary actions of the Pentagon and the CIA in Cuba, the Dominican Republic, the Congo and Vietnam.

Close to Lovestone was a small coterie of associates, including his chief European envoy Irving Brown, who were equally committed to saving the world labour movement from communism. Assigned to assist Brown in the immediate postwar years was a man not specifically referred to in Radosh's work but who is of interest to readers concerned about US penetration of the Australian labour movement — Harry Goldberg.

Goldberg's first task after the Second World War was to assist Brown to split the Italian trade union movement by making common cause with Roman Catholics whom they succeeded in prodding out of the General Confederation of Labor while providing the general wherewithal for the unsavoury operation. It is interesting to recall that this was a time when the Italian Communists were incredibly moderate, participating in non-socialist governments and avidly working to increase production. It should also be noted that until recently US social scientists who worked on the Italian trade union movement somehow never managed to get around to discussing the AFL-CIO's intervention in the internal affairs of Italy.
Goldberg's next assignment was Indonesia. Berger has stated that a "great deal of money" from AFL and US government sources was pumped into this mission. Although Goldberg managed to find time to write a booklet on Indonesian trade unionism he failed completely to build up a local replica of the AFL and by the middle-fifties the fanatical local anti-communist unions were extremely weak. In 1958 there occurred the abortive Outer Islands Rebellion supported by the CIA and led by former Cabinet Minister Sumitro who fled to Singapore where he became a business consultant. David Ransom has observed: "Powerful Americans like Harry Goldberg, a lieutenant of labor boss and CIA coordinator Jay Lovestone, kept in close contact and saw that Sumitro's messages got through to his Indonesian friends." Not unexpectedly, Goldberg was deported from Indonesia and "confined to the home office to write reports," although he triumphantly revisited Indonesia after the army coup.

Goldberg also turned his attention to Australia. His first visit was a controversial tour in 1960, after which he wrote a confidential report that was subsequently "liberated" and published in the Australian underground press in 1969. This remarkable document was interesting not so much for its crude anti-communism or for the author's inimitable arrogance but because it contained a number of fascinating evaluations of local political personalities. The goodies were the "brilliant, forceful" B. A. Santamaria, Dr. Knopelmacher who was "doing good work . . . lighting communist influence" and the late Sir Wilfrid Kent Hughes, "a good guy" who briefed Goldberg on "the opportunism and lack of principle" in the Liberal Party vis-a-vis Chinese communism. Predictably the baddies were Albert McNolty and Jack Tripovich of the Victorian ALP ("two real vermin"), Jim Kenny of the NSW Labor Council ("a perfect specimen of lack of principle and complete gutlessness"), and Bill Evans of the ACTU ("abysmal ignorance of morals and principles"). Goldberg was not at all impressed with the Commonwealth Department of Labour. In fact, he described its then permanent secretary, Sir Harry Bland, as a "bully boy."

And as for the then Minister of Labour, Mr. William McMahon, he was simply "a nincompoop".

The report also cast a searching light on overall US strategy toward Australia and strongly suggested that outside interference had not diminished in the intervening period. A prominent member of the Australian Association for Cultural Freedom, Professor Henry Mayer of the Department of Government at the University of Sydney, believes that this "most revealing" document is genuine.

Goldberg paid a shorter call in 1966. The scatterbrained wife of the former US Ambassador to Australia has recorded that at the US Embassy in Canberra he "thrilled dinner guests with an impromptu concert of classical numbers on the Residence concert grand." In June 1969 Goldberg returned once again. Unlike the first well-publicised tour, one of his few public engagements during this visit was to address a meeting in Sydney sponsored by the Australian Association for Cultural Freedom where his attentive listeners included old friends from the right wing of the ALP such as L. Short of the Ironworkers' Association and J. Riordan of the Clerks' Union. One reason for the lack of publicity accompanying this trip was the disclosure two years previously that the CIA had financed the major part of the operations of the AFL-CIO's Department of International Affairs.

JOHN PLAYFORD
TALKING DOWN HAMPERS LEFT UNITY

EVERYTHING MAX TEICHMANN SAYS in his delightfully witty review of the book *The Australian New Left* (ALR 30) may be perfectly true — I haven't read the book, so cannot judge — but perhaps the sarcastic and patronizing tone of some of his comments does a disservice to the cause of Left unity.

