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Editors' Comments

ON READERS' COMMENTS

THIS IS just a brief editorial note to thank those few readers who responded to my appeal to write to the journal indicating just what they want it to contain. If there was a poor response, this does not mean that mass apathy is to blame. As revolutionaries, we must always look to ourselves and the inadequacies of our methods to seek the reasons for our lack of success and then we must modify our policies. Only then is it possible for us to blame the mass for their apathy or their quietism. What the few letters I did receive indicated was readers' irritation with the number of theoretical pieces which were difficult to understand and with the imbalance between reports about Australian issues and overseas issues. They want more Australian content.

I, personally, am dubious about eliminating sections on theory, for this is to lapse into populism and to forget Lenin's famous dictum that "Without a revolutionary theory, there can be no revolutionary movement". It is in my opinion, and I look forward to correction from my readers, that much of the failure of the socialist revolutionary movement in Australia can be ascribed, to lack of an adequate grasp of theory, not to a lack of militancy, though it may be that that too is disappearing today as "One Dimensionality" supersedes positions of criticism in our society. The assertion of Kavanagh that communists should "Go back to Marx" before they could make a revolution seems as valid forty years after it was made as it was in the late twenties. Simply, I am not in favour of reducing the amount of space devoted to theoretical issues.

However, I believe this journal must recognise the force of reader criticism that nearly all theoretical material in this journal has been too esoteric — in fact, so difficult to understand that they have not even read it. In future, I think, the journal should exercise a rigorous editorial policy of demanding that all articles on theory be written in a way that can be understood by the general reader. If the material cannot be presented in such a lucid fashion as to be understood by all, then it should not appear. Moreover, it is arguable, against the mystifiers of marxism, that Marx intended all his work to be understood by the workers, and certainly was intensely hostile to the meanderings of philosophers. We can even go so far as to assert that marxism is common sense raised to the level of philosophy.
Outraged sophisticates of marxism should recall, before taking up cudgels, that Marx himself was always very careful to point out that no idea became real as a social force until it was taken up by the mass of people. The purveyors of theory should therefore take especial pains, when writing for this journal, to make their points simply enough and to use simple enough language for their argument to be understood by the mass of its readers.

Reader demand that there be more concentration on Australian issues is a point well taken. Henceforth this journal will make the most energetic efforts to become more Australian in content. It will need to draw on the resources of more and different writers — people who are knowledgeable on matters Australian. This increased emphasis on Australian matters will not mean the complete elimination of reports on overseas matters, but it will mean more regular reports on Australian economics, Australian imperialism, Australian foreign policy and on Australian racism. We look forward to receiving material from readers on these issues.

A.D.

THE ANTI-WAR MOVEMENT. WHERE NOW?

In a relatively short space of time all the old debates about the Vietnam war have ended. Nobody enters the debates any more to speak of "threats from the north", the "menace of China", or "saving Vietnam for democracy". Even our obligations to great and powerful friends hardly rate a mention in the media. One might conclude that the anti-war forces have won the debate, which, in a certain sense, they have, but to leave the matter there is to assume that we have also won our "war", which we have not. It is just too early to pack up our demonstration kits and go home.

The temporary difficulties experienced by the Liberal-Country Party in adjusting their line to the new emphases in United States policies may afford some satisfaction to those who have opposed the Vietnam war and supported normal relations with the Peoples Republic of China, but satisfaction should not delude us into an assumption that anything basic has changed.

Why is there so little debate? Obviously silence is a tactical refuge for the government. A debate assumes that two sides contend. When one lapses into silence the sharpness of the other may be blunted or turned in on itself. The pro-war forces do not want a debate, even the old debates were forced onto them, because they want people to believe that the problems have all been resolved. Above all they hope to delude the anti-war forces into believing that there is nothing now to worry about. If the combat troops are withdrawn in a suitably emotional atmosphere —
bring the boys home for Christmas — who will notice that the training and advisory personnel are to remain? Who will believe that it is such troops, American and Australian commanders, experts and technicians who will continue to run the war, using local puppet troops, against the independence movement of the Vietnamese people? And if people do believe there is still a problem won't the United States and China fix it up together?

All that is left (the government hopes) is conscription, always the lesser question in the mass actions against the Vietnam war anyway, and who will worry over much if the conscripts do not have to do Vietnam service, especially if the term of service is cut back by six months? It is the anti-war movement which needs the debate to counter the confidence tricks, to avoid confusion which would lead to immobility, and to extend the movement. Right now, at the level of the media, a public debate just isn't on while within the movement the debate tends to turn in on itself. An important exception has been the debate that has been taken up in workshops. Workers who still maintain the arguments once advanced by a Gorton or a McMahon have begun to confront the issues with anti-war activists. The results have been positive and found reflection in the increased stopwork actions against the war on June 30th.

But the issues were, and are now, more complex and not easily conveyed in a lunch break or, for that matter, a university front lawn meeting. The movement has to estimate that while mass demonstrations against the war have continued to grow mass consciousness has not greatly increased. Certainly sentiment against the war is broad but because it is not very deep it can be suborned in the changing situation. It does not help much if the left debates with itself, often confining its arguments to such questions as the dates and routes of demonstrations or that ration of speakers and rock bands considered to be most suitable for the ears of the demonstrators.

And the left, in large degree, continues to project itself simplistically, creating an impression that the key to the problem of consciousness about the nature of Australian foreign policy lies in telling people long and loud that the Vietnam war is a major part of the global strategy of US imperialism. That there is no easy solution, no simple answer and certainly no particular form of propaganda to solve this problem, has to be faced. A comparison between anti-war material issued in various States would rate Adelaide highest on one form of anti-imperialist propaganda yet it would be rash to assume that mass consciousness is higher there than elsewhere.
The movement was built, and should continue to be mobilised, on the demand for immediate and total withdrawal. It should not settle for less. The partial withdrawals should be assessed as a partial victory but insufficient to justify a contract out of responsibility in favour of government promises, big power settlements or the hope of a future Labor Government. In addition to army commanders and advisers, the government intends to keep intelligence personnel, navy units, some RAAF units and RAAF men engaged with the US Airforce in Vietnam for as long as they are allowed. Those who seek to step back from the demand for immediate and total withdrawal should note that McMahon was quoted in The Australian on July 29th, 1971, saying: “Total Allied withdrawal would not solve the Vietnam problem”.

The exact nature of a changing relationship between China and the United States is open to speculation and not easy to estimate. No one should quarrel with China’s wish to normalise relations with particular countries, to improve trade, to win even tacit consent that Taiwan is not a separate nation and to end, or minimise, the costly isolation imposed mainly, but not entirely, through imperialist policies. At the same time it would be foolish for the anti-war movement in this country to now assume that the United States, or Nixon, has suddenly become rational and generous, or by implication, McMahon. Heavily pressed at home by a growing anti-war movement which now includes considerable sections in the ranks of the armed forces, it may well suit Nixon to play at peace making while bargaining in other ways for the stakes of Vietnam. It is not unlikely that Japan will, as she can, shoulder much more of the military burden for imperialism in Asia. This, together with some troop withdrawals from Vietnam, can be used to buy off some of the movement. More importantly, Nixon has been seeking an international conference to settle the Indo-China conflict.

McMahon, again playing internal politics, treated with scant attention Whitlam’s telegram from China announcing his belief that a new Geneva style conference could be called in 1972. Certainly the idea is being floated and whether in response to such speculation or not, it is important to note that the Vietnamese liberation forces have recently made explicit statements affirming that Vietnam’s future must be determined by the Vietnamese and not by anyone else. After long years of successful struggle they will not negotiate away the positions they have won, and the United States has lost, in battle.

Nevertheless there is a view in the movement that Vietnam may now be facing pressures which could materially affect her fighting
capacity. Such a view adds strength to the idea that, in the long run, big powers determine everything but it is not well founded whatever impression Whitlam may have received in China in May. An official Chinese statement, early in August, ridiculed the concept of an international conference and reaffirmed that the condition for settlement in Indo-China is total, immediate and unconditional withdrawal of United States troops. The one hard fact that emerges for both the American and Australian movements is that by forcing the total withdrawal of the military presence of the imperialists from Vietnam we could put Vietnam beyond compromise, real or imagined. While recognising that both big and little powers, under threat, are sometimes forced to make compromises our aim should be to avoid those compromises of our demands which would, in any way, legitimise the presence of any of our troops in Indo-China.

The condition for the greater mobilisation of the anti-war forces is the reopening of the public debate throughout every section of the community and the extension of the debate so that it embraces the nature of Australia’s foreign policy and the meaning of the present changes. The fact is that, in addition to the forces that will remain in Vietnam, strong Australian ground, sea and air forces are stationed in Malaysia, Singapore and Papua-New Guinea. In all cases they are there for the same reason as in Vietnam — to destroy by force the democratic movements of the local people, for true independence and freedom from the exploitation of Australian, British, Japanese and American capital. Even though it may shift some troops from one place to another, the Australian Government, like the United States, is aiming to continue its real policy in Asia — armed intervention, using conscript soldiers to maintain its imperialist power.

The situation requires the continuance of a genuine national anti-war coalition which can promote the public debate while developing significant national mass actions involving all areas of the coalition and extending further into the organised work force. All these elements are essential if mass consciousness on the real issues of Vietnam is to be deepened and not dissipated. The movement will be impeded to the extent that the coalition, now expressed in the Vietnam Moratorium Campaign, continues to be turned into an organisation responsible for every facet of the movement. Such a form substitutes for, and ultimately curtails, the initiatives of each component part of the movement and subjects it both to the risk of take-over bids and co-option into respectability by those who give first priority to a parliamentary solution.

M.R.
Interview with Jack Mundey

What do you think of reactions to your previous interview with ALR?

Clearly the most favourable reaction came from militant, progressive workers in the factories and other workplaces and from radical students. A wide range of people and organisations were openly hostile to the general concepts enunciated in the interview. The most vitriolic attacks came from the employers’ organisations, the press and the rightwing of the Labor movement. Also critical were many senior union officials, including some communists and other so-called “left” officials, many of whom I consider to be well and truly entrenched as part of the status quo in Australia.

Quite frankly, I was surprised at the volume and breadth of comments and the persistence with which this ALR article was...
trotted out. In many Arbitration Court cases, the employers’ lawyer or spokesman attempted to use the contents of the interview to demonstrate what a lawless, “way-out” leadership the NSW Branch of the Building and Construction Workers has. On one occasion, a prominent barrister appearing for the Master Builders’ Association contrasted the “responsible” leadership of the Tradesmen’s representatives with the “irresponsible” leadership of the BCW which, he claimed, was “eroding” not only the employers’ position but also the position of the tradesmen’s union leaders in NSW!

Following an interview on the ABC on the ALR article, Commonwealth police came to our office with a list of 17 questions. The police refused me a copy and I declined oral answers. The main points of the intended police questions were on my ideas on militant forms of strike action — occupations, combating scabs, retaliation on scab-built buildings, and agitation for workers’ control and abolition of the penal powers. It is significant that the police questions were the issues which the forces of reaction took up in their publications.

To what extent has union activity developed in the directions you advocated then?

The strike struggles have intensified, but I feel that there has not been evidence of sufficient new initiatives in action by strikers. Union officials, in the main, continue in traditional forms of strike action and keep a tight control on workers’ activities. In the recent building strike in NSW, conservative tradesmen’s leaders threw up their hands in horror at the “terrible crime” of a few scab-built walls being pushed over by strikers from the various building unions. Likewise officials in this strike opposed the tactic (which the strike committee finally voted for and implemented) of mass occupations of projects where employers attempted to keep working.

In strikes in the service industries, there have not been attempts to keep trains and buses moving and refuse to collect fares. Having in mind the mood of the public at the recent savage fare increases, such an exercise could have a tremendous impact on the general public. Again, with the unprecedented crisis in education, imagine widespread concerted strike actions by students and teachers and what a challenging effect it would have on authority, particularly if the strike was used by students and teachers to combine for a greater control of education by students and teachers. The Victorian teachers’ struggle in particular points in this direction.
One welcome positive social involvement has been in environment control. The Clutha protest, the threat of strike action around retention of Kelly's Bush in Sydney, and the 26 Victorian unions' fight against a warehouse being built in parkland in North Carlton are some examples.

But in general Australian union history is one of concentration on economic issues and a relative neglect of political and social issues. Many unions, including militant ones, content themselves with strongly-worded resolutions on these matters. However these resolutions, made in the rarified air of a state or national conference, rarely see the light of day and rarely is implementation fought for at factory-floor level. Next year a similar resolution is carried and then placed away in the archives of the union.

The ACTU Social Services protest also reveals a problem. Though an increased number of industrial workers were on strike for the half-day, as with the Budget rally last year, very few attended the rallies. I believe this non-attendance is partly due to lack of conviction as to the value of attending rallies, and partly to the dry, repetitive rhetoric dished up at the rallies by union leaders and politicians. In the Sydney rally, which was small and attended by mainly middle-aged and elderly people, there was no climax, no demand for any form of confronting representatives of the McMahon Government there and then when the workers were assembled. No wonder young workers are not attracted to such gatherings.

Again, the glaring need for more education of the workers on basic political issues was the apartheid protest against the Springboks endorsed by the ACTU. In line with the UN and world public opinion, the clear call of the ACTU executive resolution was welcomed by progressives, but union officials and militants at the job level failed to get the support of the industrial workers to a degree where workers, if mobilised sufficiently, could have actually halted the tour. What a victory that would have been as an Australian expression of hate for racism!

Radical students left the industrial workers way behind in their persistent confrontation with our racist "guests". Not only did many "left" union officials fail to even try to mobilise their members, many apparently did not take part themselves. Of course a number of union bodies and workers did play a positive part in the anti-apartheid activities which were overall a notable success. But it is no good gilding the lily. The fact is that in the great controversy on the rugby tour, a significant section of our people emerged as racists, and we in the union movement have not done
and did not do a satisfactory job among the union membership to combat racism and ignorance in this country.

What are the employers and others doing to try to turn back the workers' offensive and develop a counter-offensive of their own?

Since 1969 the unions have, generally speaking, been on the offensive. The employers have not fully recovered their position or composure. However, forward thinking employer organisation leaders such as G. Polites, of the National Employers' Policy Committee, is busy hammering out a new line—a line that will take more into consideration the requirements of the multi-national corporations and their policies which will impact Australia in the years ahead. Australia, still one of the most "politically safe" countries for foreign investment, is receiving the attention of US industrial experts who are influencing employer organisations and their containment plans.

Our union movement has been slow in forging new ideas on collective bargaining to suit Australian conditions. In fact, there has been little dialogue. In the recent months, the so-called Cameron-Sweeney proposals have been put forward with a view to showing the electorate at large how a Labor Government in 1972 would "manage" the capitalist economy. It is designed precisely to allay any fears that an ALP Government would not be "responsible"; to show that such a government would control and restrain more militant and far-reaching demands by way of voluntary sanctions imposed by the workers themselves.

Following the Launceston Conference and the stand taken by the left delegates, there was an extremely strong feeling among the workers that once having broken the penal chains which bound them for so many frustrating years, they will not have a bar of any form of industrial sanctions, let alone self-imposed ones! So while the Clarksons and Darlings holler for law enforcement industrially, the demand of the progressive left should be for agreements of short duration, or better still, open-ended agreements with a pre-requisite of prior consultation of the parties before a change is effected.

What is happening now about the penal powers?

Since 1969, there has been a strong current of opinion not only demanding the removal of all penalties but a deeper opposition to arbitration itself. During 1971 though, some of the big
employer organisations have been again pressing for the imposition of the penal provisions. Introduction of the 32A provision of the Arbitration Act was designed to prevent showdowns on the penal fines after the O'Shea affair.

Some (though too few) unions have engaged in stronger forms of opposition to the Courts, and on many occasions our union has completely boycotted Court proceedings. Because the Australian union movement is not really independent, many of the reformists, with an eye to the possibility of a Labor Party in office, are against any radical changes to the status-quo and actually supporting a reformed Court. Some even favour retention of penalties. Down below there is almost complete opposition to the penal clauses and growing opposition to arbitration itself.

The authorities themselves are somewhat frustrated and so we have seen the introduction of the repugnant Summary Offenses Acts in a number of States and Federally. With the penal provisions rendered inoperative at this time, reactionary State Governments moved quickly to bring in the Summary Offenses Acts, many clauses of which especially attack the right to strike, dissent and demonstration. In NSW, Askin declared that the 1970 strike of the Builders' Labourers inspired part of this legislation. The first person arrested under the new Act was Tom Hogan, an organiser of our union. This was hardly accidental. His crime was "waiting on a building site". He was there at the direction of strikers to investigate a purely union matter! The NSW legislation was opposed by a wide range of individuals and organisations. It was, however, rank and file teachers and industrial workers who got out a broadsheet, organised protests to the Courts, etc.; and once again most unions contented themselves with passing executive resolutions and leaving it at that.

The tentative steps towards more involvement in outgoing issues began to accelerate with the success of the penal clause struggle. The Santamaria-ites, Riordan, Short & Co., are pressing for the return to mainly economic issues and are violently opposing intervention in burning social and political issues. Their language and that of McMahon, Bolte and Askin is very similar indeed. The "politicalisation" of our union movement is now the fundamental issue at stake. If the progressive section can win this struggle so that it becomes natural for unions to intervene directly in important social and political issues, then unionism has a real future. On the other hand, if the reactionaries and conservatives have their way and the movement is restricted to mainly economic issues, with reliance upon governments introducing legislation and with no extra-parliamentary action by workers on political and
social issues, then unionism has a very limited future and will become less and less a force in Australia.

How much of an issue is democracy within the unions themselves?

All unions — though generally speaking there is more democracy in the left unions — have a long way to go to really involve their members in decision-making on vital policy issues and the actual control of their union. The attendances at general meetings (some by the way do not have general meetings, all power being vested in the executive) are low and there is a strong feeling that the membership have little say compared to the full-time officials. Many full-time officials are highly bureaucratic, their main concern being retention of their position of power. Some use the union movement as a stepping stone to parliaments, boards and commissions — a few even to the Arbitration Commission! There is often expediency on party-political positions, and there are some strange bed fellows when the heat is on at union election time.

There is a degree of cynicism amongst workers about trade union officials in general. Personally, I believe there should be a rotation of union officials; that after a number of years full-time it should be compulsory for every official to return to his place of work for a year at least, or better still a term of three years. This would get away from the careerist approach of many union officials. I also believe there will be more workers’ control movements emerge in each industry, with an important ingredient being more control of their union by workers.

