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BOOKS
FOR FIFTY-TWO YEARS of the 67 since Federation, Australia's Prime Minister has come from the party of conservatism, of urban monopoly capital, whether called Free trade, Protectionist, Nationalists, United Australia or Liberal.

For 34 years of these 52 years the conservative Prime Minister has been a Victorian. Since 1916 there have been five conservative PM's (excluding the caretakers Earle Page, Fadden and McEwen). Of these, two were Labor rats, Hughes and Lyons, who became Prime Minister because traditional conservatism was no longer able to rule in the old way. That the Prime Minister then came from outside Victoria was also significant.

Bruce, Menzies, Holt ruled Australia for 25 years, coming from similar backgrounds—"Public" school, law, members of the Melbourne Club, safe men for the Establishment, conformist in philosophy and policies, even though their intellectual abilities and political talents varied. The 81 Liberal MP's preserved tradition by electing Gorton. Geelong Grammar in place of Wesley College, "gentleman farmer" instead of lawyer, as conformist and conservative, even perhaps still more to the right; differences are minor and similarities decisive.

The Australian press, unrenowned for either depth or dignity, did its level best to create some sensationalism, some appearance of tension, competition and struggle. After a few days exploiting the tragic circumstances of Mr. Holt's disappearance and death, another few days of fulsome gratitude for Johnson's visit, that combined business with mourning, the press settled down to screwing some drama out of the race for leadership. Predictably, it was no race; Gorton cantered in, by a thumping margin of 21. Melbourne had won again.

Of course, there is much more than parochialism involved. Melbourne is the financial centre of Australia, the hub of monopoly capitalism. Menzies, with his usual arrogance, spoke no more than the truth when he said in Parliament over 30 years ago that he was glad to hear Labor MP Beasley read out a list of big shareholders in Broken Hill Proprietary, because he "heard the names of so many of his friends".

Gorton's election is new proof that there is in fact an Australian ruling class, and that its core is the Melbourne grouping of finance capitalists. It may perhaps seem unnecessary to repeat
this, were it not that even some critics of modern capitalist society seem to have joined its upholders in declaring outmoded the concepts of class and class struggle, and ownership and control of industry and finance as the basis of class power.

To say this is not to make the vulgar-materialist mistake of assuming that Melbourne company directors assembled in a Collins House boardroom to select the "pea". The ruling class has its own conditions of existence, its own ramifications and its own methods. Whether you prefer the words *power elite, establishment* or *ruling class*, the reality is the same—a class outlook based upon private ownership of the means of production, an ideology usually moulded in elite schools that cater for, at most, four per cent of the people (as this column has pointed out, two-thirds of Cabinet members were educated in these schools). There are the closest personal relationships between big business tycoons, tory politicians, top lawyers and the ranking brass of the civilian and military public servants, established at exclusive schools and clubs, by intermarriage and other forms of social intercourse. And the Melbourne monopoly group's domination, the basic cause for Melbourne's political dominance in the conservative party, is of course reinforced by past favours and privileges granted, future positions and largesse to be bestowed. There is the good old Liberal Party machines, more powerful and ruthless than Labor's, even if more subtle, gentlemanly and less exposed to daylight (naturally, since the press controllers are part of the machine).

The only conflict of policy came from outside the Liberal Party, and then only in the form of McEwen's ban on McMahon. There is more to this than the Basic Industries Group or Maxwell Newton, and it may well be complicated by a dislike that combines policy, politics and a clash of personal habits and differences. But the policy difference is again decisive, and it goes further than Country Party-Liberal Party jealousies (that are real, and by no means ended by the events of January 9). There are deep differences of interest between monopoly groupings, deep conflicts of opinion on policy (devaluation, foreign investment, tariff, trade and fiscal policies, even perhaps foreign policy).

It requires neither deep penetration nor inside information to prophesy not only further serious clashes between the coalition parties, but also strife within the Liberal Party. The wounds, insults and double-dealings of a sudden struggle for succession are not easily forgiven.