After all, few doubt the sincerity and courage of most members of the New Left, and its aims are close to those most of the Old Left have always pursued, or have lately realised they ought to have been pursuing, whatever misgivings one may have about some of the new methods, or lack of them. Granted that militant sincerity not guided by any sound theory can be more dangerous to its friends than to its enemies, this is precisely the reason experienced Marxists should be trying to help the New Left find a unifying revolutionary theory, rather than dismissing it with contempt and derision.

Did any eager world-reforming youngster ever become a mature revolutionary theoretician overnight, and avoid all romantic illusions about the revolution being "just around the corner"? I certainly didn't, forty-odd years ago, and, if Max Teichmann ever did, he must be a very atypical revolutionary.

On May Day on the Sydney Domain, I happened to be standing near a group of New Leftists, mostly of the Maoist persuasion, when the Communist Party contingent marched past. Some of them started chanting, "Smash Soviet Revisionism!", whereupon a hard-shell Stalinist accused them of being in the pay of the CIA, starting a ding-dong slanging match that added precisely nothing to anyone's understanding of revolutionary strategy. I chipped in, "Don't you both think it would be best to get together to smash the common enemy first, and settle our own differences afterwards?"

Rather to my surprise, most of the youngsters supported me in the ensuing discussion, despite my balding pate and white beard, and the ringleader of the chanters was reduced to mumbling apologetic excuses for his behaviour.

This seems to give a clue to the correct attitude to the New Left. Most of its members are ready to follow a sound lead, from wherever it comes, so let frank but comradely and constructive criticism of each other's views continue by all means, but back this up with concrete suggestions and discussion about unity *in action* around specific demands.

It is true, as Comrade Teichmann suggests, that no army ever won a campaign by making up its tactics as it went along, and deciding the strategy at the end; but it is equally true that no army ever won a campaign by refusing to fire a shot until every private and drummer-boy in its own ranks and those of its allies had graduated *cum laude* from a Military Academy. Marxists have always rejected the Fabian dream that a potentially revolutionary class can realise its destiny through debate, education and propaganda alone; it must be forged
into a revolutionary force in the continual struggle for limited but ever expand­
ing demands.

Such a programme of unity in action will quickly leave behind the demagogues, doctrinaires and sectarians of the New Left, along with their counterparts in the Old Left, mouthing slogans at each other in some dingy office, while the Real Left, old and new, marches on shoulder to shoulder to victory.

ARTHUR W. RUDKIN

VERBAL VIOLENCE

AS ONE OF THOSE REVILED in Max Teichmann's diatribe on the authors of The Australian New Left and A New Britannia (ALR No. 30), I should appreciate some space in your journal, not to defend specifically my chapter or those of my co-contributors (How can one respond intellectually to tasteless calumnies!), but to say something about the import of Teichmann's incongruity of thought and tone in a wider sense. Unfortunately, his style of virulence is symptomatic of a grave recrudescence afflicting the entire spectrum of Aus­tralia's Left, threatening to kill any meaningful revitalisation.

My condemnation of his style does not mean that I am opposed to fragmenta­tion on the Left, or that I wish to gloss over real differences, or that I am unprepared to debate differences openly if that is what some people would like to do. Quite the contrary! But I do demand minimal standards of civility. I cannot understand why we must verbally assassinate one another on the way to our more humane socialist world. In fact, after twelve years commitment to various left-wing struggles, I'm more convinced than ever that rhetorical totalism is not too far removed from physical annihilation, and is definitely not one of the roads we are seeking. If we are repulsed by the vituperation and the running amok of a Knopfelmacher, why do we resort to the same type of behaviour among ourselves — or even against our right-wing opponents?