Amalgamation of unions has been slow, not because the workers oppose it, but because officialdom jockeys for positions in the new union. Political party differences also hinder the coming together of unions. Everyone’s watching the successful coming together of the three metal unions. It would appear the new rules give more rank and file control and ensure more involvement. However size alone does not determine a union’s value, and the implementation of policies and the activities undertaken in this decisive industry will have a big influence on other industries and on amalgamations amongst other unions.

There is a great difficulty in breaking through in rightwing union bureaucracies which are closely tied to the capitalist establishment. However, the increasing strength of grassroot movement in the Australian Workers’ Union and the breakthrough by left-forces in the Ironworkers’ Union on the South Coast of NSW are signs of a move to the left which I feel will gather force in the years ahead.
What are the workers' reactions to the campaign of the government to blame the unions for inflation, and what are the important issues in the wages struggles at present?

There is considerable confusion about who is responsible for inflation. The barrage of the daily press blaming "Hawke and the militant unions" has fallen on some receptive ears, particularly among workers who are not involved in strike actions themselves, but rely upon other unions to do the grinding work of lifting wages for them. The left generally has an immediate need to get more propaganda out to the workers. Other than the fine work of the Combined Research Centre of the AEU-Boilermakers-Blacksmiths and one or two other unions, there is a real neglect in this area.

When one considers that the workers' share in the Gross National Product hasn't risen in the post-war years, yet over the long course there has been a substantial increase in productivity, there are strong arguments to be used. The central point should be that we demand a greater share of the GNP.

Another issue receiving attention is that of what relativity of wages should exist between tradesmen and non-tradesmen. It is in the latter category that we find the most exploited of the industrial workers in the steel works, metal factories, motor car plants, etc., where the profits are enormous. Many of these workers are migrants, who do the less congenial, most arduous jobs yet are paid far less than tradesmen. The mentality of craftism is strong among tradesmen's officials and this often results in unions, including the left ones, giving prior concern to the tradesmen's interests. As tradesmen constitute a minority, this creates a resentment among the non-tradesmen. Another weakness is the failure of unions to elect migrants to positions of union leadership.

Last year we put forward a wage relativity formula of 100%-90% for tradesmen and non-tradesmen in the building industry. Not only did the tradesmen's officials not agree, but they failed to put forward any alternate relativity. It appears to me that all hangovers of craftism must be eradicated if we are to build genuine industrial unionism. This of course is not just a problem with officials, but extends to considerable numbers of the rank and file of tradesmen's unions.

In changing the division of the national income, we would be also tackling the burning problem of the uplifting of pensions of the aged and invalids and other deprived sections of our "affluent" society. Our union originally put forward the concept of strike action in support of pensioners, and that was only a
start. Longer and more decisive strikes in key areas will have to be undertaken before governments will really act on pensions, land rights for Aborigines, etc.

What do you think of workers’ involvement in the struggle against the Vietnam war?

The decade of the 1960’s saw a heightening of anti-war activity with a very wide spectrum of the country’s people involved in all forms of opposition to the Vietnam war, though the union movement still lagged way behind. Many and varied reasons were put forward for this. Once again fine resolutions were carried at the top. Calls were made from union leaders of the left and some from the centre for the involvement in protests for the ending of this war. After the Pentagon Papers disclosure we even had J. P. Ducker address the moratorium rally in Sydney.

I believe we have failed to show the economic cost of this war; but even more that we have failed to convince the workers on the moral issues involved. There was also a lack of conviction of many left leaders on tactics in demonstrations, sit-downs, sit-ins, etc. Too few leaders were to the forefront of such activities. Again there was too much lip-service and insufficient physical presence in the anti-war demonstrations. In the moratoriums of the last two years there has been an overall growth in the number of workers stopping work, but here again too few unions really worked to get the whole membership to stop. This indecision in leadership was naturally reflected among the rank and file. The failure of the international working class movement to mobilise workers against the war to the degree achieved by the student movement needs much more analysis. In Australia particularly, because of our proximity and our future in Asia, do we need to examine this question.

You have few women members in your union, but what is the attitude you observe to Women’s Liberation?

We have a number of women members who receive the same wage rates and benefits as male members receive. Our aim is to retain our present women members and encourage others to join. With changes in construction methods, there is no reason why women should not be employed in this industry. Within our own union office, the girls have a form of virtual workers’ control. The division of work, introduction of new methods, staff required, etc., is determined by the office workers themselves. No longer
are they merely there to get tea, and carry out orders from on high. By encouraging their self-action and running of the office, there has been all-round improvement.

I personally believe women's liberation to be one of the most exciting and progressive social and political developments of our time. Because of our male dominated society, there is an unfavourable reaction among most males generally, and certainly among industrial workers towards women's liberation. As every male is affected by his dominant position in society, the women's liberation movement is quite shattering to him. However because of the greater exploitation of women in almost every instance, women's liberation has an undoubted and historic role to play, and I believe in time industrial workers, along with others, will come to share this belief.

What do you think will be some of the issues at the coming ACTU Congress?

I have already mentioned that increased involvement of the unions in political and social issues is the big question likely to emerge at the ACTU Congress. Already Riordan, Maynes, Short & Co. have gone nearly as far as the McMahon, Snedden and other ruling class spokesmen for restricting the involvement of the ACTU. The "who is running the country" theme is very much like the Menzies' catch-cry about "advancing yellow hordes". It is a deliberate and phoney tactic aimed to frighten Labor Party union leaders from pursuing an industrial line which intervenes in social and political issues, whenever and wherever they affect the working people. The "leave it to the elected government" cry and avoidance of extra-parliamentary activities by unionists is the line of the National Civic Council and DLP, and of rightwing extremists still in the ALP. Already this has had some effect judging by various comments following the Maryborough by-election. There will clearly be an attack on Hawke's leadership.

During the last two years Bob Hawke has made a considerable impression. The workers are impressed with an articulate leader capable of handling the best spokesmen from the employers and governments. The average worker sees Bourke's as a successful experiment and was particularly pleased with Dunlops and the "retail price maintenance" issue, Hawke's support for the stoppage in support of pensioners, and his generally positive attitude on political and social matters. While overall his image is still very good, among the more politically conscious it was somewhat tarnished by his involvement in the Cameron-Sweeney proposals, and his stand supporting Federal intervention in the Victorian ALP.
WOMEN'S LIBERATION is the result of an incredible response amongst women everywhere to a very real need in society. For the first time in the history of mankind, women have united to establish their rights as human beings. To discuss the subject of women's liberation is to unleash a great amount of long pent-up emotion and subjective animosity, frustration, disenchantment and anti-male feminism.

We have, till now, laid great stress on objective reality, objective fact. We said that to assess objective fact is the best basis for understanding reality. But there are some realities which seem to defy objective analysis, realities that by their very nature are obscured by subjectivity and subtlety.

The unrelenting objectivity of those who speak of "breaking old bonds", "making frontal attacks" and "confronting capitalism", sometimes sadly fail to reach their less objective sisters (and brothers) who need to be reached on an individual basis as well as on a collective one. You cannot win the people if you neglect their souls and yearnings, are unable to relate to them as subjects, and singly as well as collectively.

Two lines of attack seem to me to develop from these two approaches. The aggressive, objective outlook stresses economic reforms, changing the social order, eliminating class struggle. The aggressive subjective outlook stresses personal confrontation, soul cleansing, discussion ad infinitum and so on. These two forces are discernible in the movement. Women's Liberation requires a blending of both forces and it is here that the very crux of the question lies.

How can you unite industrial, less articulate, women who readily recognise immediate reforms and social demands (e.g. wage justice, child care, job opportunity) and their better educated, more articulate, sisters on campus and elsewhere, who find great emotional and psychological release in analysis, discussion, elucidation and polemic? How can one achieve the seemingly impossible, i.e. a fusing of forces?

Judy Gillett is a school teacher in South Australia. This article is an abridged version of a paper given to a weekend discussion under the above title organised by the Communist Party in May this year.
These problems are neither confined to economic reforms nor to so-called “middle class” idealism. The question is really that of inspiring and motivating all women, especially the great majority now entering the work force, to unite and struggle for reforms and against the more far-reaching and subtle manifestations of oppression, victimisation and male chauvinism. I find it almost impossible to establish which, if any, are the most basic of the demands being made by radical women, but those which strike me as extremely fundamental to woman’s vision of herself and how she is viewed in society are the ones revolving around sexual liberty and the sexual role.

The one factor which distinguishes primitive man from civilised man is the development of sexual role playing, that is a pre-ordained behaviour pattern and achievement potential based on sex alone. In early communistic societies there was no such thing as domination of one sex over the other. All adults were responsible for all children. Although adult society was differentiated into areas of work (women caring for children, food gatherers, etc., men mainly hunters) each sex worked within the community as a collective and therefore the “divide and rule” principle which developed in later societies did not exist. In the earliest social organisation of human beings (which forms lasted for hundreds of thousands of years) the nuclear family was non-existent, sexual relations were free amongst both sexes; both sexes regarded themselves as the parents and providers for all the children in the community, as well as caring for the sick and aged.

In such a primitive, classless society all were providers, all were consumers, none were oppressed and none oppressor. In many cases, in fact, a matriarchy or maternal line of descent was the rule. The child’s father, being hard to trace, in a promiscuous free-love community, as the earliest human communities to an extent were, the mother was the obvious choice on which to base lineage and kinship. Thus, in many primitive communities, women were highly regarded and respected. The very thing which modern society now regards as making women basically inferior and handicapping her (the child-bearing function) was in earliest times the quality which made her greatly respected and honored. As Engels says in *Origin of the Family*:

That woman was the slave of man at the commencement of society is one of the most absurd notions that have come down to us from the eighteenth century.

How did it happen then that what we regard as woman’s most serious handicap (child bearing) gave her a superior role in primitive society? In 1927, an anthropologist, Robert Briffault, wrote a book entitled *The Mothers* in which he described how in their
early struggles to feed and care for their offspring, the women developed highly complex forms of labor and social activity. Primitive women progressed from food collecting to primitive agriculture (digging stick to primitive plough) from collecting small animals (e.g. our tribal Aboriginal women who collect small mammals, reptiles, insects, etc.) to animal husbandry. Similarly, related crafts and techniques — pottery, weaving, leather-making, chemistry, medicine, botany, house building and other forms of primitive knowledge — were developed.

Once woman became a solitary wife and mother in an individual home and was trapped in a new system of private property and monogamous marriage, she was rendered powerless. We should not be fooled into believing that there is any truth in the fable that marriage as an institution, and the family as we now know it, has always existed and is therefore imperishable. Woman’s sexual role has changed historically. In early civilisations she became a chattel and virtual slave to her husband. To quote Engels again:

Familus means (in Latin) domestic slave and familia is the aggregate number of slaves belonging to one man. The expression was invented by the Romans to designate a new social organism, the head of which had a wife, children and a number of slaves under his authority and according to Roman law the right of life and death over all of them.

For centuries, in fact, right up to the middle ages, marriage as a legal contract was only for the privileged classes. Amongst the peasants, both parties worked to support the family and were economically independent of each other, yet also dependent on the collective. “When woman ceased to be a producer she became a dependant.” (Reuter & Rumer, The Family.)

To continue specifically with the historic sexual role of women, not just within the family as wife and mother, but as courtesan, prostitute, servant, concubine and, finally, sophisticated starlet, popsie, bunny girl, nude model, bathing beauty and female escort, we see a continuing chain of women as property to be bought and sold; an ethic (if one can call it that) not altered by capitalist society, but simply brought up to date and developed further by it.

It is capitalism that has found the most sophisticated methods for sexual exploitation and male chauvinism. There are countless examples to be found in advertising, women’s magazines, films and novels. Here are two examples selected from the writings of John Miles in The Advertiser (Adelaide) in March and May 1971:

I hope that mothers do not go out of style. I feel that ’ncubators’ Day could not be an emotional or commercial success. It lacks the heart-strings appeal. And yet it appears that, if a couple of the main planks of the Women’s Lib. movement are achieved, many mums of the future will be unmarried ladies who demand abortions at the drop of a tear.
I am not for chaining mum to the kitchen sink. But I feel it is much more important for us all that women should be successful wives and mothers than that they be crash-hot big shots in commerce, industry and the professions . . . Motherhood, the making of homes, the implementing of moral values and the care, love and companionship which support husbands is surely more than a part-time job . . . But it should also be kept clearly in mind that selling pantyhose or pounding a typewriter or feeding a computer or "having a career" in the boardroom or the courts or the hospitals and the Houses of Parliament is peanuts compared with the real role of a woman as a creator, a lover and a mainstay of family life.

Women need to be liberated from a sense of inferiority when they stay at home and do what they love doing most — looking after their families . . . Women are mad on love. Most men can take it or leave it.

But there is one thing that every man finds absolutely indispensable at some stage of his life, and that's a mother.

and

Women have a special gift, according to Prince Philip — a special gift of being able to dissociate their minds from what their hands are doing — a special gift which makes them capable of working without thinking about what they are doing . . . women tend to live nearer the end of their tether than men. Therefore, they are more on edge, more aroused, and less likely to go to sleep or become inefficient on a purely repetitive job . . . And there is in women the need to talk, and the opportunity to do this in a repetitive task is really one of the job's main attractions.

It is interesting to note how in what is loosely described as today's permissive society, two incredible sides to this "sex gulf" emerge. On the one side we find the patriarchal establishment and all that that implies, fanatically jumping up and down and screaming anti-abortion, anti-birth control, anti-free love, anti-equality epithets and on the other a more enlightened partially professional, militant group, who describe what they term "the new sexual ethic". Dr. Bryan Furnass, for example, Director of the Australian National University Health Service, speaking at a meeting of GP's in South Australia remarked:

In biological terms it would seem more logical to require a licence to have children than to marry — though this would strike at the root of the legal concept of property in present-day matrimonial contracts . . . in the sexual field concern for human happiness should involve the training rather than the thwarting of instinct and emphasise the positive rather than the negative aspects of the problem. (Advertiser, 3.5.71.)

Should such views as this prevail the wheel will have come full circle and we could envisage a society where marriage as a legal contract is forgotten.

At the present time, however, women carry out their sexual role, or are manipulated by it, in a variety of ways. The jobs that women seek are often an extension of the wife-mother role: the nurse, teacher, doctor, cleaner, shop assistant, laundress, tailoress, or immediately related to her sexual exploitation:
mannequin, hairdresser, cosmetician, etc., i.e. man's plaything—a decoration. Women in the mother-role are manipulated by society too, especially in fields of employment. They are denied adequate child care, accouchement leave, sick leave, long service continuity, permanency, etc., but also in respect to social services, child endowment, maternity allowance and pensions. Lastly with regard, specifically, to sexual oppression, women have been duped and manoeuvred by fashion and cosmetics and all other forms of consumerism.

A prevailing myth of the consumer economy is that the new innovations create leisure time for the consumer... especially... the housewife consumer... special cleaners for windows, floors, carpets, sinks, toilets, furniture etc. are supposed to release women from household drudgery. In actuality they impose a highly elaborate routine on that drudgery. Cleaning the home becomes a more highly specialised routine linked to the consumption of highly specialised cleaning products. The cosmetic industry does this too, new more involved methods of make-up come onto the market each year. Women (in advertising lingo) must be liberated to desire new products. (Media Images by Alice Embee).

The modern society's ideal woman is young, well-proportioned, wears the right hair style, clothes, jewellery, perfume, cosmetics, deodorant (all types). What tortures so many women suffer because they cannot emulate this synthetic ideal! The business of preying on the fears and aspirations of thousands and millions of women is one of the most profitable and insidious forms of sexual exploitation, and the promotion of fashion with its manipulation of women is one of the principal methods of perpetuating their inferior status by inferring their continual need to please men and decorate themselves for the male society in which they move.

In the realm of consumerism once again, we only have to look in good old Woman's Day (never a whole week of living in it) to see to what extent women are seduced and baited by high pressure, highly sophisticated advertising; the worst features of this pressure being the unhealthy querying of woman's sense of inadequacy, ability, acceptance, capability and intelligence.

Before we close on the subject of role playing and the way in which society has moulded and oppressed the male and female sections of it, I would like to spare a few moments to take stock of the effect that role playing has on men as well as women. We have discovered that to be continually regarded as passive, submissive, malleable creatures is in fact a "non-existence". Have we ever thought what it must be like to have to just as artificially manufacture the opposite attributes as men are required to do, e.g. activeness, aggressiveness, rigidity and strength? Many women have regarded men as the lucky ones. I am not so sure any more.
In an interview with men carried out by Sally Vincent, entitled “Being a Man Isn’t Easy”, the interviewee tells her:

... it struck me (then) that all male behaviour was learned, that everybody who behaves as a real male is doing so in order to get the approval that we are all seeking from the outside because none of us knows who we are from within... men are supposed to be dominant, aggressive, attractive to the female, ruthless sexually, advanced intellectually... Masculinity means to me being responsible for one's feeling and feelings. Responsible for one's act. Therefore masculinity is something a woman can and should experience as well. It is a part of the emergence of a feeling in the species since there is no differential between the male and female except in their physical attributes. So masculinity must only be the authority that the human being feels as a human being emerging. (emphasis added)

Women’s Liberation literature has challenged the concepts that assume feminine passivity and male aggression to be natural. To understand some of these questions we may begin to understand ourselves and those we love.

In further considering the role of the family, it is important to note its present changes and possible future ones. The family of the 1970's is not the same as the family in the immediate post-war period. There are more married women at work, especially young women, and therefore more pre-school children being cared for by some other agent. There are fewer teenage children at work, as now more are at school or tertiary level education.

One of the greatest attacks on the Women's Liberation movement is the charge that it wants to overthrow the family, destroy the role of mother and institutionalise all children, and this should be answered. The changing structure of the family is not new; the family has in fact undergone many changes in the history of human society. The roles of mother and father as played out in modern capitalist society are not permanent either, as we've seen from looking at primitive society. Even as recently as the Victorian era few women were employed outside the home. Men were dictators in their own homes and in society at large, and the wife and/or mother was legally, socially and economically completely dominated by him. This has changed greatly even in what, historically, is a short space of time. As Anna Yeatman points out:

we observe... changes in the family stimulated by the transition from a mechanised to a "technological" economy... the role of women is clearly going to be considerably modified... "sexual emancipation" and "equalitarian values" will serve to increase the viability of the marriage family institution so far as it will become humanised and more adaptive to individual need. (ALR No. 28).

The family as we know it has served capitalism faithfully, as it was intended to do. It isolated people into communities, made them rely on small groups for protection, affection, security and
shelter. It promoted the concept of individualism versus collectivism, the concept on which capitalism is based. It will not necessarily disappear; in fact monogamous partnerships may well provide a suitable social answer for individuals. But a more communal and collective influence will penetrate the high white picket taboos of present families, especially in the fields of education, social experience, problem solving, labor saving, consumer goods usage, population control and world pollution.