SERIOUS PROBLEMS FACE GORTON as he takes over a divided coalition. Most of these are inherited from Holt, even if handling of the postal strike was something for which Gorton himself can
claim the "credit". The two most serious problems are the economy and the Vietnam war—and in saying that, one states that almost every aspect of policy, of social and political life, is fraught with difficulties and dangers.

The Australian economy faces grave difficulties, even though it has been buoyed up over recent years by huge inflows of foreign capital (that is gradually taking over a decisive ownership of many industries) and by accelerating extraction and export of minerals (that is depleting our natural resources and making the country a quarry). Even these expedients have failed to guard against long-term problems that arise from internal and external contradictions of modern monopoly capitalism.

Australia has an acute balance of payments problem—a chronic trade deficit, rising freight and other costs, a general trend of falling prices for raw materials and rising prices for capital goods and other manufactured imports. Last year's fall in foreign capital investment, on top of these long-term trends, has brought Australia's gold and foreign currency reserves to $900 million, the lowest for years and approaching danger point. This serious situation coincides with general capitalist financial crisis, affecting particularly the United States and Britain.

Such capitalist "elder statesmen" as Harold Macmillan, some serious newspapers and economists are calling up the spectre of a possible crash like that of the '30's. Whether this be right or wrong, there is no doubt that there is a crisis of confidence, a long-range and indeed incurable disease of the world capitalist economy.

Capitalist economists, theorists and politicians have been proclaiming the solution of basic problems that marxism declared insoluble, through the new, sophisticated economics based on Keynesian theories. It is true that these theories and measures have achieved certain successes, that have affected economic and political trends in the capitalist world. Only incurable dogmatists or wishful thinkers refuse to recognise these successes and their effects. However, as marxists have always said, these measures have not solved the basic problems of capitalism. Indeed, the very fields in which these techniques operate—credit, finance, deficit budgeting—are precisely the fields in which the crisis breaks out, even though it assumes different forms.
precisely this enormously wealthy capitalist power that faces the most serious financial crisis, that has brought its gold reserves down to 12 billion dollars and threatens the dollar with devaluation. Modern monopoly capitalism has transferred the problems of trade, realisation and extended reproduction from the national capitalist economies into the sphere of world trade and finance. Imperialism—the striving for world economic domination by huge monopoly groupings and its corollary, world political and military supremacy—has created a most explosive situation. Two important features of this situation are the struggle between imperialist nations and the increasing pressure of exploitation by the industrialised capitalist countries upon the non-socialist developing countries.

BRITAIN HAS SUFFERED MOST in the struggle between the capitalist powers. Devaluation, the attack upon living standards and unemployment, withdrawal "East of Suez", has forced full acceptance of the end of British imperial policies. Other imperialisms have waged their struggle against the British. Gaullist France has been the most open, but all the others have played their part, in trade wars, financial pressure and political in-fighting. Perhaps the greatest contribution was made by the United States, that moved into the imperialist "power vacuum" created by British withdrawals from sphere after sphere (South East Africa, Persia, Middle East, India and others). And often these "withdrawals" were made under US pressure, whether overt or covert.

Now, the very successes of the other monopoly capitalisms in their struggle against Britain are threatening the whole capitalist world, in the form of a crisis of confidence in stability of its world financial structure.

THE GAP BETWEEN industrialised and developing nations is the other great problem. World politics are more and more influenced by the problems of hunger, the agonies of new nations striving for industrialisation and agricultural development under the intolerable strains of exploitation by the capitalist nations. This exploitation is exercised in the terms of trade, in distortion of the economies for the benefit of investing countries, in manipulation of corrupt elites and governments by the powerful nations, and finally by political and military intervention.

The suffering and misery that this brings to hundreds of millions is multiplying. The new forms of world capitalism, and its new exploitation ("neo-colonialism" and "aid") are in fact widening the gap between industrialised nations and the others.
On a world scale, history is vindicating, in terrible fashion, the prediction made by Karl Marx that capitalism leads to an accumulation of wealth at one pole and of suffering and misery at another. This also creates new and powerful forces for social revolution.