My first encounter with this phenomenon of (shall we call it) 'verbal violence', and the realisation of what it can lead to, occurred in the United States when I was working as the regional director of the New England Committee for a Sane Nuclear Policy — better known as SANE. This was back in the still very frigid Cold War years of 1960 and 1961, when SANE was being torn asunder by investigations from Senator Thomas Dodd's Internal Security Sub­Committee. As we were hauled before his Committee, tensions mounted within SANE, terrible rifts developing along ideological, personality, and policy lines. We may have loved peace and mankind, but we sure hated each other. I can recall one fatal meeting where the invective became so heated that some of the more sincere haters actually exchanged blows and shoves (a scene repeated, in only slightly milder form, at last year's May Moratorium in Brisbane). If the comrades inSANE (one word this time) had been carrying nuclear bombs, one wonders if they would have ended up throwing them at each other. It was as if the words — "Kill, kill, kill for peace!" — popularised in the song by the Fugs, were really intended for us.

Why tell this little tale — a searing experience for one individual? Because I see its contradictions and their consequences reflected in the ambivalence of
the Teichmann style. As a person presumably dedicated to socialism, I assume he is interested in exposing what he regards as the authoritarian features and argumentative weaknesses in some of the New Left writing (a legitimate exercise to be sure), yet in the process he lapses into abuses of analysis and name-calling that reveal in himself the very qualities he is deploring. Not only does he commit wholesale verbal violence that discredits his academic competence, but he invites retaliatory gestures of hate from those against whom he has railed. Like civil war, the ideological fratricide of the Left, when it commences, usually turns out to be the most vicious of political conflicts.

All of this, of course, rests upon the assumption that Teichmann is a socialist or strives for socialist objectives. Many on the New Left would no doubt disqualify him as a ‘true socialist’ because of non-revolutionary credentials. Thus the verbal violence would begin its escalation. He might rejoin by calling us ‘pseudo-socialists’ — at least McQueen and his followers who he has typed as “left authoritarian misanthropes”, with a final pronouncement of “Left Fascist”, heading for the “New Siberia”. The rest of us, particularly Osmond, O’Brien, and myself, he has lumbered with the epithet of “Utopian Socialism”, pejoratively defined — when applied to us — to mean membership in “a lonely hearts society” or in a “dilettantes’ association”, “shortening the path to temporary intellectual eminence”, wanting to “storm the toilet blocks” of the universities, purveyors of “Studies from a Dying Sub-Culture”, motivated to cite eminent left scholars “as evidence of wide reading and radical respectability” and “as bromides to sedate the critical reader”, and so on, and so on. We are even guilty of a “particular narcissistic form” of radicalism that “constitutes a branch of social-climbing”. Whow!

Accompanying the epigrams and epithets, a spate of smears are spewed forth as a substitute for analysis. Peter O’Brien gets tarred with the Nazi brush, because he has stated that “there is a need of iconoclastic and symbolic acts, and the need to inject the maximum amount of cultural and social tension into the society”. To which Teichmann reminds his readers: “These, of course, were the Nazi tactics, before their revolution. Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery . . .” Here is truly a place to apply one of the syllogisms that Teichmann has so unfairly invoked against McQueen.

I am scalded “for pouring cold water on coalition strategies (requires an ability to get on with people)”, when I have been very careful to qualify and specify my rejection of alliance formation. Attentive reading, though, does not seem to be a Teichmann forte. What he does to McQueen is really frightening, but I’ll not pursue those transgressions of reality, since McQueen is more than capable of defending himself (if he thinks it worthwhile). I am concerned, however, at a patently false charge directed at my integrity. Giving me the totalitarian treatment, Teichmann claims that I “speak of the need to penetrate various organisations with a view to taking them over by stealth. This” — he continues — “one remembers, was the old-style CP scenario. Who are the cynics and manipulators now?” Since I say nothing remotely suggesting manipulation, it might be interesting to see exactly what I do say about the ‘why’ and ‘how’ of penetrating organisations. In a passage leading up to the section on the “Transformation of Existing Institutions”, the following is stated:

The revolutionary goal becomes the actual life style of the revolutionists. Since they envisage a life which focuses on experiencing their humaneness,
their political activity (to borrow a description from Richard Farson) “will be experiential, rather than utilitarian, and the purpose of life will not be to use themselves for ulterior goals, but to experience themselves, not to use others, but to experience others, not to use their environment, but to experience it in the fullness of its possibilities for richness and beauty”. Thus confrontation — while directed towards the overthrow of institutional arrangements and modes of thinking — does not include the annihilation of persons. The practising and realisation of the vision must go on simultaneously with the confrontation. The two are inextricably linked. Persons cannot be sacrificed as things. One cannot postpone the revolution to man until after the revolution for man has been achieved.