Dr. Furnass comments:

Pre-marital and extra-marital links may eventually form part of a pattern in which nuclear families gradually coalesce into extended family relationships similar to those in some primitive tribal communities. It seems unlikely that such radical departures from existing taboos and restrictions will be achieved overnight, although the present generation of adolescents may well be in the vanguard of instituting such a change.

One thing that is obvious is that the family as we know it oppresses all its members—women, men and children. The woman is forced into a totally dependent position, and pays for her keep with "emotional-physical labor", 99.6 hours a week, in fact, according to the survey by the Chase Manhattan Bank.

How can oppression by the modern family be alleviated? Birth control, contraception and abortion are important, as are the questions related to the right for women to work. For when women achieve full economic independence (and this can be through struggle on economic reforms like child care facilities, equal pay, accouchemoent leave, etc.) they will create an independent view of their own, they will liberate themselves and their menfolk. This struggle for economic independence should be tied to a social and personal analysis of the individuals in society and of the pressures they have suffered from generations of authoritarian and segregated education and conditioning in sex-determined roles. In this way we can try to ascertain how and why the changes in men's and women's lives came about and how and why we can change them. As Peter Fryer says in the very last paragraph of his book The Birth Controllers (and he in turn is quoting a report of the Royal Commission on population in the UK):

Only when no one at all need fear unwanted pregnancy shall we be able to speak, not merely of a "big extension of man's control over his circumstances", but of woman's control over hers. (emphasis added).

and, I would add, enabling her to enrich the community.

We should now try to assess whether the struggle for woman's liberation is or is not part of the class struggle. Our present western society is split into two main classes, the employed class and the employing class. Women, of course, occur in both these classes and in the main relate to the values, ideals and aspirations
of the class to which they belong. For example, it is unlikely that a wealthy, propertied woman would have any feeling for, or sympathy with, the many economic demands made by working class women in the work force. On basic questions concerning private property, privileged position, and profit control, wealthy women will defend the status quo and in so doing they betray their working class sisters.

However, despite this fact, there are still many issues which over-ride class barriers and unite women as a sex. Contraceptive freedom and the right for abortion are two examples of such issues. We should remember that the struggle between the two classes is the force for real social change and human liberation, especially women’s liberation. However we may and should criticise socialist countries for many still prevailing backward attitudes to women, we should remember also that the enormous achievements made for women in these countries came about not by sex war, but by class war. It is a dangerous diversion to try to make the class struggle into a sexual hostility towards men (or vice versa). The common interests of workers as a class over-ride the special interests of woman as a sex.

However, there is one aspect of class we have not discussed. That is the role of the housewife. With regard to class, she is, it seems, in a unique position. I would term it “a dispossessed sub-class”. Marx pointed out that classes could be described by their relationship to the means of production, but here we have a large section of the community who provide their labor for no wages.

In a society in which money determines value, women are a group who work outside the money economy. In essence women are still back in feudal times. We work outside capitalism as unpaid labor — and it is the structure of the family that makes this possible, since the employer pays only the husband and, in fact, gets the rest of the family’s services for free. (Robin Morgan in her Introduction to Sisterhood is Powerful.)

I would like to extend this description also to the housewife who goes to work, for she is now doing two jobs, one underpaid, and one not paid at all. What kind of social freaks are we? This double role is reinforced and openly encouraged by the mass media, e.g. Woman’s Day 22.2.71. In response to a previous article entitled “How to Minimise the Drag of Housework” many readers wrote in their favourite tips for easing the drag. One of the “best” said in part:

For the working housewife especially, I can recommend the “Time Method”. By doing two hours of housework each of the five working days — in addition to the preparation of meals, washing-up and making beds — it is a simple matter to keep the home attractive, things running on the proverbial oiled wheels, and keep the week-ends free for shopping, pleasure and relaxation.
Of course the two allotted hours can be fitted in to suit the individual, but I found that one hour in the morning and one in the evening is best for me. (emphasis added).

How long will we be content to be employed at two jobs for one wage packet?

One aspect of life where woman is **supporter** is highlighted in the cultural sphere. For thousands of years, through all forms of class struggle and social change, women have supported and assisted men in **their** struggle, which was social reform (Pitt, Shaftesbury, Stuart Mill, Marx, Engels, etc.) or cultural achievement (writers, artists, composers too numerous to mention) the names of women on their star-spangled ladder are conspicuous by **their infinitesimal presence**. Why? Are we in fact more dumb, less creative, less imaginative, have less drive, integrity and motivation?

Women have been forced to adopt the roles of housewife and mother, so that male creative geniuses could go on creating and not be bothered with their next meal, bed, clothing, etc., or with the care and nurture of their offspring. Madame de Stael (1766-1817) said “Genius has no sex” and Thomas Carlyle’s wife sadly observed “I married for ambition. Carlyle has exceeded all that my wildest hopes ever imagined for him, and I am miserable”. One can correlate creative genius with political consciousness. This is a bitter pill. How many women’s consciousnesses are developed at the expense of their husbands'? Who were, or are, **Mrs. Kosygin, Mrs. Nixon, etc.?** — wives and reflected glory.

Women have served all these centuries as looking glasses possessing the power of reflecting the figure of man at twice its natural size. (Virginia Woolf.)

We should try our hardest to achieve a plan of concrete action on which we can establish unity with and for the vast numbers of women who are mainly only depressed by their oppression without understanding it, the women who when their mother role is played out are told by the doctor they are “going through the change of life”. How many of these cases are aggravated because these women have no **need** to stay at home any longer, but have been in domestic chains so long that their hands have become grafted to their chains. It is no wonder that so many middle-aged women in our communities, whose children have grown up and away from them, have become hypochondriacs and barbiturate swallowers.

Can anyone justify this incredible state of affairs? For my part, I recall the words of Christabel Pankhurst as a guide for action to change the situation:

Remember the dignity of your womanhood. Do not appeal, do not beg, do not grovel. Take courage, join hands, stand beside us, fight with us!
NOTES ON THE ECONOMY

Inflation

WITH THE RATE of inflation accelerating and unemployment beginning to increase, the prospects for the immediate future are quite predictable: increased government anti-inflationary pressures, with a consequent rise in unemployment. The Treasury men will argue that we need a little unemployment for our own economic health. Of course, the men who advocate such a policy have complete job security! It is not difficult to guess at the kind of measures the government will look to: hold back wage increases; cut back ‘inessential’ social services and government expenditure; increase indirect taxes.

The attempt to blame inflation on wage increases will be called an ‘incomes policy’. And, when producers have varying degrees of monopoly power or tacitly agree to raise prices in concert, rising wages do lead to rising prices. The inherent logic of an incomes policy is quite simple — for business (especially ‘big businesses’) to prosper and keep most people employed, high profits are necessary for high levels of investment. Any attempts to hold down prices now as a part of an over-all incomes policy affecting wages and profits will put a squeeze on profits (already lowered over the last year), thus preventing businesses from fulfilling their mission in society as investors for the future.

You won’t hear too much about the role of foreign investment in contributing to inflation over the last few months, in spite of the fact that such investment has increased rather dramatically this year to about $1400m — up by over $300m. There will be scant attention given to the high rates of salary increases for business executives over the last couple of years — already, between 20% and 30% of these incomes are paid as tax-dodging ‘perks’. Naturally, the tax-savings are enormous — over $1,000 for income of $10,000 plus $2,500 in ‘perks’, and over $2,500 for an income of $20,000 plus $5,000 in ‘perks’ (how else do they get those houses and cars?)

And you will hear plenty about those steel price and state payroll tax increases which will be used to justify a large hike in prices — in spite of the fact that the cost-increasing effects of these changes will only average about 1% for all of manufacturing. The truth of the matter is that profits were down anyway and a good excuse was needed. How can you knock profits when your job in the future depends on them? By definition, an incomes policy under capitalism must mean a policy of restraining wage increases (with an occasional tut-tut for grossly excessive price
increases). There is little scope for considering the equity of such a policy when the dynamism and ultimately the existence of the system is at stake. The only answer to an ‘incomes policy’ is worker control — control of how much and to whom now (wages) and how much and for whom in the future (investment). No wonder such demands are resisted.

That Bougainville Copper Float (or Fleece)

How would you like to get 40% on your money? Even that outrageous tax-perk which gives the greatest benefits to the rich — the $1,200 deduction for life insurance — only yields such a high return on your investment with a taxable income of about $6,000 (at $15,000, it’s well worth over 50%!)

Better still, how would you like to earn 40% on a $350 investment when you get your own money back as soon as you sell a 10% share to the public? That’s about the way it works for Conzinc Riotinto of Australia* in its Bougainville copper project.**

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<th>Cost of Project</th>
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<td>Australian ‘public’</td>
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<td>New Guinea Administration</td>
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How come CRA hasn’t put any money in? Well, it’s not quite true that they didn’t put any money in — they financed the preliminary surveying and a few other initial costs. They get all of this back with the new share float on the Australian ‘public’. Not bad so far, since they can use these funds now on new ventures. They are able to pay off all of their loans in about 6 years. And, by about 1980, they will start paying taxes in Papua-New Guinea . . . an incredible fact, considering they persuaded the New Guinea Administration to put up a good chunk of the direct project costs now, simply by calling it the New Guineans’ stake in their futures, and asked them to put in a good deal of extra money for public works related to the project. The neatest thing of all is that the New Guinea Administration bears the ‘cost’ of the long-term ‘political’ risks. . . .

David Evans

* Source of profit figures: the estimates made last year by Mr. B. R. Stewardson in a paper ‘The Bougainville Copper Agreement’ (presented to the ANZAAS conference in Port Moresby) adjusted for recent copper price trends were confirmed by the 40% dividends offered in the recent Bougainville Copper Float.

British workers' control conference

"WORKERS' CONTROL — THE MOVEMENT OF THE SEVENTIES": Such was the sign over the speakers' platform, Birmingham, England, where over one thousand shop-floor delegates attended the Eighth National Workers' Control Conference in October 1970. The continuing strength of the shop steward movement in England contrasts sharply with our Australian experiences and is clearly reflected in the fact that this Conference of Workers’ Control was the 8th and largest of its kind held on a national basis.

Contrary to a prevailing Australian reformist viewpoint, there is no one more equipped or capable to deal with the deep social issues directly affecting workers than the workers themselves. Nor is it accidental that many union leaders, unionists and union delegates originally of the left have lost sight of the democratic and potentially revolutionary qualities that reside within the Australian working class movement. Nor does it require an analysis in depth to determine wherein lie some of the root causes that have led to such disastrous effects for the Australian revolutionary and working class movement as a whole.

Dogmatic materialist concepts almost devoid of the essential dialectic, derived from a stalinist hegemony, and its efforts to refute christian idealist dogmatics, has and continues in no small degree to delude the revolutionary movement on the fundamental role of working class, participatory democracy. That delusion, in itself, calls for deep and continuing analysis of its causes, and effects on the Australian scene.

Such distortions of the fundamental basis for the promotion of socialist ideas of democracy have been further compounded by the related acceptance of the "lawful and orderly" system of compulsory arbitration on which most of the Australian trade union movement has come to rely. The absence of this type of Bob Campbell is Newcastle organiser of the Sheet Metal Workers' Union. He was elected by representatives of 14 unions to attend a conference organised last year by the World Federation of Trade Unions on the problems of young workers. This conference was held in Bulgaria, and with the approval of his union Bob Campbell took the opportunity to go to England to attend the Workers’ Control Conference.
system and the refusal of important sections of the British trade union movement to be intimidated, due to its more democratic base, probably best explains its contrast with the movement here in Australia.

In many ways the conference was a significant step forward for the British workers as well as a valuable example for all serious left activists in Australia. The flow of discussion was in high key and as each speaker finished, the chairman had dozens of choices for the next. The vast majority of the contributions came from the floor of the conference whose composition was much younger than one has come to expect at a meeting involving unionists.

One very healthy aspect of the conference was the tremendous number of organisations represented. As participants walked into the hall they could expect to be handed material from every tendency in the left in Britain, ranging from Maoists, Trotskyists of varying brands, the unemployed, organisations for the freedom of African States and anti-apartheid groups, to the Communist Party and the Labor Party, together with many other marxist and leninist groupings.

One of the major concerns of the conference was democracy within the unions. This was well summed up by Mr. Ernie Roberts, Assistant General Secretary of the Amalgamated Engineering and Foundrymen’s Union, when he said: “The major job for workers at the moment is to take control of their own organisations, that is, the trade unions. Until this is done it is useless to begin to attempt to control the boss. If until the present day, the unions have made many gains, both in conditions and wages, ways must nevertheless be found to make real demands on the boss which will challenge his right to hold complete control over our lives.”

A phrase heard many times during the conference was extra-parliamentary opposition. The disillusionment of most speakers at the performance of the Wilson Labor Government is closely related to this. Governments, regardless of their shade or leanings, are always much more vocal in opposition than when in power. When Labor politicians in Britain today express horror at the Tory Government’s attempts to introduce its Industrial Relations Bill — which is similar to our penal provisions — they don’t sound very convincing. For the Wilson Government Bill “In Place of Strife”, which was resisted by the workers, was designed to do much the same job. One delegate said: “Well, the Tories are back in power if, indeed, they were ever out of power, for they have always had control of the Stock Exchange.” Valuable lessons can be learned by the Australian left from these examples, particularly
by that section which see election of a social democratic party — the ALP — as the path to socialism.

A major point which came through was the need for international co-operation between workers in the face of international corporations. Instances were raised showing clearly how huge monopolies were transferring production from one country to another to cut costs at the expense of the workers. Particularly is this true of the motor vehicle industry. Dialogue between Japanese and Australian workers could be an immediate step in this direction for us.

As a result of attending this conference, I feel that the British working class is moving in the direction of having control of their lives put into correct hands — their own. A most valuable aspect of the whole conference was the fact that workers from some particular establishments or industries came forward with complete concrete programs for the control and management of their job. The situation in Britain certainly lends itself to this type of program for there are far more nationalised industries there than in Australia. Any proposal, however, would be impossible to implement in any way without complete control over every aspect of the program by the workers directly in contact with the job.

**Australian potential and obstacles**

From the "vantage point" of Newcastle, the potential for a challenging workers' control movement on a national scale in Australia seems rather restricted. There must be analysis in many centres throughout the country. This article therefore concentrates on practical obstructions to industrial democracy and workers' control in the Newcastle movement.

In the State Dockyard in Newcastle, we have a perfect example of an industry in which a policy of industrial democracy could be implemented to a considerable degree immediately. Firstly, it is State-owned; secondly, it has a history of mismanagement; and, thirdly, there is some evidence of responsible action by the trade union movement in settling problems — for example, the Newcastle Trades Hall Council intervention in demarcation disputes.

There have been attempts by the State Government to convince the workers that they have some say in the running of things by appointing Mr. John Ducker of the NSW Labor Council onto the management board. They even have the Newcastle Lord Mayor, Ald. McDougall, on the board. Anyone with any experience in the dockyard will agree that this ploy is even more useless than it sounds. Workers in this establishment, as in Britain, are in a much better position to understand the needs and requirements
than anyone else in the community. An initial move would be the involvement of the works committee in all aspects of safety and on other committees.

For many years, the dockyard unions have been tearing each other apart in useless, senseless, demarcation disputes; in many cases with the “assistance” of union officials who cannot, or will not, see any further than their narrow union interests. This situation was allowed to continue until, in 1969, there was a genuine threat to completely shut down the works. The Newcastle Trades Hall Council, at that time, advanced a code for the settling and prevention of inter-union demarcation disputes. The basis of this code was that both parties should agree to abide by the decisions of an independent arbitrator from the unions, agreed to by both parties. Since this proposal was implemented, the dockyard has been relatively free from major demarcation disputes.

There is an urgent need at Newcastle, and other dockyards, for a single industry union. However, when this was advocated by the Newcastle THC, in a resolution which said “This Council deplores the increase in situations in which unions are contesting each other instead of initiating understanding towards industrial unionism”, and given coverage on the front page of the local press, it was met with horror by many union leaders, including some on the left.

The Newcastle struggle in the BHP and subsidiaries for a 33-1/3rd per cent pay rise for all workers was not itself successful, but the gain was a campaign which was, for the first time, controlled and directed by the rank and file. The meetings held during the struggle were the best attended meetings ever for Newcastle, the workers responding to the call for a rank and file campaign free from top decisions. New shop committees emerged, together with a greater awareness of the positive character of extended trade union democracy, in comparison with the innocuous bleats of the past for action by leaders at the top. This struggle exposed the self-imposed containment and conservative restraint that still obstructs the movement. BHP had only to mention deregistration for some union leaders to look immediately for some compromise and ways to extricate their unions from a possible confrontation with Australia’s largest monopoly. Hardly the way to win workers to more militant unionism!

The issues of democratic decision-making and involvement need much greater promotion than that given to date, and evidently, if the Australian unions are to become an “offensive” movement, its inhibiting “bullock wagon-like” structure, complete with whip-crackers at the helm, will have to go.
Extracts from Stephen Bodington's paper at the Workers' Control Conference

Trade Union Demands and the Technological Revolution

THE CONTEXT of industrial struggle for better wages and working conditions is being changed and will continue to be changed more and more rapidly as new technologies, scientific management, etc., make their impact more and more felt. No worker can be sure what the future holds for himself, still less for the community to which he belongs. Operations of industrial concerns tend to be determined by national or international management policies that pay scant regard to the interests of the communities in which their component units are located. To wait until problems are obvious is a great mistake. If the shipyard workers on the Clyde had, in the years following the war, insisted upon the right to ask all the questions they could think of about the future of the shipbuilding industry it would have been possible to hammer out a much better future for themselves and for the Clydeside. This, of course, would have taken time, facilities for meeting, research into the background of questions asked, facilities for presenting information in the clearest possible form, facilities for workers themselves to study the background of the problems raised. Many thousands of hours would be needed to make such investigations fruitful; but is one not talking about many millions of hours of working and living time for people in the regions? So the first suggestion is the need and right of workers to deliberate on the future of their own work activities in conjunction with people of the community in which the activity takes place. (It is obvious that work life, community revenue and much else is primarily dependent upon basic production and basic economic activities located in the region.)

The right to meet and to discuss

The struggle of the Italian workers in the Autumn of 1969 in the engineering industry in addition to winning big wage advances, won a number of other demands of which one in particular is, in principle, of great importance. Employers who in many cases previously had not even allowed trade union representatives to enter the factories, were forced to concede the right of all workers to use the factory premises for meetings of those who worked in the factory and for ten hours of such meetings a year time spent would be paid.
Genuinely democratic demands are demands formulated by people themselves and this takes time and calls for discussion. Workshop meetings and discussions are crucial to the democratic process and there is no subject of interest to the meeting of workers that should be excluded from the scope of such discussions. Only by such discussions can 'reasonable demands' be formulated. Out of such 'reasonable demands' the momentum for socialist struggle is likely to be generated; what appear to the collectivity of workers feasible and 'just' will become the object of struggle. The onslaught on the structure of the capitalist market economy will become concrete. As the capitalist organisms attempt to meet 'reasonable demands' they will adapt themselves and develop whatever potential they have, and insofar as they have not got the potential to meet feasible demands, the struggle for these demands will be transformed into a struggle for socialism.

**Scientific management and democratic involvement**

Efficiency measured in terms of ability to produce goods for exchange profitably is demanding more and more 'scientific management'. Scientific management essentially means integration of workers and machines as elementary components in a flow of production designed to proceed over time with a minimum of interruption. The worker becomes more and more a mere cog exercising no individual power of decision or initiative, but carrying a heavy responsibility to ensure that the chain of production processes, the flow of production, is not interrupted or, if it is, to take the most urgent remedial action. Such routinisation of work is a preparation for fuller automation, that is, the automatic linking of machine processes with less and less human intervention.

Because they live their lives within the production process the industrial workers are the most richly informed about the nature of these processes and best able to design production flows in such a way as to improve the product and at the same time take account of the interests of the workers themselves. In point of fact the industrial workers are the last people to be consulted as a rule. Processes are studied over the heads of the workers by 'experts in scientific management' and once new production plans have been worked out workers are confronted with plans for reorganisation that have been settled and agreed and wrapped up in mathematical formulae which must be accepted on the grounds that 'the experts know best'. Of course, the production process involves questions of high technical specialisation but the reorganisation plans as a whole, of which the technical points constitute no more than component parts, are more intelligible to those who operate the production processes than they are to the decision
makers who, as directors, represent the owners of capital. 'Scientific management' is kept away from the shop floor not for practical reasons but to ensure that control is linked to the ownership of capital and does not pass into the hands of the collective of people engaged in the production process.

Control over 'scientific management', involvement in production reorganisation right from the very start, would seem therefore to be an important objective of industrial struggle. It is essential to the protection of the workers' immediate interests but, more importantly, is a stepping stone towards socialist control of democratically organised highly automated industries. Once again the problems are complex. Time and study are required to understand them. This again points to the need for making discussion time, information, training, special research at public expense the objective of struggle. The fact that all resources for research, education, special enquiries, etc., etc., are at the disposition of people who see the problems in a different light from that of the workers' needs to be called into question. If the workers are to win social freedom they will need to win a stronger command of the sources of information and scientific understanding. Large public resources are devoted to such ends; but decisions about how these resources are used are democratic only in the most formal sense of expenditure being approved by Parliament, etc.

Finding alternatives to authoritarian organisations

Struggle that takes the form of people in organisations, such as workers in factories, or members of a local community expressing concern about where the organisations to which they belong are going, sounds simple enough. In fact it is far from simple because it is calling into question the basic principle on which all social life has been organised throughout past centuries, namely the principle of authoritarian decision. Society has evolved checks on authority but self-organisation of people by themselves is something new. It will take a great deal of time, thought, experimentation and conflict before really democratic ways of running things gets established. For this reason one cannot underestimate the importance of time to allow people to argue, express their differing points of view, learn about and enquire into the things they do not understand, get first rate information in a form that can be quickly grasped. The demand for education is an old one in the socialist movement. Now we want to learn something that no one can teach, something we must learn and explore for ourselves. So the new demand is for 'self-education'. We need to establish new standards of behaviour, new outlooks, new attitudes to one another, new attitudes to work.
APART FROM the oddity that it was really a second performance — the first having been held on August 22, 1968 — the 14th Congress of the Czechoslovak Communist Party in May was chiefly notable for its attempt to lend some semblance of legality to the “normalization” so laboriously achieved by the Husak leadership. Having won power in April 1969 by an inner-party putsch, and being entirely dependent on Brezhnev’s backing, Husak and his team felt they needed some kind of “mandate” from the home front. And Brezhnev wanted to be present when thanks were given for “salvation” by his tanks, in Prague, the city that three years ago had been as rebellious as the Hussites against the Pope.

As far as the aims of the Soviet intervention were concerned, both Brezhnev and Husak could view the Congress proceedings with justifiable satisfaction: the movement of 1968 to revitalize socialism was declared to have harboured “the danger of counter-revolution”, the idea of “socialism with a human face” was damned as revisionism, and the military occupation of the country was

Jiri Pelikan was formerly a member of Parliament in Czechoslovakia, and Director-General of Television. An interview giving his background was published in ALR No. 29. In that interview, due to a misunderstanding of the translation, it was stated that Pelikan had spent five years in gaol from 1940. In fact about one year was spent in prison, and later, after escaping, a further four years in the underground until liberation in 1945.
hailed as “an expression of international solidarity”. With Brezhnev's blessing, Husak was confirmed in his post, at least for the time being. And after three years of in-fighting, purges, self-criticism and rescinding of resolutions, the Communist Party has emerged so emasculated that in all probability it will, for a long time to come, be immune to any new ideas; moreover, its leaders know that they owe their positions not to the people of their own country but to the good offices of the occupying power.

Is Novotny responsible for Dubcek?

Some political observers find a measure of confirmation for their theory about Husak's “centrism” in the fact that, in his speech to congress, beside condemning Dubcek, he criticised Novotny. But what faults did Husak ascribe to Novotny? His share in the Party leadership during the political trials, the years spent in delaying the rehabilitation of the innocent victims, the alienation of the youth and the intellectuals, the exclusion of the working class from politics, the blocking of economic reform, or the habit of seeing the hand of bourgeois ideology in every new idea, etc., etc.? Not a bit of it! Novotny was blamed for being too liberal, and thereby paving the way for Dubcek and his revisionism! In an attempt to undermine Dubcek's popularity, Husak presented him as a product of the hated Novotny. Only in the land of Kafka is it possible to dream of putting over such an absurdity. As matters stand, the Husak leadership is resorting to the Novotny methods, but with a difference. There are none of the compromises that Novotny had to make in face of mounting opposition.

Caution in the economic field

The only relatively bright spot in the Husak record is that the economic break-down of 1969-70 has been halted. The trouble, however, was not caused by “Sik's wild theories”, as Husak has tried to suggest, but by the invasion and the confusion it wrought on all sides. And in place of proper treatment for the severely afflicted economy we have what amounts to alleviation of pain by the stop-gap measures of price freezing, boosting imports and a return to the discipline of the central plan. (Incidentally, talk about economic break-down caused by Sik is another of the Kafkaesque themes. For one thing, the private sector was not revived in Czechoslovakia in 1968, in contrast to Poland, Hungary and the GDR; and the only time Prof. Sik was able to work on the practical implementation of his reforms was between April and August, when he was vice-chairman of the Government Economic Commission, and the chairman of the Commission was, all the time, Dr. Strougal, now Prime Minister and one of Husak's team!)
A more cautious and realistic approach is evident in the economy than in political and ideological affairs. The targets set are not over-ambitious and the limitations of the traditional sources of growth are known. The policy is, therefore, to restrict investment and get more out of existing production capacities, to develop modern technology and scientific management, to rationalize the industrial structure by cooperation in Comecon, to pay more attention to the service sector, the consumer market and housing construction. But these are aims already proclaimed by Novotny, while under Dubcek a start was made in carrying them out. Now there will be three main obstacles: the return to central planning; the impossibility of improving productivity without initiative by the workforce, which would presuppose democratization; the unilateral dependence on the Soviet economy, accompanied by political subjection. Husak will find, as did Novotny, that neither workers nor technicians will give of their best if they see no prospect of adequate reward, if their money will not buy the things they need, and if they feel that the fruits of their labours are being squandered by the bureaucrats, while they are denied any say in the management of affairs.

True, following the shock of events in Poland, there has been talk about “attention to workers’ complaints”, and about the trade unions, but neither in Husak’s speech nor in the congress documents do we find any suggestion that the unions might be accorded the role of defending the workers’ interests or that industry should look for new forms of self-management. On the contrary, Husak speaks of a return to the “well-tried methods” of production conferences and strict discipline. Evidently the Party leaders will be faced with continued passivity among the workforce and the prospect that a fresh economic crisis may set in at any time.

A new party

Although Husak was able to report to congress that the Communist Party had been purged and yet remained a mass party, the question arises whether it is not in fact a new party in everything but name. For that is the measure of the difference compared with the CPC as we have known it, above all in 1968, but also in the prewar years, and in 1945 and 1948, when it could command considerable support in the country, especially among workers, intellectuals and young people. In the interests of truth it must be said that there have always been sectarian and Stalinist trends in the CPC, and also hysterical intolerance, but counter-balanced by the democratic, progressive trend which predominated in 1968 and determined the character of the Party.

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The trouble is not only the loss of half a million of the most active members, the wiping out of entire committees in regions and districts, the disbanding of hundreds of branches, decimation of the Central Committee, or that tens of thousands of communists have been sacked from official posts and their jobs and many arrested. On top of all this, by describing its country’s loss of sovereignty as “the triumph of class consciousness”, and by making this the chief plank in its platform, the Party has become wholly alien to the people and their traditions. Having broken with all the positive aspects of the communist past, it is following the road that has always led the Czechoslovak Party towards catastrophe— the road of political trials and Stalinism.

True, the Party in its present guise is held together by its discipline and by the fear of change, but there are grave problems ahead. The social composition of the membership shows a sharp deterioration (as of January 1, 1971, only 26 per cent workers) and the average age has already risen to fifty. It would, of course, be wrong to suppose that all who have remained in the Party agree with the present course. Apart from a relatively small group comprising, for the most part, the personnel of the party and government machines, many have stayed in for fear of losing their jobs, or from opportunism, from lack of other perspectives, and some in the belief that improvement can only come from within. But at present internal regeneration on the lines of 1963-67 seems highly improbable. For a long time yet recurrent purges, Stalinists in key posts, and also the fear that the tragedy of August 1968 could be repeated will stand in the way. At this stage the urge for change will emanate primarily from outside the Party, mainly from its former members and from the youth. Nevertheless, one cannot entirely reject the hypothesis that this external pressure may at some point be projected within the organisation, despite its present mummified state, and create a situation similar to that of 1967-68.

**Same old people on the same old line**

While there was no question about the political outcome of the congress, the elections to the Central Committee and the Presidium were awaited with some interest, if only as a barometer of Husak’s standing and of the influence exerted by the ultra-conservatives. Of course, it had been clear ever since the December meeting of the Central Committee that Husak had gone over unreservedly to the political platform of the “internationalists”, that is of Indra, Jakes and Kapek, and that any differences among them were merely tactical or due to manoeuvring for positions.
With Brezhnev’s hand strengthened by the 24th Congress of the Soviet Party, under the shadow of events in Poland and with Husak having duly given thanks for “fraternal aid”, the circumstances were such that the Soviet leadership backed Husak and his team, being scared of the political vacuum and upheavals that change could bring. Another man who emerged with his position strengthened was the second in the hierarchy, Alois Indra, who evidently still aspires to the role of “chairman of the workers and peasants government” for which he was cast in August 1968 — that is, unless he should step one day into Husak’s shoes. Indra’s rise has unexpectedly brought Husak and Bilak together; these two former rivals were lavish in their praise of one another, both before and at the congress. For one thing, as Moscow’s man Bilak took his cue, and moreover, having realised he has no hope of being first man in the Party, he sees that in alliance with Husak he can be number two. In the Presidium, however, the hard-liners made some gains; the moderate Erban and Hanes were replaced by the active supporters of and participators in the invasion, Hoffman and Hruskovic.

In the Central Committee the changes were far more drastic; about half the membership was dropped, and that not counting the ninety members expelled or forced to resign during the purge. A symbolic feature of the retention of almost all the “internationalists” named in December 1970 as having invited the Soviet troops (although they still lack the courage to make a public admission of this), which confirms that the December exercise was a manoeuvre designed to save the former Novotny men whom Husak would otherwise have tried to drop after the congress — as “invitees” they were immunized. Despite the shadow-boxing in Husak’s speech, many of Novotny’s faithful servants remain in key posts; for instance, Lenart, for eight years Prime Minister under Novotny and a Politburo member, now on the Presidium and Slovak Party Secretary; Strougal, Novotny’s faithful Minister of the Interior, now Prime Minister and on the Presidium; Lastovicka, once Politburo member and Chairman of Parliament; David, for ten years Minister of Foreign Affairs; Auersperg, Novotny’s secretary and later ideological chief; Novotny’s proteges Kapek, Svestka, Zupka, Rytir, Karjecir and so on — not to mention Stoll, who for twenty years figured as the official ideologist.

The other half of the Central Committee is made up of “new people”, mostly men from the aparat, from public organisations and the regions, with a few workers thrown in. Husak’s intention was to have a pliable committee, impervious to heretical ideas. Yet it is noticeable that he failed to get any of the leading figures from the academic or cultural world elected and that even the
handful of intellectuals who have committed themselves to “normalization” were left out.

With the new Party committees and with the elections to be held in the autumn, Husak hopes to step from the purgatory of normalization to the paradise of legality. Yet his lack of faith in the stability of this achievement has led him to have the Party Rules amended to allow for coopting up to ten per cent of the membership of all committees. An undemocratic provision for an undemocratic and uncertain state of affairs.

The crowning paradox of normalization was the refusal by congress to allow the establishment of a Czech Central Committee and other appropriate bodies to match the existing Slovak institutions. So we have a situation where the Federal Government of the Czechoslovak Republic is directed by the CC in the Czechoslovak CP, the Slovak Government is controlled by the Slovak Party, but the Czech Government comes under the Czechoslovak Party CC where there is strong Slovak representation. Husak and his Slovak friends, in their day, criticized what they called the asymmetrical arrangement in the country and demanded equality for the two constituent nations in party and government affairs. Now the tables have been turned and it is the Czechs who are denied the right to their own leadership.

International normalization

The Prague gathering also had the job of trying to extract agreement for the 1968 invasion from all communist parties, including those which have persisted in condemning it. Much effort has been expended to this end over the past two years, economic pressure and threats of splitting parties have been used, and of course time has done its bit, too.

Nevertheless, despite the fanfares of official propaganda, the congress demonstrated that the wound is still open. Of twelve socialist countries, only six spoke in favour of the military intervention, while the other six delegates directly or indirectly expressed their disapproval — the Romanian, Yugoslav, Korean and Vietnamese delegates pointedly avoided mentioning the events of 1968; China and Albania simply failed to attend.

Of the western communist parties, some were not invited (Australia), others refused the invitation (Spain), others declined to reconcile themselves to not being able to say what they wanted (Britain). In countries where there are two parties, notably Greece, Israel, Venezuela, Argentine, India, the pro-Soviet parties alone were invited, even where they represented the minority side.
Spokesmen for the important parties of France, Finland, Japan and others also avoided direct comment on the 1968 events, confining themselves to enunciating the general principles of mutual relations and to noting that differences of opinion exist. Unfortunately, statements of this kind can be easily misused, as demonstrated by the Czechoslovak press. More valuable, and in accordance with comradely relationships among communists, would have been to speak frankly on the spot rather than publishing one’s views for home consumption after the event.

A truly scandalous episode was the refusal by the congress organizers (undoubtedly after consultation with Brezhnev) to allow the Italian delegate to read his Party’s message—a statement reaffirming condemnation of the military intervention, expressing support for the “new course” of 1968 and doubts about the present “normalization” in Czechoslovakia, and underlining that each country must decide its own socialist policy. This muzzling of one of the world’s biggest communist parties calls to mind the paradox that only in the capitalist countries can communists express these views, and that if they voiced them in Czechoslovakia, Longo, Berlinguer, Ingrao and other members of the Italian CP would be expelled, sacked from their jobs and, maybe, brought to trial!

All this demonstrates that despite the efforts and the pressures, global normalization of the communist movement has not been achieved, and that the rift caused by the invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968 has not been closed. It may be covered up for a time, but any future upheaval will certainly widen it, perhaps to breaking point. The only possible remedy would be for the Soviet leaders to return to the line set by the 20th Congress of the CPSU and to the conclusions of international meetings about the equality of parties, non-interference and the right to individual development, that is, to the unity in diversity proposed by Togliatti in his famous testament.

The vicious circle — the way out

Czechoslovakia will probably disappear for a time from the columns of the press. And silence is equally desired by the Stalinists and some western governments who are impatient to reach agreement with the Soviet Union on perpetuating the status quo before China is in a position to have a say. It is also possible that the active opposition in Czechoslovakia will be driven deeper underground and that, for a time, a considerable section of the population will relapse into apathy. Indeed, some, in weary resignation or from a natural desire to find some outlet, will very
likely join in the attempt to stabilize things. The young generation, especially, although the experience of 1968 will be with them for the rest of their lives, will not be able to stand aside for ever; some will certainly take advantage of opportunities to fill the jobs of men who have been dismissed, pensioned off and so on.

None of these things, however, can alter the fact that the “Czechoslovak crisis” is something new in Central and Eastern Europe, and that it can never be extinguished. We have here, for the first time, a socialist opposition in a country professing socialism; an opposition that is not anti-communist, and has no intention of changing the social system, but wants to restore the original ideals and aims.

The more sensational forms of action, strikes, demonstrations, kidnappings and assassinations, are not at home in Czechoslovakia. This may have led the press in the West to infer that people are resigned. In reality, however, resistance is the deeper, more lasting, and in the native tradition. The hounding of thousands of intellectuals into industry simply helps to reinforce the bond between the workers and the intellectuals who, together with the youth, form the backbone of the opposition. From the temporary defeat of 1968 the workers, intellectuals and the young people have gained not only the hope that the Stalinist image of socialism can be changed, but also the bitter lesson that any attempt by a single nation to escape from Soviet hegemony is doomed to failure. From the knowledge that a common fear of change unites the Stalinist bureaucracy everywhere, there is growing a consciousness of genuine international solidarity with the working people of Poland, Hungary and the other countries, including the USSR, and a determination to fight side by side, in a coordinated manner, for genuine socialism. And therefore any future explosions in Eastern Europe will certainly assume an increasingly international character.

The onus is on the Soviet leaders to awake before it is too late to the dangers of their policies and to allow the peoples of the countries concerned freedom to carry out the necessary reforms; only by taking this course can they forestall spontaneous outbursts which may be fraught with the direst consequences.