While one can endure puerile and tedious epithets like “Anatole France Lemmings' League” and “the Barber’s Cat Self-Improvement Society” simply because they are puerile and tedious, the blatant desecration of truth in conjunction with the assailing of one’s character is something else again.

If the Teichmann piece is a paradigm case of verbal violence — the above representing only a small sampling — some of the tracts and remarks pouring out of other sections of the Australian Left are also afflicted with the disorder. A Qld. Peace Committee official and a prominent trade unionist, for example, told a public meeting that Brian Laver had swung over to the DLP, as is often the wont of former radicals, because he was opposed to the amalgamation of the metal trade unions. Then, there is the Humphrey McQueen campaign against Dr. Cairns. At the Anti-War Conference in February he delivered a paper in which he charged Cairns with issuing a “call for neo-capitalism” and with conducting a “public campaign on Vietnam (that) is part of his entire counter-revolutionary project”. His case was constructed from a series of selective quotations taken out of context and situation, and sometimes linked by innuendo to the reactionary statements of other people*.

It's not that people spreading this verbal violence are always acting out of malice or insincerity — who can deem their motives — but we must stop it somewhere. And if not through the responsibility of each individual, where then?

RALPH V. SUMMY

COMMUNIST ACTIVITY AND LABOR PARTY CHANGE

IT SEEMS TO ME that John Sendy in his article on “Socialism and the ALP Left” in your March number makes the mistake of trying to analyse the ALP without taking into account the influence that can and must be exerted upon it by a much strengthened Communist Party applying united front policies.

*A slightly revised version of McQueen's original paper will appear in a forthcoming issue of *Arena*, which will also contain an extensive reply to the charges he levels at Cairns.
Basing himself on the present situation, Comrade Sendy concludes that communists should be less “initiators of reform movements” and more “activists and ideologists aiming to exert political and theoretical influence” on movements arising apart from their initiative. This amounts to something a good deal less than the party’s role as seen by Dimitrov — “at bottom the initiator, the organiser and the driving force of the united front of the working class”. This conception of a reduced role for the Communist Party is in keeping with the line pursued by the party’s representatives when they opposed the paragraph in the document of the 1969 International Meeting calling for the role of the marxist-leninist parties to be enhanced and for them to march in the front ranks of the revolutionary and democratic movements. An enhanced role can of course only be won by the merit of our work and our ideas but, in my opinion, we must always aim for such an enhanced role, not accept a reduced one.

Given a reduced role for the Communist Party, a dim view of the Labor Party follows. Such a development as has occurred in Chile, with a socialist party leader advancing a program that challenges the very basis of US power in Chile, reflects the strong influence of a united front in which the Communist Party is a very powerful force. Apart from the many years’ excellent organising and ideological work of the Communist Party of Chile, the Allende regime could hardly have emerged.

In general, the leftward movements within the Labor Party can be traced to mass activity initiated by other organisations. The swing of the Labor Party majority against conscription in 1916 was due largely to strong prior campaigning by the IWW, socialist and pacifist groups. The eleventh-hour change of the Labor Party in 1951 to a position of fighting against the Communist Party Dissolution Act occurred after 12 months of an ever-widening public campaign initiated largely by communists in the first instance. The opposition to troops for Vietnam came on the basis of an already mounting mass upsurge. Activities confined to Labor Party circles can usually be contained by the powerful Labor Party machine. Hence the importance of the mass activity that WE can initiate or stimulate.

Is it true, as John Sendy says, that the changing of the ALP in a socialist direction is a “forlorn hope”? Should we jettison the view expressed by the communist parties of the world on this matter in the 81-Party statement of 1960? Certainly, in its background and present ideology, the ALP is non-socialist. Certainly it is subject, especially when in office, to tremendous pressure from the main monopoly power centres Australian and international. Moreover, the only real socialism is marxism and most of what has passed for socialism in the Labor Party is non-marxist. But the very fact that gives rise to John’s article — the existence of a Victorian branch of the Labor Party as it operated in the past 15 years, declaring its faith in socialism and fairly consistently supporting left policies, proves that the Labor Party can change in some circumstances. We can again refer also to Chile, and we can remind ourselves that Spanish socialists fought alongside communists and other democrats, arms in hand, in a great democratic cause against terrible odds for nearly three years in the late 1930’s.