In this respect Czechoslovakia is the touchstone for the ability of Soviet policy to emerge from the vicious circle of great-power hegemony to understand what is happening in Eastern Europe—not holding back developments, but encouraging them. Far from weakening the USSR or the cause of socialism, they could only be strengthened.
**Democracy and Socialism**

In an interview published in the *Suddeutsche Zeitung* of 1/6/71, Luis Corvalan, General Secretary of the CP of Chile, was asked whether the democratic road used to achieve Socialism would be retained once Socialism had been achieved. Corvalan replied:

“I have made it clear in Moscow that Chile’s national characteristics must be respected. Parliamentary democracy, created by the bourgeoisie and for a long time used by the bourgeoisie as an instrument of power, has nevertheless become in Chile an institution recognised by the whole people.”

Does this mean that after the achievement of Socialism, there may be many parties, even an opposition? Corvalan replied:

“In Chile, definitely. . . Even if reactionary forces should try to change the situation by force, we would not use this as an excuse for breaking with Chilean traditions. Democracy will be maintained. . . It is clear, of course, that we do not pretend to be a model for other countries.”

**Greek black colonels — Nazi Quislings**

“One of these quislings is head of the current junta, George Papadopoulos, according to the well informed *Le Monde Diplomatique* (May 1969): ‘The president of the government, Papadopoulos, during the occupation served under Major Kousoulacos (rewarded after the junta’s coup with the governorship of Greece’s Agricultural Bank), commander of a battalion armed and equipped by the Germans — like all the other so-called Security Battalions (*Tagmata Asphalias*) — which conscientiously played its role as a security unit . . . against the ‘Communist’ resistance fighters!”


**Movement for Socialism in Venezuela**

“The CP of Venezuela split in December last year. The dissidents — representing a majority of Party members — formed the ‘Movement for Socialism’ on January 14 and elected Pompeo Marquez, former Politbureau member of the CPV, as its General Secretary. In an interview in Paris, Marquez said, inter alia:

The MAS was formed after three years of hard controversy in the CPV. There were two streams, of which one was conservative, the other for renewal. . . The differences related particularly to the estimation of the present situation inside the country. . . The reasons for the rule of monopoly capitalist relations of production are to be found not in the USA, but within the country. . . Other
differences relate to: the question of armed struggle and the lessons of our defeats in the sixties; the estimation of the conditions of struggle within our country and of the classes which will form the vanguard in this struggle; the question of allies; the problem of internationalism, independence and sovereignty of every movement; the role of the USSR in the communist world movement; the question of socialist democracy. . . We do not believe in the possibility of peaceful transition to Socialism in Venezuela. . . But we do not believe that under present conditions, armed actions are a good means to organise the masses and stimulate mass initiative. . . As far as our relations with Communist Parties are concerned, we have met Rumanian, Spanish and Greek comrades. We have taken up contact with the Chinese, Cuban, North and South Vietnamese comrades. We have had unofficial talks with members of the CP of France. We are now travelling to Yugoslavia.” Politique hebdo (Paris) 8/4/71.

Crisis among the Black Panthers

“The line represented by Newton and Hilliard considers the creation of a Party of a Leninist type and the organisation of the black communities around this Party as most important. . . The other trend — represented by Cleaver — puts the revolt of the American lumpenproletariat and the armed struggle in the forefront. . . The Angela Davis case played an important role in the split. The Central Committee supports Angela Davis as a political prisoner. . . Cleaver has however described her as a ‘puppet’ of the CP of America, which is trying to win back the black movement and to destroy the influence of the Black Panther Party. . . Other areas of conflict centre on Castro: Cleaver, who was expelled from Cuba, describes the Cuban leaders as ‘revisionists’, while Algeria is described by the Central Committee as ‘reactionary’.”—Tagebuch, (Vienna) May 1970.

Sartre on the Middle East

“The war can hide the class struggle which is going on in Israel as in the Arab countries. . . Ask the revolutionary forces which exist on both sides to unite in order to forge together a solution to the conflict which is tearing them apart. This solution must be neither a return to the status quo, nor a simple compromise drawn from mutual concessions and therefore necessarily provisional, nor the crushing defeat of one of the belligerent parties by the other, but rather a step towards the international Revolution. The divisions among the European left on this subject have no other effect than to harden the positions of the hawkish right on both sides. If, for example, we deny Israel’s right to exist, it becomes impossible to find any response in that country when we condemn its government’s policies.”—Israel-Palestine, July-August, 1970.
Testament of George Lukacs

IT WAS ONLY SIX WEEKS AFTER the invasion of Czechoslovakia by the five Warsaw Pact countries. A second Preparatory meeting of communist and workers' parties had been assembled in Budapest to attempt to organise the planned international meeting. The immediate impact of the military intervention on the European communist parties was such that all that could be agreed on at this gathering was to meet again in six weeks.

It was in this atmosphere that I rang George Lukacs at his home in Budapest to ask him if I could have a talk to him. I explained that I was a delegate from Australia to the gathering of communist parties assembled at the Gelert Hotel, and mentioned a common friend who was at the time a leader of a West European communist party. "Certainly", he replied. "I'll be pleased to see you. What about tomorrow morning?"

The next morning, October 3rd, 1968, I spent with George Lukacs at his study which overlooks the Danube. He was relieved when he discovered that I could speak German, the language in which he has written most of his works. He explained that he felt less at home in English. Lukacs was extremely interested in the attitude of the representatives at the Preparatory meeting to the Czechoslovak situation, and questioned me about it.

I took detailed notes of the interview. Lukacs sought my promise that I would not publish this interview during his life. He explained that he had only recently been readmitted into the Communist Party (Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party) after his expulsion following his part in the 1956 events in Hungary. "They know
my views, but I don’t want to oppose party policy publicly”.

The intervention in Czechoslovakia had upset him greatly. He kept coming back to it during the course of the meeting. “I am strongly opposed to the intervention,” he said, “but I don’t want to be associated with the anti-socialist hysteria. At the same time I also don’t want to do anything which will endanger the economic reforms in Czechoslovakia. However, as a theoretician I reserve the right to express my views. I don’t want to participate in the shouting but to clarify the theoretical questions involved.”

He saw the intervention as a tragedy, but also as a symptom of the crisis of the socialist countries. “The Stalin era and its aftermath have reduced the attraction of communism. Compare the attraction of the Soviet Union today with that of Russia after 1917 when the country was starving. It will take a decade of a correct policy to restore the attraction of communism. Unfortunately the big process of decay of the capitalist system has been countered by negative developments in the USSR. As a result of the intervention in Czechoslovakia, Brezhnev has made Nixon President of the USA.”

Lukacs was critical of some trends in Czechoslovakia during the Dubcek period. He spoke specifically about the cult of Masaryk and of freedom of the press.

“I regard the complete freedom of the press and the establishment of a number of parties as false. To approach bourgeois democracy as the alternative to Stalinism is false. This is not the alternative. We can’t go back to the heroic period of bourgeois democracy. Such tendencies existed in Czechoslovakia. They must be overcome. The real alternative to Stalinism is the return to the principles of the Paris Commune, to 1905 and to 1917 to 1921, to workers’ councils built from below. These questions need to be clarified. But I don’t want to criticise the Czechs at the present moment when they are in great difficulties”.

I asked him for his views on the prospects of policy changes in the Soviet Union. He replied: “The future of anti-Stalinist development is very unclear. I must confess that I overestimated the intelligence of the present leaders, I did not expect the intervention. Much depends on whether there is a group inside the leadership which will recognise the danger that the present trend constitutes to the USSR as well as to socialism. But we don’t know the internal situation well enough. These Soviet leaders are apparatchiks, managers. Khruchov was a politician, even if a bad one. But they are not politicians. The intervention has reduced my opinion of them still further. They acted like the most stupid amateurs (die blodesten Dilletanten waren sie). To
this day they have not been able to produce one single person who says 'I invited the Russians into the country'.”

In reply to the question as to what he regarded as the main reasons for the intervention, Lukacs said: “The main motive for the invasion was to destroy any opposition. After Stalin’s death it became clear that the economic system could not survive without democratic reforms. This is still the big task at the moment. The Russians fear that they will be confronted with a reform opposition. As long as the opposition is confined to artists and writers they can cope with it — they can be locked up. But Sakharov’s letter shows that the technical intelligentsia is beginning to rebel. Yet the USSR depends for its position as a world power on the technical intelligentsia. They can’t be locked up. The commissars could deal with the old working class, but they can’t cope with these people. Let me illustrate this with an example from the last war. Why did the USA succeed in producing an atomic bomb whilst Germany failed? There were two reasons. One, they obtained as migrants from Germany some of their best scientists. Two, in many cases Germany’s own scientists did not have their heart in their work. This is nothing new. The USSR can’t escape this problem”.

Speaking about himself and about some contemporary Marxist writers, Lukacs had this to say: “Official Soviet circles treat me still with great reserve. Generally I am not attacked, but simply ignored. In the German Democratic Republic I am a dead person since 1957.”

“I disagree with Kolakovsky but respect him. I don’t believe that Marxism itself is in need of revision. Marxist methods must be understood and applied especially in spheres where we are lagging behind, such as political economy. Marcuse and Bloch are utopians, I am a Marxist. Isaac Deutscher was a very intelligent man, but he is very partial to Trotsky. He distorts the relations between Lenin and Trotsky.”

In reply to a question about the lag of Marxism in the sphere of economic theory, he said: “In 1929 it seemed to me that we were witnessing the last general cyclical crisis. They will not recur. It is a new stage. This problem requires to be studied and solved. This has not yet been done. The reason for the new stage — which should also be a new stage in Marxist analysis — is that Marx dealt with machine capitalism. In his time most articles of consumption were not produced in capitalist factories. What little personal consumption there was by the working class was supplied by handicraftsmen. In addition to this we have the
growth of the service industries. These things constitute a structural change in capitalism. Now capitalism depends on the consumption of the working class. It is interested in the worker as a consumer, not merely as a source of exploitation as in Marx's time."

In reply to the question about the prospect for the communist movement in the West, Lukacs said: "I am pessimistic. The fact is that the USSR remains the model no matter what we do."

About the new left he said: "I view it with great sympathy, as the beginning of the opposition to the manipulated society. In 1945 it looked as if the manipulated society would win through. But present development is only the beginning of an opposition, which may take decades to unfold. It is similar to the earlier smashing of machines. It was progressive, yet real development was only possible when a new stage had been reached. The real prospects lie in the long term effect and developments. Here I am critical of the negative attitude of the French Communist Party to these developments. The Italian Communist Party is much less embedded in Stalinism. This is in part a tribute to Togliatti."

I asked him about his views on the earlier hopes and current prospects for destalinisation in the Soviet Union.

His reply was: "I was pessimistic from the start. I said that they wanted to overcome Stalinism by Stalinist methods. They held this against me. But it was true. Stalin reversed the relation between theory and tactics. He put tactics ahead of theory, and created theories to justify tactical needs. Unless we overcome this, destalinisation remains a phrase. Whether one man or whether a collective acts bureaucratically is not the question. The question is whether tactics or theory is primary. Take as an example Stalin's theory of the sharpening of the class struggle. Why did he put this forward? Because of tactical needs at the time of the trials. This is the essential question. As long as tactics are primary we remain Stalinist. Therefore I believe that the return to Marxism is a very important practical question and not only a theoretical question. The Soviet leaders handled the question of Czechoslovakia on the basis of their tactical consideration. This was primary, they produced theories to fit the tactical needs."

I asked Lukacs why in his view the Soviet leaders can't free themselves from placing tactical considerations first.

He replied: "They have been brought up this way. Thirty years of Stalinism, that is what those who are fifty today have had in their life."
He went on to say: "We have lost the real socialist perspective of freedom. We have capitulated before the manipulated society. It is an illusion to believe that the economic advance of the USSR will win us support. Many workers get this under capitalism too. I am all for economic development, but greater consumption does not yet mean greater socialist perspectives. If we don't admit that we are in a crisis we won't get out of it. We are going through a period of the darkening of the socialist ideal. Compare Bernstein's view that the movement is everything, the aim nothing. It is really similar today. We have left socialist perspectives to Marcuse and Bloch. Manipulation is not only a feature of capitalism, there is also manipulation under socialism. Those opposed to manipulation don't look to the existing socialism as a model. And with justice. It was Lenin who said a long time ago that you can't deceive classes.

"The return to Marx is an ideological revolution. It is my view that the Czech comrades were not sufficiently critical of non-Marxist views. Take for instance the idea of absolute freedom. This can't exist. It is simple to say we all need freedom. I go a long way with this. But if there is propaganda for racism, should we allow this? I would use administrative methods in such instances. To say that there is complete equality is nonsense. In 1956 some students asked me to arrange to translate some works of Western philosophers. I said we will not translate indiscriminately. Learn German, if you want to read Heideggar."

Talking about himself, he told me that he was arrested by the Russians in 1941. "I spent two months in jail. It was through Dimitrov's personal intervention that I was released."

Discussing the situation in the communist movement, Lukacs said: "The way out of this terrible crisis is for more parties to return to Marxism. That may yet lead to overcoming of Stalinism. In the Soviet Union itself Yevtushenko and Solzhenitsyn reflect a movement of the people. It can't be otherwise."

Lukacs was bitter about manifestations of anti-semitism in socialist countries. He recalled that Engels had called it "the socialism of fools." He added: "The influence of Israel and Zionism is terribly exaggerated. This too is connected to the priority of tactics. It comes back to this. It serves some tactical needs. But a Marxist would not do this. It is this false priority that leads bureaucrats to do it."

I asked about his view of the long term prospects in the development of the socialist countries. "It took over 800 years
for feudalism to establish itself. It is now just over 50 years since the socialist revolution took place. It may take 100 or even 300 years for socialism to develop. We must expect a relatively longer period of transition than we had expected. It will depend to a considerable degree on us, on what Lenin called the subjective factors. I want to contribute all I can to help theoretically in the renaissance of Marxism. On the other hand it may not take so long. We must not forget that history takes some big jumps. I saw the collapse of the Hapsburg and Romanoff empires; they looked stable and seemed everlasting in their time. Much depends on every communist being conscious of his task. The reform movement against Stalinism will be victorious in the long run. The real danger today is passivity. Revolutionary cadres exist latently. The Communist Parties must concentrate on these tasks. We must not make the least concession to Western bourgeois ideology for fear of being considered Stalinists. I do not make such concessions."

About what could happen in the socialist countries if necessary reforms were not introduced, Lukacs said: "The restoration of capitalism is very difficult, in fact impossible. Even in Hungary the basis for restoring capitalism is gone; 1917 can't be destroyed. A type of state capitalist system is possible, but we lack historical experience. I think the transition will take a long time — it is a sphere where little theoretical work has been done. What the movement needs today is a common perspective but different tactics. But the Russians believe that they can continue to lead the movement, as in Lenin's day, under their leadership. They suffer from bureaucratic illusions. The Russians had enormous authority in the days of 1917. They do not have it today. Just as the Pope can't prevent the use of the pill, so Brezhnev can't restore the relation that Lenin had with the Communist movement in 1917."

This is how Lukacs summed up Stalin's role in history. "He had three great historic achievements. One, he brought about the industrialisation of the Soviet Union. Two, he achieved victory in the Second World War and thereby prevented a Hitler-dominated Europe. Three, he prepared the conditions for breaking the American monopoly of atomic weapons and prevented the American domination of the post-war world. These three things give him a lasting place in history. At the same time he destroyed for half a century the effectiveness of Marxism and socialist perspectives."

When I said at the end, "Comrade Lukacs, you seem rather pessimistic." He replied: "No, I am optimistic for the 21st century."
The myths of 'value-free' sociology

SOCIОLOGISTS STILL CLING to a definition of reality which assumes that causal connections can be made from a base definable in purely empirical terms. It is this myth of objectivity and scientific value-free precision which guides much sociological theorizing. In 1744 Vico placed these assumptions in doubt when he argued that mathematics did not record the inner nature of things but was rather the product of the human mind and was, in effect, true only of itself and not beyond itself. He argued that mathematics bears no one-to-one relationship with physical or ‘natural’ systems, as these have their own rationale independent of the actions of men and unknowable in human cognitive terms. This does not imply that humans may not efficiently order physical units to produce desired results, which obviously can be done, but emphasises that ‘efficient use of’ does not constitute knowledge of nature.

Vico also argues that what man makes is, or can be, understood by man because he himself makes it. Thus history is, in principle, knowable with a much higher degree of accuracy than is any system.

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studied by the physical scientists. A significant implication of this approach is that the use of mathematical reasoning which is appropriate to natural sciences is, when applied to the understanding of society, absolutely inappropriate. Here mathematics implants a method geared to partial understanding and efficient manipulation onto a subject of study which may be fully understood and all embracing. It is the methodology which distances the analyst from the system to be analyzed and thus makes opaque what is potentially transparent. Mathematical precision, therefore, serves as a mystification that prevents real interaction of the social observer in society and affirms the separation of society and man.

This guiding myth, which also finds expression in economics and psychology, serves to force irrelevance onto what are vital human subjects. Objectivity divorces the observer from the thing observed and precise mathematical formulation of the thing observed divorces the abstract formulation from its own active expression. Thus, the whole enterprise is one which alienates, is grounded on alienating principles and affirms alienated methods. It is the distancing that divorces the observer from his own social environment and permits the reification of social processes by making them static entities. Static entities which are related to the observer in much the same way as physical objects are related to the dispassionate research chemist. Thus ‘social engineering’ may be manipulating methods for organising humans as machines for abstract ends like ‘high production’ rather than for human ends which might be ‘to hell with work like this’. ‘Value-freedom’ is, in this context, the value of a specific ideological context, one which affirms the status quo — capitalism and the accompanying property ethic.

The alienation inherent in this process allows much of what is socially significant to be ignored as ‘non-empirical’ or ‘value-oriented’ and enables the sociologist to avoid criticising or even attempting to understand the society in which he operates. The questions of man’s meanings and purposes, his construction of reality, beliefs and values can thus be ignored in favour of microcosmic studies of abstracted model-men. Present technology with its danger of ecological destruction and atomic catastrophe, and over-population force a revision of the accepted principles of academic endeavour, and the ideological ground on which present social theory rests is being criticised with increasing vigour. It also highlights the responsibility of the individual social scientist for the maintenance of particular constructions of reality, since the criticism emphasises the essentially voluntary nature of all theorising. That is, the relationships to be understood do not permit of a
single, unambiguous formulation of an inherent truth but require a projection of order if they are to be made meaningful to the observer. To the extent to which sociologists are iconoclastic and dynamic, they are socially relevant in pointing to the gap between what are socially prescribed possibilities and what is man’s potential. To the extent to which sociology is conservative and static/descriptive, it is limiting as it affirms a past condition as the present condition.

All academic disciplines owe their existence and maintenance to arbitrary distinctions constructed socially and maintained voluntarily. The boundaries of the disciplines are not givens to be discovered but are affirmations by practitioners calling themselves by the name of the discipline. Thus, the boundaries of sociology are, in effect, what ‘sociologists’ choose to make them; they are not prescribed beyond the practice of men. Sociology is not a unitary perspective independent of sociologists but is a series of perspectives each dependent on the individual so that each individual is responsible for his own formulation of the meaning and relevance of the study. The discipline exists in our consciousness, our actions and our structuring of the universe. Of course each individual sociologist has available to him a range of writings, and his own construction of the subject matter is, in part, dependent on his particular experience of the contents of previous works. But his totalisation of them is his own and he is uniquely responsible for answering or attempting to answer the questions as to what this totalisation is based on.

The view that suprapersonal forces are the deterministic arbiters of man’s actions, arbiters which have an absolute, knowable construction that can be empirically verified is, in effect, an anti-heroic myth. This side of empirical positivism negates man’s voluntarism in favor of ‘natural’ or ‘social’ forces that are independent, autonomous and omnipotent. The myth implicit in much sociological theorising is not man the heroic, but society the heroic ‘super-force’. In contrast to this, sociologists should take as their proper sphere of concern that of man, man-in-action, the praxis of material men acting to produce their environment in a reflexive interdependent complex, the resultant of which is man’s historical affirmation of himself. Concern should therefore be with the actions of man, his meanings and the context in which he lives.

Basic to this approach is concern with meaning. Rickmann states: “In perception expressions are not given to us as expressions—we only realise that what we perceive is an expression when we grasp that it has a meaning”. It is on this level of meaning that man constructs his universe, consequently the relevant epistemolo-
gical conditions for understanding are concerned with the attribution of meaning. It is a relative epistemology rather than an absolute one which is congruent with understanding in the social sciences. This approach does not deny that objects exist, but rather stresses that it is the ordering of the meanings of objects which is the proper sphere of social theories. These are essentially theories about the way man relates to his social and object universe and to himself. Of itself, data is meaningless until acted on by man, and the attribution of meaning is the basic act of man projecting himself and his construction onto his environment.

In this context, meaning and ideas are posited as an active ordering of the universe. Vico, and later Marx, see ideas not as clear and distinct mental definitions but as tools and weapons (thus, for Marx, a theory can prove itself in action), as instruments through which man gradually comes to himself and achieves his humanity both individually and historically. Vico criticises the abstract analytical method advocated by Descartes and suggests that thinking, as it is experienced, follows a highly complicated path of meaning, context and relevance and that analytical method is not the form of thought but only a rare form of thought. Understanding gained through this method is, consequently, a partial understanding corresponding to the partial formulation of the real as rational. Categorisation and rigidly oppositional thinking has been criticised by a wide range of writers as making a static, abstracted, partial, exclusive, unambiguous formulation of what is a dynamic, holistic, ambiguous, inclusive reality. Categorisation requires that time be held as a constant, yet the attribution of meaning by man is the active expression of man-in-the-world, a world where space and time are not independent unities but are fully reflexive and interdependent.

The alternative approach emphasises the constant creation and recreation of individual and social meaning through action on the environment, so that history may be seen as ‘the advent of meaning’. The present, in which individuals act, is always becoming. It is not an unambiguous given, but an actively created project, grounded in its own past and oriented to its own future. In this process, it is the activity of man which is the constituting and integrating element. It is in this sense that Marx can say ‘man makes history’ and, together with Sorel, suggest that ‘the man who draws up a program for the future is a reactionary’. That is, the program is drawn up in terms of its own past which will inevitably be transcended in its active becoming. History is a human creation and is the inescapable responsibility of humans because they themselves have made it. It is what man has added to nature, it is specifically human and can be blamed neither on God nor
on the impersonal forces of nature. These are precisely Sartre's points when he argues that the dialectic is the mode of reasoning most appropriate to the dynamic nature of social reality and his formulation of the dialectic as totalisation, de-totalisation and re-totalisation is an attempt to come to grips with the problem of expressing a non-linear process in linguistic form, of providing a mode of understanding appropriate to the process to be understood.

Both the perspectives of teachers and the conventional methods of analysis in sociology have been criticised recently by Roszak (Dissenting Academy) and Blackburn (Student Power) while Chomsky has attacked the validity and use of rational argument in social crises (American Power and the New Mandarins). But it appears that the basic criticism is of the role ascribed to man by analysts who are themselves playing the same alienated role suffered by those they are studying. Criticism is aimed at those holding partial, static, establishment views of the world, views that empiricise man and abstract him from his humanness. Methodology has become of paramount importance, a methodology ignorant of its own presuppositions and grounded in a pseudo-scientific rationale of 'objectivity' that does not include a critique of its own value stance but from which pronouncements about other value stances are constantly made. Total involvement in methodological considerations has had the effect of reducing analysis to particularised description and divorcing it from the process described, alienating form and content and implicitly justifying what is rather than postulating what can or ought to be.

In the approach to sociological enquiry which emphasises man as the focus of study, it is necessary to state the assumptions about the nature of man on which the analysis of social forms is based. Because of the nature of social interaction as a process, analysis concerned with truth in the Cartesian sense is not satisfactory. For this, as Vico argues, is a static construction, while science — and especially social science — is really an inter-subjective human project whose principles are not to be found in things themselves independent of human action, but rather 'within the modifications of our own mind'. He argues that man acts in the world, makes it human and in so doing, humanises himself. Marx also follows this construction, claiming that the need for self-realisation in man is accomplished through "the union of man with nature, the realised naturalism of man and the realised humanism of nature". For Dilthey, too, understanding rests on the recognition of 'the I in the thou'.

Man is consequently viewed both as creator and creation, as the
producer of his own conceptual universe and as the product of his own projection. Concern for both sides of all interaction, mediated through a process-definition of reality is an attempt to avoid reifying the form of social action into an ideal type, unidimensional, static construction. Central to this approach is a view of man's relatedness to the world, the interior and exterior condition of his self. Marx supplies the key to understanding the dynamic nature of man and states that the anterior condition of action is need, the need to express oneself through the objects of the environment, to act on the environment as a positive expression of human creativity. It is not, therefore, simply environment action on a passive receptor that is the condition of man, but it is the expression of man through the environment that transforms both the environment and man himself in a two-way process. The interior condition of man is need, the exterior condition of need is praxis.

The formulation of need-praxis as the condition of individual action corresponds to Sartre's definition of the dialectic where he argues that man and the environment (including other men) interact in a continuous process. The individual perceives the environment in terms of lack, that is, he projects a particular construction onto the environment, a construction that orders it in terms of a felt need. The praxis which corresponds to this ordering then organises the external world as a means of fulfilling the need and in this way man projects and actualises himself through the active attribution of meaning which reflexively affects his consciousness. Berger and Pullberg suggest that "to act means to modify the figure of the given in such a way that a field is structured which, to the actor, constitutes a meaningful totality" and it is this process of the structuring of the environment by man that is the projection of his meaning onto the world. However, at the same time, the field to be structured contains of itself data and is the material on which man works and which faces man as both the raw material and the result of his work. Man's meaning, mediated through its own actualisation returns to him as the introjected* condition of external reality. Thus what was once a meaningful ordering of the world in terms of need becomes meaningless as the need is filled by the projected order, and each particular formulation of man's need to express himself through the world is detotalised by its own successful totalisation. There is, consequently, a continuous process relationship between man and the environment, where man realises himself through the world and realises the world through himself. History is the stream

* Introjection here means the incorporation into one's personality of a particular projected view which orders the environment—Ed.
of such meaning actualisation and, as Merleau-Ponty suggests, should not be divorced from philosophy as both history and philosophy are man’s creation and actualisation of meaning.

At this point it is tempting to reformulate the interaction process simply in terms of man’s consciousness of it, and this is precisely what Hegel does when, in The Phenomenology of Mind he suggests that man is alienated and returns to himself only in thought. Marx’s criticism of the Hegelian formulation is that this “turns man into the man of consciousness, instead of turning consciousness into the consciousness of real men, living in the real world”. When Hegel studies the alienated products of man he takes them only in their abstract form and, in a sense, denies their material expression as real wealth, etc. But man is not alienated by the spiritual essence of his produced objects; he is, as Lefebvre says, “alienated by being temporarily dominated by a world that is ‘other’ even though he himself gave birth to it”, and he suggests that Marx’s critique of Hegel’s theory of alienation “opens the way for a positive humanism which has to transcend and unite idealism and materialism”.

Man is, once more, the focus, and it is man’s creation and recreation of himself in the world of material objects and other men that is the necessary ideal of understanding. Together with this orientation towards man as self-creator goes the existential emphasis on the freedom of choice. That is, each individual is free to choose and, in good faith, perceives the choices. Unconscious drives are merely those forces which the conscious mind knowingly denies. The individual expresses himself under conditions of need/praxis and is himself manifest in action, one aspect of which is choice. Thus not choosing is itself a choice not to choose and is one choice among a range of possible choices. It is therefore a uniquely human problem to be aware of the choices and to have the responsibility attendant on any particular choice. The process of choosing is an ongoing one which is at once the condition of, and the limitation to, man’s potentiality since action requires that a choice be made and the ‘utility cost’ of this alternative is the alternative foregone. This is what Sartre calls the ‘kernel of unfreedom in freedom’ and is the condition of a temporal existence. Husserl also emphasises the becoming nature of man and advocates a concentration on experience as the proper focus of study as this is the stimulus and response of man’s actions in and through time.

Individual identity is, consequently, a constantly becoming process, being formed and reformed, actively maintained or changed; it is a unity of consciousness temporally linked with
experience to experience. William James states: “It is but our abstract conceptual thought that isolates and arbitrarily fixes certain portions of this stream of consciousness”; it follows that understanding of man in society requires a system of reason appropriate to the unity of man’s ever moving consciousness and action, and the most satisfactory system seems to be dialectical reason.

Man acts to constitute society and the society so constituted reacts back onto man as the continuing expression of his manifest praxis. Thus the present approach to man does not dehistoricise him but makes him uniquely responsible for his social environment and the perceived requirements of the environment. Man operates in society to the extent that society operates in man, the whole construction is a human creation and requires human action to maintain the construction. Consequently, the whole social system may be analysed as a process of projection and introjection, that is, an active expression of man’s creation. Every act constitutes and reconstitutes the social system while categorisation of the society as a ‘given’ corresponds to the arbitrary fixing of one particular formulation as the formulation, as the social reality and neglects the continuity and historical unity, the relational form of which is temporality. Categorisation, in effect, emphasises the spatial order and neglects the temporal, states a content devoid of form. Formal logic is not an epistemology. The form of society is process and therefore the content changes, so to state one formulation as the formulation states a partial as a total and divorces the society from man. Viewing society in process terms it can be seen to operate only in and through man, the active carrier and creator of the relations that make up the social system; so man is posited as the central focus of study.

The anti-psychiatrists, notably Laing and Cooper, also add to this approach to sociology. They emphasise context and view the relation of individuals to others as a process of interchange where each is constantly affected by and affects the other. They emphasise the process and continuity of the interchange and show how complete patterns of human interaction develop through interpretation and reinterpretation of the other’s activity. However, they also recognise the action of the subject in this interchange situation, so that the action of the subject attendant on his reinterpretation of the other, causes the other to reinterpret him and modify his own behaviour accordingly. This is the basis of a dynamic analysis of interpersonal relations where my action passes from being my action for me to being my action for you, ‘from being mine for me it becomes other for the other’. There is, consequently, a twofold problem in understanding social interchange.
The first is the impossibility of experiencing the other’s experience. The second part consists in the difficulty of comprehending a context when one is a part of it, and where the very actions towards understanding alter the context if for no other reason than that they become a part of it. This indicates that I cannot predict how you will experience me. I cannot be sure what my actions mean for you and similarly I cannot tell what your actions mean for me, as my understanding of you is mediated through my own experience. What is obvious for me may not be at all obvious for others.

Again, emphasis is on continuity, on process and on the unity in movement of all action. Thus we return again to man as the creator of his meanings, as the essential arbiter of his own universe. When it neglects this action orientation and individual involvement sociology falls into a determinist pattern which views the created universe as if the creation is the supra-personal arbiter of man, as if the society maintains itself rather than that man maintains society. Society has meaning only to the extent to which it exists and continues to exist in man’s consciousness and action. It is an abstraction made real by man-in-action, but which is often treated as an alien, for-itself entity beyond the construction of man. Sociologists fail in their task of analysis when they are content to treat the alienated fact as the given condition of man, when they deny their own active role in the total social process.

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Values and University economics

A man may be petty, vicious, coarse-grained, paranoid even, and, outside his specialism, thoroughly ignorant, and yet do well enough as a scientist or scholar. (E. J. Mishan)

1970 WAS A YEAR OF STUDENT UNREST within the Economics Department of Sydney University. The discontent centred on mathematical courses which were introduced into Economics I and II and were compulsory for all students. The courses were not the subject of prior consultation with students and, given the prevailing student mood, several staff members, towards the end of 1969, predicted student trouble if the courses were persisted with — but their warnings were met with Professorial disbelief and hostility. The warnings were made in the light of a 1969 survey of student opinion which disclosed widespread dissatisfaction with the existing economics courses — usually on the grounds that the “orthodoxy” being taught was too theoretical and remote from reality. Students made plain their desire for “socially revelant” courses. The response of Departmental Heads Hogan and Simkin was to ignore the survey (and staff opinion) and add a compulsory mathematics section to an already highly unpopular course structure.

There were three reasons why the 1970 changes could not but have aroused student hostility. First, matriculation requirements for the Faculty specified no particular standard of maths as a course prerequisite (“no special knowledge of mathematics will be assumed” said the 1970 Faculty Handbook on p.16). There was no indication that a certain level of mathematics would be “useful” as has been specified in the 1971 Handbook (it has not yet been made compulsory). Second, Economics students were not forewarned of the changes in the 1970 Handbook and came completely unaware and unprepared for the major changes which occurred. Economics II students found themselves confronted with

This is an abridged version of a paper circulated at Sydney University during second term and published in Honi Soit (July 15, 1971).

The author, formerly an Economics tutor at the University, was sacked (along with a fellow tutor, David Hill) at the end of 1970 for his opposition to the Heads of the Economics Department. During that year both he and Hill were recognised as leaders of a deep and divisive staff-student discontent within the Department. After losing his job Waters found it impossible to secure an academic appointment. After working as a builders’ laborer for six months, he is now a school teacher. David Hill works for the Sunday Australian.
an eighteen lecture maths course of which no mention had been made in the Handbook. First year students found themselves faced with an additional section to their Economics I course, "Elementary Quantative Economics", which consisted of maths and statistics for specialist economists. Little wonder that students in both years found themselves in difficulties to the extent that several tutors in both years had to hold special coaching classes in their spare time. Indeed, informed sources have placed the failure rate as high as 25% in second year where the brunt of the mathematical bias was borne.

Of still greater significance was the third reason for student discontent. The primary consideration in structuring a course should be the needs and interests of students. Yet students have a diversity of aims in studying Economics and this calls for flexibility of choice to accommodate their divergent interests. But the 1970 changes were tailored exclusively to the interests of one (minority) group of students: those honours and pass students seeking a primary qualification (or major) in Economics for academic and vocational interests — the future "professional" economists and econometricians earmarked for economic research or model building.

The Economics Society pointed out that students who would be explicitly or implicitly excluded from the Faculty by the changes fell into a number of categories. There were Arts students who did not require a course of intense specialisation; there were people who would prove effective in industry, the public service or perhaps industrial relations, but who could not handle the maths; there were those who wanted a broad, general education, i.e., who wished to study economics as a social science and not as a narrow, technical discipline; pass students whose primary interest lay in some other discipline (e.g., people majoring in accountancy, government, economic history, industrial relations or psychology for careers in industry, commerce or teaching) who accepted the necessity for a three year course in economics, but for whom a specialist training would be unnecessary if not a deterrent to taking economics; and, finally, students from Faculties other than Economics wanting only a smattering of economics or a one year survey course — often intending teachers seeking an extra teaching subject. Such were the objections of the students’ Economic Society. My personal objection to the course (somewhat different) is outlined in the next section.

Economic Technocracy

Like E. J. Mishan, many of us are concerned at the ever-narrowing specialisation in the social sciences. The innocent layman,
surrounded by a growing array of specialists of all kinds, is deluded into believing that his welfare is in good hands, whereas in fact there is no social science expressly concerned with human welfare in the round. Each practitioner has his own tiny corner of specialisation and few are looking at the social process as a whole, i.e., where society as a whole is heading. Hence, Mishan argues, social scientists (particularly economists) have by default allowed us to drift into a world of pollution, environmental destruction and deterioration in the quality of life.

Hogan and Simkin conceived their function as one of uncritically “servicing” the status quo by producing specialist or professional economists for industry and the state; people who would ensure the smooth functioning of the ongoing system in an age of rapid scientific and technological change. Prof. Wheelwright’s stimulating, critical and “relevant” Descriptive Economics course was taken from his hands and emasculated — it had included critiques of the methodology and theories being promoted by Hogan-Simkin; and whilst Hogan’s new, “modern” course was panned by students in the 1969 survey, Wheelwright’s “topped the charts”.

The courses were thus calculated to produce economic technocrats or “mathematical technicians”; technically-competent professionals willing to sell their “skills” to big business and limit their horizons for the mutual profit of employer and employee. Such products would implicitly accept the values and assumptions of the status quo. They would be unbalanced technocrats, well versed in abstract mathematics but unaware of the social reality in which the economy functions. In short, the charge is that a strong maths orientation produces socially ignorant economists.

An altogether different perspective is involved in training students to look analytically and critically at the society around them and develop social consciousness; to encourage future business and public service economists to question the purposes and goals of their activities. This aim stems from the recognition that inept, socially irresponsible graduates have contributed to the pollution, distortions and injustices of our society. It should be a central aim of economics to develop a general critical analytical ability, in stark contrast to the abject acquiescence in the values and institutions of contemporary capitalism that “practical men” like Hogan-Simkin are busily fostering.

Intellectual Intolerance

Hogan-Simkin have consistently stressed a quantitative-mathematical approach, to the detriment and largely to the exclusion of all other ways of teaching economics at the pass level. Intellectual
intolerance as to **course content** has been accompanied by irresponsible and autocratic methods of departmental **decision-making**. But this is now public record and I will not dwell on it here.

Far from being totally opposed to the incorporation of quantitative techniques within the discipline, as Hogan-Simkin appear to believe of us, Hill and I recognise the enormity of the subject-matter and concede the relevance of mathematics to many of the more advanced theories expected of the intending honours graduate. But in the light of the diverse academic and vocational needs of students, we consistently requested that the heavy emphasis on mathematical techniques be reduced and that there be a system of optional subjects, **including** quantitative techniques (this was also the policy of the Economics Society).