Lance Sharkey, writing in 1957, in his foreword to the second edition of his pamphlet The Labor Party Crisis, said that in 1954-55, the Labor Party had, by and large, returned to its traditional liberal-democratic standpoints, but
that world conditions had changed and it was possible that the Labor Party could, in some respects, go past its previous standpoints. Add to the changed world conditions the force that the Communist Party CAN AND MUST become, and we certainly see the possibility of future radical leftward movement by the main body of Labor Party people. (In the process some right breakaways would no doubt be inevitable).

Comrade Sendy, while agreeing the ALP cannot be ignored in any revolutionary strategy, considers that “the problems of the ALP, while very important, are by no means the cardinal question that they used to be, because of the proliferation of left wing struggle”. I believe that the problems of the ALP are no less important than previously because it still retains the support of the mass of the industrial working class which, as our last party Congress re-asserted, is decisive for social change in Australia. The “proliferation of left wing struggle” is largely among circles of petty bourgeois origin which, despite their many fine qualities, lack industrial power and long-term stability.

Despite all the wrongs committed by labor governments, I do not think we should use inverted commas in speaking of the advance involved in electing a labor government under Whitlam. Mass movements have compelled the Labor Party to commit itself pretty heavily on the Vietnam war, on conscription and various other issues. A new labor government, if mass pressure is sustained and developed, could open the way to important victories on key issues which would, in turn, help the mass movement further forward, at the same time as it would expose the severe limitations of a Whitlam-type policy. (Clear exposure of these limitations in practice would in itself be an advance.)

Most workers, while a good deal disillusioned about labor governments, will certainly be hoping for the return of a labor government in 1972, and if we do not work hard to this end, we shall be divorcing ourselves very much from the workers generally. It would be wrong to see (as some do) the return of a labor government as all-important and not see the crucial importance of the right-left struggle within the Labor Party. But the return of a labor government is a very important next step forward, and communists should work hard for it, strengthening their relations with Labor Party people in the process while, at the same time, advancing their own policy through their own candidates. Given the growth of the mass struggle, and the growth of our party, the return of a labor government could bring a real advance without inverted commas.

John correctly rejects the view that we should in no way participate in parliamentary or election activity. But is he too negative about such activity? He quotes Lenin on “the most shameless careerism . . . glaringly reformist perversion of parliamentary activity”, etc. and his terms fit present Australian parliaments aptly enough. But Lenin also insisted on the urgent need for communists in western countries to develop what he called a “non-opportunist, non-careerist parliamentarism”.

In the present changed world conditions, with very strong mass movements under way in most countries and with the socialist countries exerting ever greater weight in world affairs, parliaments may sometimes play a vital progressive role as indicated by the 20th Congress of the CPSU. Chile affords a striking example of what can be done through elections and parliamentary action backed
by years of mass struggle of workers, peasants and students; and this remains a historic example even should United States imperialism succeed in temporarily destroying it.

In conclusion, I would repeat that the subject of the article — “the position of the various left wing or left of centre sections of the ALP” — cannot be studied apart from the development of united struggle and the influence of a much strengthened marxist-leninist party.

RALPH GIBSON

THE AUSTRALIAN "URBAN GUERRILLA"

I WAS INTERESTED TO READ the material in your last issue about the struggle in Latin America, and to learn that the views of Carlos Marighela on waging the main battle by guerrilla warfare in urban areas were also to be published. Australian revolutionaries should have attitudes of respect for and solidarity with, the urban guerrillas of Latin America who are engaged in heroic struggle against the repression, torture and poverty perpetrated by present rulers and their US overlords, but I think the different approaches needed in Australia should also be pointed out.