The fact that options have been introduced in 1971 is at least a partial vindication of the stand that Hill and I took; but the reforms are inadequate. My own view was that quantitative economics should be optional for all pass students. And whilst the changes appear a significant move in that direction, the reality is quite different. In first year, the maths is only optional for non-Economics Faculty people, but even this is vitiated by two factors. First, those on teacher’s scholarships were instructed to do the mathematical option; and second, anyone wishing to proceed to second year cannot do so without having done the mathematical option unless with the express approval of the Departmental Head — who has to be convinced that the candidate possesses the background to handle the maths in second year. In these circumstances, it is hardly true that most students had any “option” at all and only 70 people chose to do the non-maths option. In second year, whilst the quantitative course is optional, the core course is itself mathematically-biased because of the use of Simkin’s own exceedingly difficult (for beginners) mathematical volume (the book acknowledges that it is an “advanced” text). So there is a credibility gap between appearance and reality in the matter of the much-vaunted course options for 1971.

**Critique Of The Quantitative School**

The quantitative trend in modern economics has fostered an increasing trivialisation of content, and an increasing attention to the elaboration and refinement of **technique**. Some of the best minds in modern economics have absorbed themselves in an endless refining and counter-refining of one another’s theories. Dudley Seers has described this type of economics as “fashionable trivia”; noting with disapproval that the highest praise for a paper is that it is elegant rather than useful. There has not been the same concern for urgent social problems as for “mathematical aesthetics”
and the manipulation of advanced techniques. Orthodox economists “have crept off to hide in thickets of algebra” laments Joan Robi­

son. When it comes to an actual issue, they have nothing concrete to say. They “take refuge in building up more and more elaborate mathematical manipulations and get more and more annoyed at anyone asking them what it is that they are supposed to be manipulating”. And by directing the attention of students to the learning of technique they are being kept ignorant of more important politico-economic issues. In the words of Prof. J. K. Galbraith: “Once students were attracted by the seeming urgency of economic problems and by a sense of their mission to solve them. Now the best come to economics for the opportunity it provides to exercise arcane mathematical skills.” Indeed, “radical economists” (see R. C. Edwards, et. al., AER, May 1970) contend that orthodox economic analysis, because it implicitly accepts the status quo, cannot deal with urgent modern problems: Vietnam, neo-imperialism, under-development, racism, pollution, the subjugation of women, inequality, alienation, etc. These issues would be central to a reconstructed (“radical”) curriculum reflecting the motif of modern capitalism: conflict and power. Attention would be focused upon the basic institutions of capitalism and the class divisions fostered by those institutions.

A “must” for disenchanted economics students is Galbraith’s classic demolition of the Hogan-Simkin “specialist” approach to economics in the essay “The Language Of Economics” (1962) reprinted in R. L. Smyth Essays In Modern Economic Develop­

ment. He begins by pointing out that Prof. Samuelson in a recent presidential address to the AEA had noted that three previous presidential addresses in succession had been devoted to a denunciation of mathematical economics and that the most trenchant had encouraged the audience to standing applause. There can be no question, Galbraith asserts, that excessive and prolonged commitment to mathematical exercises in economics is damaging. “It leads to the atrophy of judgement and intuition, which are indispensable for real solutions and on occasion, leads also to the habit of mind which simply excludes mathematically inconvenient factors from consideration.”

Galbraith next outlines the “prestige system” of academic economics of the Hogan-Simkin brand. Low prestige is accorded to the man who concerns himself with practical policy questions and with related disciplines for this brings him into the realm of political and moral judgements. It is a threat to the sharp delineation which maintains the “purity” of economic “science” by putting the discipline in a separate box.

And of course the “practical” approach does not lend itself
to highly technical and mathematical treatment. An economist who concerns himself with sociology, explains Galbraith, is assumed by his "specialist" colleagues to be escaping the rigours of his own subject. At the higher levels, modern economics "divorces itself fully" from practical questions and from the influence of other fields with the exception of maths and statistics. "Models unrelated to reality are constructed, commended, criticised, amended and then completely forgotten." Positions near the apex, those of greatest prestige, are fully protected from external influence. Work near the top is "pure" in the sense of excluding questions of practical application and excluding influences of other disciplines. This work is highly mathematical.

This is a masterly expose of the sham economics that the Sydney Professors espouse, and, while no-one would have minded the Professors squandering their own time "at the apex" in a fantasy world, it was surely obvious that students would resist the "downward thrust" of this pseudo-economics into undergraduate courses.

Mishan (in The Costs of Economic Growth) argues that the "mathematical school" wants precision, wants to quantify everything and is thus impatient of, and tends to leave out of its calculations "mathematically inconvenient", hard to quantify factors — like social and human costs. Mishan condemns these economists for having encouraged over-emphasis on growth and neglecting social costs and implications (like environment, pollution, deterioration in the quality of life). The work of "mathematical technicians", narrow specialists, can have disastrous social consequences!

K. Boulding stresses that mathematics is a wonderful servant, but a bad master. It saves us from pure empiricism but forces us into simplicity. This is both its power and its danger. The danger is that we shall become so enamoured of mathematical models that we think the world is actually like them, a sort of "no-person" world, a study of the movement of prices and commodities in the absence of people.

Which Course?

Economics is in a state of chaos as we enter the 1970's. The critics of the established orthodoxy at Sydney University branch into two groups. Those led by Prof. Wheelwright favour a two-stream approach to the teaching of economics:

1. a general social science (radical/institutional) approach emphasising politico-economic problems; and

2. a stream concentrating upon mathematical techniques.

The strategy is to "outflank" the Professors who (hopefully) would
be lecturing to depleted classes if students were offered a choice.

The second group (including Hill-Waters) favours a common core sequence (Economics I, II and III) with the provision of several options (including quantitative economics) to allow students to pursue their own needs, interests and specialisations. I favour a common core to encourage everyone (including the future technocrats) to develop a keen critical analytical ability. I would hope that the "technicians" and "specialists" produced by this system would have wider horizons than the like-products of the two-stream approach and would more readily question the purposes, implications and social consequences of their activities.

The Hill-Waters approach departs sharply from the Hogan-Simkin approach in which all students are constrained into the one channel of specialisation. In our scheme (whereby students are acquainted with orthodox theory but also exposed to its critiques) the mathematicians would have ample scope to pursue their own bent but within a framework of critical appraisal and critical analysis, which included critiques of "neo-capitalism" and encouraged future business and government economists to an awareness of their social and human function.

All students would be given some awareness of the problems of measurement via a one-term (elementary) course in mathematical economics in first year (worth no more than 5% of the total marks) so that they could decide for themselves whether "econometrics" was worth pursuing in terms of their needs and aims. But students would be exposed to the limitations and critiques of this approach as well as its claims.

The above proposals are motivated by concern at the subordination of University education to the needs of a developing capitalism by its narrowing to an uncritical, "service" function. I am sure there will be objections to, and weaknesses in, the proposals and I hope others (particularly advocates of a broad, general, critical education) will join with me in putting forward their answers as well as merely criticising the ones I have submitted as a contribution to (hopefully) a debate.
The making of a communist:  
an interview with Guido Baracchi

Could you tell us something about works of Lenin that were available in Australia in those early days?

Up till the time I was expelled from the Communist Party at the end of 1925, I hadn’t read What Is To Be Done at all and I don’t know anyone who would have read it unless it was a Russian reading it in a Russian edition. We got our Leninism from The State and Revolution. I can remember a VSP man called Hoskins. He wrote under the name of “Dogmatist”. He wrote a pamphlet The Materialist Conception of History. It was a very famous little pamphlet in its sphere and in its time—an able bit of work in its way. It was from this, from The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky and Left Wing Communism a little bit later that we got our Leninism.

And you also read, after the beginning of 1919, the New Communist Manifesto; did people take great notice of the 21 points in 1919?

Yes, there was quite a lot of argument about those. In the VSP, for instance, there were people who reckoned they were too tough altogether and were more inclined to accept the British ILP attitude to the 21 points. But they were discussed quite a lot.

And am I correct when I say that the Melbourne Branch of the Communist Party was established some time between 23rd and 28th November . . . ‘A Communist Party of Australia was formed by Baracchi and Laidler in Parer’s Hotel Melbourne’ . . . in this correct?

This is the second part of an interview with Guido Baracchi conducted by Alastair Davidson in 1964. The first part appeared in ALR No. 31.
You tell me. They actually established the Melbourne Branch of the party at the request of the United Conference of 30th October 1920. This party advised members of the VSP to form a Communist Party of Victoria but retain membership in the VSP.

I’ve seen the Communist Party minute book. There was an original book which ran from 1920 into the middle of 1921 and I have read it. It’s in the Hancock papers.

Is it? It would be more or less correct. The Conference that was held in November 1920 had two delegates who came from Melbourne — C. W. Baker and myself.

He still lives up here in New South Head Road, is that correct?

I knew he lived somewhere in NSW and I saw him before I went to Europe in 1955. That was the last time I saw him. He was working in Edel’s Music Shop at that time; I went into that shop and there he was. He said, “Well, we started something in 1920”.

Was he an American?

Well, he had all the manner of a Yankee salesman — not the present ones, but an old time one. I think he must have been in America, and he had a sort of Yankeefied method of speaking. But I couldn’t say that he was an American. About his propaganda, too — of course the American socialist influence here was very great. There was such a vast flow of books and pamphlets that came from Charles Kerr in particular. As to whether he was originally from America, whether he had been in America, I don’t know. He came to the Communist Party through the Rationalist movement, of course.

About this question of the two delegates that went to the foundation conference in November 1920, Baker and I, we were sent by these Melbourne communists and I definitely think there was a meeting in Parer’s Hotel. Besides Laidler and me, there were a number of others. Baker would certainly be one, and Charlie France would be one, and Maruschak would be in it, and Frank Stevens would be in it. Of the four tendencies I mentioned, I think that the ASP tendency would not be represented there; although there would be Russians there, I don’t think any organised Russian group was represented.

They were all expelled from the VSP, were they?

Yes. But I think the date would be round about right. It’s pretty
vague on my part, but I wouldn't dream of denying it. The time seems right.

**You and Baker came to Sydney and stayed here with the Proletarian? It became the official journal?**

It did afterwards. Baker and I came to Sydney and went back to Melbourne immediately after the conference to report to the Melbourne group what had been done. A subsequent conference was held in the ASP Hall, corner of Liverpool and Pitt Streets. We went back at Xmas and we stayed a couple of nights in the Burlington Hotel. Plenty of cockroaches. So many that you couldn't sleep for them—the cockroaches and Baker's cough. But we went back once and reported. The *Proletarian* was still running up to June. The last number here was in June 1921. At this time I went to New Zealand. Baker, just when I don't know, went to Sydney and Laidler stopped publishing the *Proletarian*. After an interval Baker brought it out in Sydney. I was not in Sydney at the time the *Proletarian* started. I was actually overseas when I got the first number of the *Proletarian* from Baker from Sydney.

**You went overseas in 1921?**

In June 1921 I left for New Zealand. I was in New Zealand until towards the end of 1921. I came back to Sydney for a very brief time and then, at either the end of 1921 or at the beginning of 1922, I went to England.

**And you were at that time an active member of the Communist Party of Australia?**

I was a member of the CPA from the time it began until I became a member of the British Communist Party. I was a member of the Australian Communist Party up till the time I left Australia and I was considered a member even though I was out of the country and not paying dues. When I got to England, I was there for a brief time and then I went to Germany.

**This was in 1922?**

I was in Germany for the remainder of 1922 and all 1923. I was a member of the German Communist Party during that time.

**You took part in the 1923 Communist Party rising in Germany?**

No. I took part in the activities of the CP but the only place where the rising occurred was in Hamburg and I was in Berlin.
But I was editor, with an Englishman called Clark, who had been a conscientious objector during the war and was three years in gaol. Clark and I were editors on the English edition of the three-language paper *International Press Correspondence*. During the rest of '22 and '23 Clark and I were editing the English edition of *I.P.C.* I was a member of the Berlin District of the CP. I used to attend their meetings and demonstrations, and marched with them when Borofsky was assassinated in Switzerland. His body was brought to Berlin. I heard Radek speak at that funeral memorial in the rain and I volunteered from our office to participate in any action that occurred in Berlin. We were called together one day in the office and were asked would we volunteer for this action, and I said I'd volunteer and 'What do we have to do?' They laughed and said 'When you are told, get out in the street and fire'. I said 'With what?' There were plenty of demonstrations and I had been chased out of a square and down a side street by the police; there were a few tanks around too. It was called off at the last minute, but the message didn't get to Hamburg and the insurrection occurred there.

**Were you influenced greatly by any of the German Communists?**

I knew Paul Levi, not very well, though I knew all his work. I knew his background and I was very friendly with a very intelligent group of his young student supporters who were expelled from the CP at the same time he was. I used to foregather with them very frequently at night in a well-known cafe in the Unter den Linden, called Cafe Bar. They told me an immense amount about Paul Levi, his attachment to Rosa Luxemburg and her work. I met Levi a few times before he either suicided or accidentally died by toppling out of a window in Berlin.

I never met Thalheimer but I heard him speak. I attended a German CP conference in Leipzig in 1923 and Thalheimer spoke there. The other, less theoretical, leader of the CP at that time was Brandler.

**He was expelled later in 1927?**

That's right. I heard Fisher and Maslov speak at this conference, and Clara Zetkin. I heard her speak both at the Congress and in Moscow later.

**Did they influence you in any way? Were they great or medium or just fair?**

I admired Thalheimer's theoretical work very much. He wrote a book on Dialetical Materialism — I don't know whether you know...
it. It was delivered in Moscow in the form of lectures to Oriental students — Chinese and Indian students — and I think it was a splendid piece of work. One of the best books of its kind that had ever been written. He was certainly an extremely able theorist. Then there were other theorists like Karl Korsch, who was subsequently expelled, and I knew also that famous character Willi Munzenburg.

He was the one who ran the League Against Imperialism?

Yes, and he became the International Secretary of the Workers’ International Relief. I was subsequently the Australian rep. when I came back to Australia in 1924, I was secretary of the Workers’ International Relief here. At this time it was trying to collect money for German workers who were having a tough time. Munzenburg was a magnificent organiser.

Have you read the article by Carew-Hunt on Munzenburg in St. Anthony’s Papers, No. 9?

No, I haven’t.

He got most of his information from Buber-Neumann. But what I wanted to ask you in connection with the Workers’ International Relief is about Lane’s book — Reminiscences of a Rebel, Dawn to Dusk. He mentions a man he calls a rep. of the Communist International who had come to Australia on behalf of the Workers’ International Relief.

It was a man called Hirscovici. He was here when I got back to Australia. He subsequently went back to Russia again. His Russian name was Gorkin and he’d started the WIR here and turned it over to me. I very much doubt whether he was a rep. Since he was a Russian and a Communist, I did not doubt for a minute that he was working for the Communist International in Australia, but I doubt whether he was a representative of the Comintern. I doubt if they would have had as their rep. the same man who was doing this work on the WIR.

In 1925 Latham, when he was speaking in the House of Representatives — and I have never been able to establish whether this is true or not — said that the Australian Communist Party had a rep. at the Comintern called Montefiore. I have never got this from Communist sources.

This rings a bell somewhere with me and I can remember Christian Jollie Smith speaking about Montefiore, but I never know of him
in 1924 and 1925 when I was on the Central Executive of the CPA, I never knew of him as having such a position.

I'm of the opinion that this is incorrect — he might have been an Australian who was in Moscow.

That happened with more than one. It happened with Freeman and then Earsman was in Moscow and Garden was in Moscow.

I received a letter from Earsman. He died last year. It was actually to Tom Barker, but I received a copy of it. It was about what he did when he went back to Russia in 1922 and '23.

Did that letter come from South Australia?

No, it was written from Edinburgh. It was written to Tom Barker and Barker sent me a copy.

Did you ever lend it to Rawlings?

No.

Why I am asking this is that Rawlings got from somebody, I'm not quite clear as to whether he got it from somebody in SA, this letter or a copy of it and he said it was from Earsman. Rawlings showed me the letter. It was most interesting. Earsman was quite advanced then. When the letter came he was the Secretary or President of the Labor Party. He was a Warden during the war and received an OBE for his work as such. He was one of the founders of the Edinburgh Festival. Quite extraordinary. He was still very active and hale and hearty, but at least he retained a leading position in the Labor Party.

He was quite well educated, wasn't he? He might have been self-educated, but he was quite well read.

He was an engineer. He was a member of the AEU and a very active member, and he had a strong syndicalist bent before he joined up with the communist movement. He was interested in Guild Socialism, too. He liked to gather round intellectuals or semi-intellectual people like Maurice Blackburn, myself, Sinclair and the fellowship. We started the Labor College the three of us. We started it in the Trades Hall in 1917. He was close friends with Christian Jollie Smith over here in the Communist Party, too. But he read a bit, he read quite a lot of books on Bakunin. He read Bakunin as distinct from Marx. His reading of Marxism was very slight. He wasn't an intellectual; he was,
I think, more or less self-educated. You might say, to use a very corny phrase, he wasn’t a university type at all. But he picked up in a practical sort of way bits of knowledge from all over the place in the course of his activities and, in preparing a talk or something like that, he’d read something. But he certainly wasn’t a very big reader.

He was the dominant personality in the very early party, wasn’t he? Or was Garden; it was either he or Garden?

Yes. Well, he was the Secretary and he came over from Melbourne to Sydney and he gave the drive to the formation of the Communist Party so far as the inner group of the party was concerned. He couldn’t last too long in harness with Garden, without there being some differences arising between them. Garden with his, you might say, more opportunist trade union practitioner’s attitude, as distinct from that of Earsman, who concentrated on the formation of the Communist Party.

He formed the NSW Labor College here and he got a man who was a great reader. That was Moses Baritz. He couldn’t quite take Moses’ erudition and Earsman’s drive; they couldn’t get along together, they fell out badly. On the other hand, Earsman could gather intellectuals around him, like Christian Jollie Smith. Earsman, you might say, preceded Garden as the leading force in the formation of the Communist Party here, but Garden fairly soon succeeded him.

Earsman seemed to favor at this stage an educatory and Australian Socialist Party type of role and believed the role of socialists in Australia should be to educate the workers. This seems to be expressed in his writing, in the Labor College, etc. However, the party seems to have become an organisation for boring from within the ALP, which seems to suggest that Garden had the greater lead.