The Mininmanual of the Urban Guerrilla by Carlos Marighela outlines the methods of the Brazilian urban guerrillas carried out in copybook fashion by the kidnappings of the Ambassadors and subsequent release of a number of left wing political prisoners. The justness and necessity of armed urban revolutionary struggle in such contexts as that prevailing in Brazil seems obvious. Armed struggle, urban and rural, as a revolutionary method is undoubtedly valid in countries where political repression, torture and violence is the order of the day, where grinding poverty and total lack of political rights depress the mass of people.

Armed guerrilla action is only possible, and justified, in specific conditions, when that form of struggle is the only real avenue open, when it can inspire and mobilise masses of people or has that distinct possibility. The Chinese and Cuban revolutions amply illustrate this point. As Martin Oppenheimer puts it “Society must suffer from sufficient strains so as to allow (armed) revolutionary activity to 'make sense'”. The Latin American urban guerrilla therefore deals with machine guns, explosives and firing groups as well as leaflets, slogans and political action.

However our Australian urban guerrilla is a revolutionary, a socialist, armed with substantiated criticism of the system and with at least some kind of revolutionary perspective, who protests, demonstrates, speaks and writes, supports the NLF, sits in, fights to organise and educate large numbers of students and workers to an anti-capitalist position and is prepared to wage a many-sided and protracted fight for a socialist Australia.

Our urban guerrilla studies Marx, Lenin, Mao, Marcuse, Guevara, Gramsci, Chomsky and all writers who have contributed to the wealth of social theory, regarding their works as a valuable assistant to the formation of a coherent and viable socialist strategy in Australia. Our guerrilla seeks to assist the development of counter culture and counter structures and strives to pose challenges to the capitalist system which are difficult to absorb and which awaken peoples' consciousness.
Carlos Marighela in his *Minimanual* discusses the seven sins of the urban guerrilla. While the contexts are vastly different the “seven sins” can be considered in an Australian setting too. He lists inexperience, boasting, vanity, exaggerating one’s strength, precipitous action, attacking the enemy when he’s most angry and failure to plan and organise.

In Australian (and US) circumstances the trends towards elitism are cause for concern. No elite, no small band of determined men can substitute for mass revolutionary action nor manufacture or impose a revolutionary situation. As the Negro ex-G.I. Andrew Pulley observed: “Some people say the American working class is not radical, and so they try to make a revolution for them by holding a weekly insurrection”.

Revolutionaries need political organisation, a political party embracing workers, students, academics, etc., whose influence can be widely exerted and reach circles which no elite group can hope to do, whose main purpose, as posed by Christopher Lasch, is to “introduce socialist perspectives into political debate, to create broad consciousness of alternatives not embraced by the present system, to show both by teaching and by its own example that life under socialism would be preferable . . .”

Such a party Martin Oppenheimer (*Urban Guerrilla, Penguin*) suggests “must reflect a genuine movement from the bottom up. It cannot be slapped together by an ad hoc group at the top. It must represent, in a genuine way, local, neighborhood, campus and work-place groups which are already functioning along anti-establishment lines. Furthermore it must seriously orient itself to the problems of white and blue collar workers, for these are the only classes which, due to their relationship to the functioning of modern society, have the potential for making a revolution and the capability of carrying it through on a democratic basis”.

If such points are taken into account the *Minimanual* provides an interesting source of study and information.

JOHN SENDY

**AUTHOR’S CHALLENGE**

WITH REFERENCE to Mr. Teichmann’s review of *A New Britannia* (*ALR*, 30) there are a number of points I would like to make in reply but in order to secure attention on his allegation of plagiarism I will not do so at this time. Instead I want to say two things about this allegation.

One, it is completely untrue.

Two, I challenge Mr. Teichmann to present to a committee of three of our academic peers a fully documented case demonstrating which ideas I took from the B.A. (Hons.) thesis of Dr. J. B. Dalton. In turn I will present a rebuttal and all relevant material. The membership of this committee would be subject to mutual agreement, but (without having consulted them) I nominate Robin Gollan, Russel Ward and Ian Turner.

I would expect this offer to be taken up immediately or for a full retraction (I do not care for an apology from Mr. Teichmann) to appear in *ALR* 32.

HUMPHREY McQUEEN

Due to the late receipt of the above, any replies and comments will have to be made in subsequent issues.—Ed.