The only thing I would cavil at is the ASP bit. The ASP would not have a bar of him. They regarded him as a syndicalist rather than a communist, you know. But for the rest, I think that what you say is pretty right.
EUROPE VERSUS AMERICA? CONTRADICTIONS OF IMPERIALISM,

MANDEL'S BOOK is a Marxist economist's answer to Servan-Schreiber's The American Challenge (Penguin Books, 1969). The framework of the analysis is Lenin's theory of imperialism, which in the most general terms is the analysis of the relationships between capitalist nation states in the era of monopoly capital. While non-Marxist, or bourgeois economists do not use the term "monopoly capital", the phenomenon of concentration of ownership and control of industrial enterprises in advanced capitalist countries into fewer and fewer hands over the last 100 years and the associated increase in monopolistic forms of market structure is not disputed. Nor is there any dispute over the analysis in chapter 2 of Mandel's book that there has been a new wave of mergers which has resulted in yet more highly increased concentration of capital control over the last 15 years or so, and associated with this, an enormous increase in direct foreign investment by the so-called multi-national corporation. However, the implications of this phenomenon for the relations between two of the biggest spheres of capitalism — the United States of America and Western Europe, is more controversial.

There are several steps in Mandel's argument. He argues that, by the end of the second world war, America had emerged as the leading capitalist (and therefore imperialist) power, dominating both economically and politically the economic life of all capitalist countries. However, the extent to which America was able to dominate the world was limited in three broad ways. First, the advent of the Soviet Union and the European socialist block divided the world into two spheres. Second, revolutionary movements in former colonies of European powers, such as in Cuba and Vietnam, prevented America from gaining economic and political dominance over these areas. Thirdly, the need to restore and support the economic strength of Western Europe and Japan not only as a part of the Cold War but also as a profitable outlet for American investment, led to the re-birth of rival capitalist power centres. The implications of the rapid growth of Western Europe and Japan for the ability of America to dominate the so-called Free World economy thus forms the main part of the book.

Given that there are strong competitive forces which give rise to the international concentration of capital, Mandel examines the alternatives put forward by Servan-Schreiber: Will there be concentration of capital within Europe, developing European corporations and, eventually, a new United States of

(Another review of this book appeared in ALR No. 29—Ed.).
Europe, or an international concentration of capital via trans-Atlantic mergers, leading to the development of Europe as a "colony" of the United States of America? Mandel argues persuasively that the former outcome is far more likely, due amongst other things to the passing of de Gaulle and to the prospect of an increase in unemployed labour and capital during the 1970's forcing the member states of the EEC (with or without the United Kingdom) to create a more favourable environment for the rationalization of industries within Europe. The next step will then be increasing competition with American corporations via direct investment within the United States by the consolidated European corporations, to counter American penetration of their home markets. Mandel predicts that Japanese corporations will do the same. The ensuing phase of intense competition between American, European and Japanese capital will then lower the degree of independence of the three major centres of power in the capitalist world.

What are the implications of these developments for working class movements, both in America and Europe? In America, if attempts to prevent increased European and Japanese competition by increased protection against European and Japanese competition by increased protection against imports and direct foreign investment are not successful (and there is some evidence that these attempts will fail, witness the recent failure of the Nixon administration to obtain drastically increased protection of the American textile industry), then an incomes policy will be crucial for keeping down wages so that American corporations can meet foreign competition and remain profitable. Associated with the incomes policy, Mandel predicts increasingly repressive anti-union measures. In Europe, similar forces will operate, requiring further development of the EEC so that it has the power to implement an incomes policy and to provide support for the development of the new technology so necessary to meet American competition.

As a Marxist, Mandel does not see any possibility under capitalism to provide the framework and environment for man to fully develop and express himself because of the wastefulness of competition, the need for and the propensity to spend too much on armaments, and the lack of control of workers over their lives at all levels, including the workplace. Mandel poses European socialism — not the Soviet model of bureaucratic centralism, but more decentralized worker-control — as an alternative to the possibilities seen by Servan-Schreiber. To this end, he sees the need for the development of internationalism in the working class movements of Western Europe — not to parallel the European wide coordination of capital and the associated state institutions, but to build a United Socialist States of Europe. Such a state would be able to nationalise the organization of industries to meet the requirements of modern technology while providing a better framework for human organization. To achieve this end, the relative weaknesses of capitalism in the transition period from separate nation States to the United (Capitalist) States of Europe should provide the opportunity for a working class movement to go beyond the experience of the French workers in May, 1968, and actually take power. Should this not be possible, the chances of a working class movement achieving power after the consolidation of a new European state would be very much lessened.

Many aspects of Mandel's arguments are supported by a set of papers on
the Multinational Corporation recently published under the editorship of the American economist Charles P. Kindleberger (*The Multinational Corporation: A Symposium*, edited by Charles P. Kindleberger, MIT Press, 1970). For example, the paper by Johnson on the economic forces leading to the success of the multinational corporation, namely the importance of technical knowledge and the need for monopoly power to exploit that knowledge, provides a sharp and lucid argument supporting Mandel's analysis. The paper by Hymer and Rowthorn supports the over-all prediction that there will be increasingly intense competition between American, European and Japanese firms in the American market, and provides convincing arguments to show that the first of the Servan-Schreiber options — the relegation of Europe to a colony status, is merely a myth. These authors also put forward compelling reasons to suggest that, in absence of the formation of new supra-national state institutions, the conflicts and contradictions, and the national, local and urban needs of people organized in existing political groupings, will increase. For example, given that many multinational corporations are bigger economic units than cities, how will conflicts between the requirements of urban planning and international industrial planning by corporations be resolved? Or, in the absence of a supra-national state, how will the maintenance of full employment in, and the coordination of the various economic policies of existing nation states be achieved? It is precisely such contradictions, in conjunction with the need for the international rationalization of capital, which Mandel believes will lead to the gradual formation of a United (Capitalist) States of Europe. Whereas Hymer and Rowthorn leave open the question of whether or not the nation state as we know it will survive the growth of multi-national corporations, Mandel argues for an inbetween solution where the western European states merge into some form of federation to compete with America and Japan. In view of the evidence that Servan-Schreiber's exhortations in this direction have been accepted in Western Europe, Mandel's predictions appear to be soundly based.

In his introductory chapter, Kindleberger attempts to use the papers by Rubin and Waltz to show that the predictions by Hymer and Rowthorn (and therefore Mandel) about the future of the nation state under capitalism, are unfounded. However, it is difficult to sustain Kindleberger's arguments. Rubin attempts to show that the multi-national corporation will not need a parallel state power to resolve conflicts in international jurisdiction. While it is true that Rubin can come up with examples where such conflicts were resolved without supra-national institutions, the resolution merely reflects the realities of existing power situations; where one side is powerless to execute its sovereign rights this does not mean that attempts will not be made by national governments to alter those power situations by political alliance with other nations or groups of nations to achieve their ends. In this respect, a united rather than divided Western Europe will be better able to negotiate with America, and although this would lead to the loss of sovereignty of individual nations within Europe, it would provide a more effective counter to American power. The Waltz paper, while showing that the United States of America is less dependent on the rest of the world than Britain at the peak of her economic and political power in the 19th century, does not show that there is no inter-dependence. Further, he notes an important asymmetry in the degree of in-
terdependence — the rest of the world being more dependent on America than the other way around. In many respects, Waltz provides a neat summary of the way in which the United States of America dominates both economically and politically the so-called Free World; his attempt to make a direct analogy with the Soviet Union, implying that exactly the same forces are at work, is without foundation. However, having shown that America is less dependent on the rest of the world than Britain in the 19th century does not mean that America will not react to the interdependence that she feels, or that capitalist states in Europe and Japan will not attempt to change their relative dependence and to challenge American power. The evidence put forward by Mandel suggests that in Western Europe this will indeed be the case.

The major weaknesses of Mandel's book lie in the brevity of his analysis and a lack of sharpness in his economic arguments; it is for this reason that the papers by Johnson and Hymer and Rowthorn are such useful supplements. For those who hope for the development of socialism in Europe, Mandel's book provides only an analysis of the contemporary situation and likely developments; it does not show how to move from an uprising of workers and students like that in France in 1968 to actually gaining power, nor does he show how it will be possible for working class movements in Europe to "catch up" to the international outlook of corporations, let alone surpass them in the organization of the United Socialist States of Europe. Mandel provides only the starting point. Nevertheless, the power of Mandel's book lies in this ability to abstract from a very complex set of observed phenomena, thus providing an analysis of the major trends in the American and European economies and to carry the implications forward into predictions about the future.

DAVID EVANS

THE DESTRUCTION OF ABORIGINAL SOCIETY,

THE DESTRUCTION OF ABORIGINAL SOCIETY is the first of a series of three volumes on the general theme "Aboriginal Policy and Practice" undertaken by Professor Rowley on behalf of the Social Sciences Research Council of Australia, and representing the results of a major research project by the Council.

The present volume deals with the facts of frontier clash and its aftermath from the days of first settlement until the period following World War II. The second volume examines the emergence of the part-Aboriginal communities of the closely settled areas, while the third volume deals with the situation of Aborigines in the settlements (the 'colonial areas' of Australia as the author describes them) and examines the effect of land policies, mining development and labor policies. The whole project represents the first attempt to assemble on a national scale the facts relating to the treatment of Aborigines in all the Australian States. The Social Sciences Research Council, no less than the distinguished author, are to be congratulated on undertaking a project of such national importance.
The Destruction of Aboriginal Society is basically a history of the policies adopted towards Aborigines in the various States and the way they worked out in practice; but underlying the historical detail is the thesis emphasised by Professor Rowley very early in the book that "no adequate assessment of the Aboriginal predicament can be made so long as the historical dimension is lacking; it is the absence of information on background which has made it easy for intelligent persons in each successive generation to accept the stereotype of an incompetent group".

The first impact of this book will be to shock many Australians at the violence which the historical records reveal in the treatment of Aborigines. As the author says "No real allowance has been made for the extreme violence of the treatment of the Aborigines; for the facts are easily enough established that homicide, rape and cruelty have been commonplace over wide areas and long periods". Though this is far from being a sensational book, it faces Australians up squarely to the crimes committed against the Aboriginal people. The Tasmanian genocide differs only in degree from events on the mainland; all States have a grim record of massacres and other killings, of which the following example is typical. This was a reprisal action by white settlers on the Clarence River in 1841, prompted by theft on Ramorine Station, subsequently found to have been committed by one of the white employees:

"A group of Aborigines was found upon the Orara camped in great numbers. A cordon was formed during the night, hemming the camp in with the river behind it. At a given signal at daybreak . . . the camp was rushed, and men, women and children were shot down indiscriminately. Some took to the river and were shot as they swam. Their dead bodies subsequently floated down past the Settlement (Grafton)."

Violence against Aborigines continued unabated wherever new frontiers were being opened up, and "as late as 1958 there was a report of Aboriginal prisoners kept on the chain at Halls Creek, the Western Australian Police Commissioner stating in defence that the Aboriginal prisoner preferred chaining to being locked up".

"Regulations allowed the use of the neck chain to bring in prisoners in special circumstances; but by this time its use had become so much of a commonplace that its cruelty was likely to be denied and it was usual for the constable, with his trackers, to 'bring in' not only the persons charged, but a line of 'witnesses' chained together in this way. Roth says that even children of fourteen to sixteen years might be so treated; that women were chained with the men: that they might be completely at the mercy of the police in this way for weeks, with the chains never removed, especially as the female 'witnesses' taken were often young. He stated that the connecting chains between prisoners or witnesses might be no more than two feet in length. (Chains were still in use after World War II)."

And what of the effect on Aborigines of this process of violence and subjection? Rowley comments as follows: "... there has been a long-drawn-out process of conquest and of hopeless but stubborn resistance, both material and intellectual. There is a long history of guerrilla tactics of a subtle and determined kind where this was possible. There was also the unwilling compliance which
mocks the conqueror, and at least within the warm circle of the in-group, holds to ridicule his later half-hearted efforts to make amends."

"This tradition of resistance still remains. The part-Aboriginal groups of the south have inherited it from their tribal forefathers and it may be renewed by what contact they retain with the 'full bloods', who mainly reside in the more isolated parts of the continent. Well meant but obtuse efforts of missions and government have been held off with ridicule, or with the defence of apathy, often for generations."

Of special interest in how the present position arises from the past is the question of land rights. Contrasting the conditions of American Indians and of Maoris on the one hand, and of Aborigines on the other, Professor Rowley says:

"Not being a villager, he (the Aboriginal) had no claim to a particular area of land; his more subtle relationship with his country was either ignored or not understood. He lacked the organisation which could have enabled effective warfare in defence of his interests. He did not have the multi-purposed leadership offered by the system of tribal chiefdoms; and his society was marked by the absence of hierarchical organisation. Thus he had neither the obvious prior right to a certain area, which might have influenced governments, nor the organisation to defend any part of his traditional hunting and gathering area...

"Had the Amerindians lacked the organisation for war, there may well have been no Indian treaties.

... The Maori was respected as a warrior; the Aboriginal was despised as a rural pest."

Thus, while other indigenous people had their rights to land recognised in treaties or other agreements, in Australia from the earliest days of European settlement there has been no recognition whatever of Aboriginal land rights, and this attitude has hardened over the years, creating the entrenched resistance being encountered today by Aboriginal communities, such as the Gurindji and the Yirrkala people, who are claiming more and more insistently the ownership of some at least of their traditional lands.

On the main theme of the book, government policies in relation to Aborigines, Professor Rowley gives a detailed account of the policies and the measures to implement them, adopted by the various States and by the Commonwealth in the Northern Territory. He begins with the policy laid down by the British Government before the colonies attained independence. In all cases this was substantially the same — civilisation, Christianity, the status and rights of the British subject, protection of the person. But he notes that "On the Swan, as on the Hawkesbury, there was a very early concession that settlers were entitled to act in 'self-defence' while at the same time exhortations comparable to those of the Governor of NSW were arriving from England to treat with severity all acts of injustice (except the taking of land) against the native people."

Of this and of subsequent policies adopted by the various governments, Rowley makes the devastating comment "Policies and practices which result in
the rapid disappearance of the subjects may be fairly described as failures"; and elsewhere he offers the following reason: "The relationship of Aborigines to particular areas, and the nature of their society, and economy, were not well enough known to provide the facts on which an intelligent application of any policy could be based."

But it is highly unlikely that in practice the widest knowledge and understanding could have withstood the economic demands of the settlers with their insatiable urge for more and yet more land for grazing which struck at the very basis of Aboriginal society. Rowley describes the process as follows:

"There was a kind of inevitability in this progression, from first contact to violence; from destruction of native food supply, or of the incentives to hunt and gather it, to the establishment of either a government centre for rationing or a pastoral enterprise where rations could be gained in return for minimal labor (this made possible an Aboriginal adjustment in accordance with the moral principle of reciprocity). Then came the rapid decline in numbers through new diseases, often exacerbated by malnutrition. The loss of freedom to move and of control of the sacred places seriously affected the society in the basis of the man's work, which was intimately involved with places and the spirits, and in turn affected the processes of socialisation and the attitude to children."

Ideas of protection of Aborigines arose in quite early times, and Rowley traces the development of these from 1837 when a Select Committee on Aborigines reported to the House of Commons, recommending a number of measures including "Special codes of law to protect the Aboriginal until he learned to live within the framework of British law". Rowley observes "Thus began a process of cause and effect, since protective legislation is inevitably discriminatory in effect". Protection reached its peak in the Queensland legislation, on which Rowley comments:

"The cost of this protective measure was to place the Aboriginal at the mercy of officials. There were no provisions for appeal. No matter how lofty the intentions, its execution would reflect the attitudes of the police and others who now had to administer it. These would vary a good deal, but the background made certain a tight pattern of authoritarian management."

As protection and discrimination came under increasing fire not only from Aborigines but from other sections of the Australian community, official policy shifted to assimilation of which Rowley has this to say:

"... the destruction of Aboriginal society, after over a century and a half, would be either arrested and reversed, or would proceed by other means. Governments were to accept the assimilation policy as the other means. This policy envisaged that Aboriginal socialisation would give place to some officially approved process which would finally merge Aboriginal social habits in the majority social order."

World War II accelerated the process of social change in Australia and had a profound effect on relations between Aborigines and other Australians. In the Northern Territory, many Aborigines experienced in army workshops equal employment conditions with white Australians; they became more vocal in
their demands for their rights, and their plight became much more widely known to other Australians. Dissatisfaction with all previous government policies strengthened, and support developed for more advanced policies, notably the objective of complete self-determination for the Aboriginal minority, which had been advocated by the Communist Party for a number of years. On the significance of this demand, Professor Rowley comments as follows:

"A draft policy statement in 1963... included among the objectives for Aborigines 'the right to control their own affairs as a distinct national minority within the Australian nation'. The rigid paternalism of government policy, on the other hand, must have been playing into the hands of the Communist Party, by conditioning Aborigines to listen to the only real criticism of that policy over a considerable period. Thus as early as 1929 one can see the present set of political complications taking shape. The Communists have in fact been more alert than any other political group, over a long period, to the potentially critical nature of the Aboriginal issue."

As one would expect, Professor Rowley has some very pertinent things to say about the role of Aborigines in the labor force. He points out that the effectiveness of the Aborigines, as units of labor in the pastoral industry had long been demonstrated at the same time as it was being denied; and that part at least of the reason for much of the protective legislation was a recognition of the need to conserve this cheap and useful source of labor. The resulting exploitation is indicated in this comment:

"It is interesting to see the logic of economics operating to produce a truly colonial labor situation. The reserves were inevitably to become enclaves where the Aboriginal family produced in safety the laborers of the future. From here they were to go into rural employment, and here they were to return when not required. To the extent that they left their families on the reserve, they could be paid the wage of a single man, since the government or government-subsidised mission management was there to ensure that the family was maintained. The system could thus operate as a subsidy to the pastoral and other industries. Perhaps only in Queensland was this economic integration into the economy fully realised."

But Professor Rowley is in no doubt about the need for Aborigines to be integrated into the economy on equitable terms:

"... the Aboriginal has been left in the situation where he badly needs economic and legal hitting power to confront prejudice and establish his rights in fact. But to exercise such power he needs his place in the economy."

There are many other questions on which this book sheds a revealing light — Aboriginal culture and the enormous gulf separating it from European culture; the role of the missions; the fallacy of relying on education to transform Aboriginal attitudes into our own; the meting out of 'justice' to Aborigines offending against an alien code. It is not possible in a review to bring out all the value of this book, but the extracts quoted are sufficient to show that it is informative in its presentation of the historical facts; it is perceptive in its analysis, and forthright in its criticism. It is a must for all Australians who are anxious to know 'how things got the way they are' in relations to Aborigines, and who want to understand how to improve the situation.