AUSTRALIA'S FUTURE is inevitably affected, more closely than most capitalist countries, by this second great problem of contemporary politics. By geography and economic logic, Australia's future is bound up with South East Asia and the Pacific. By its history of association with Western capitalism, and its development to a monopoly capitalist society, Australia has been part of the imperialist world. By its relative weakness and economic and political influences of stronger capitalist powers—first Britain and now the United States—its rulers have been willing associates of imperialist policy, economic, political and military, dependent on a stronger power and incapable of exercising independent initiatives and policies. That is why Australia was at war in Korea and is now at war in Vietnam, has forces in Malaya and will become still more deeply committed to a policy of aggression in Asia so long as the Australian people allow its ruling class to decide national policy.

Australia is also seriously affected by the chronic economic and financial crisis of world capitalism. The convergence of the two great problems arising from imperialism poses serious and even decisive issues before every class and every political trend.

ELECTION OF GORTON as Prime Minister seems to foreshadow both continuity and change in ruling class policy. First, continuity of basic policy; second, change to a tougher, more extreme and aggressive line internally. The 1966 election strengthened the extreme right in the parliamentary Liberal Party and Cabinet. Gorton was supported by most of these elements and he can be expected to show appropriate gratitude in Cabinet changes. Although his political outlook and character are not well known, he is more rightwing and authoritarian than even his predecessors, unaffected by the Victorianism of Menzies and unsweetened by the careful balancing of Holt, career politician par excellence.

Shrewdness and a certain flair for political "image-building" may mask these traits and even restrain their exercise temporarily. However, the objective situation, the nature of the problems and the immediately urgent decisions to be made, do not give much room for manoeuvre.
Immediately, vital economic decisions have to be made. The balance of payments has to be tackled, probably by a combination of deflationary moves—some restriction of credit, an attempt to stabilise wages while prices continue to rise (a general five per cent or bigger rise is tipped in 1968), holding of government expenditure on education, social services and money for the States. If these prove insufficient, then increased taxes and a generally class-biased budget can be expected, while war expenditure will continually rise. But this program will not be so easy to push through.

The trade union movement is in no mood to accept the employers' tactics of absorption, the planned delays in flow-through of the increases in margins won in the metal trades "work-values" case by long and cumbersome "hearings". The mailvan drivers' strike for their modest $8 claim, delayed for years, shows that the government cannot expect to "set an example" by pegging its own employees' wages without a sharp reaction. Widespread industrial action is certain. The unprecedented explosion of industrial strife even before most industrial workers resumed work has set the stage for 1968 as a year of sharp class struggle.

**ARBITRATION HAS NEVER BEEN** so discredited. The Commission's decision to grant $7.40 rise for most metal tradesmen, far from restoring arbitration's image, has further exposed the fiction that cases are heard on their merits. Rather, unionists as a whole are drawing the conclusion that metal unionists have already acted upon—that arbitration decisions reflect the real relation of forces between employers and unions. Strong unions can win claims by their strength, and courts will rubber-stamp them if there is no other way.

Indeed, unionists are seeing a clearer pattern in the apparent inconsistencies of recent judgments. If the employers can absorb the increases for tradesmen in over-award payments, if most metal workers can get only a small increase and the flow to other awards can be dammed, very few workers would get much at all.

However, employers, Commission and government are reckoning without the unions. The metal workers will fight absorption to the end, while other workers are already acting to obtain commensurate rises. Even if "109's shower down life confetti at a double wedding" (to use a colorful phrase from a financial newspaper) industrial struggle will spread. If present penal powers fail, as they must when workers are determined and united, the government will have to decide whether to threaten more draconic measures.
There will be strong pressure from its ultra wing, and from the employers.

Deepseated and growing concern throughout the community about the chronic crisis in education, the glaring inequity and inadequacy of old age pensions, and the scandal of high costs of medical care, will increase political pressure for increases in socially necessary expenditure of public money. The Country Party's demand for compensation to primary producers hit by sterling devaluation adds a new factor.

Over all these problems hangs the question mark of war expenditure. In the Budget speech even McMahon had to admit the present spending is at danger level, economically. Since then, the Vietnam commitment has grown, F111 costs are rising, and new pressures are being exerted for increased commitment to the "defence of South East Asia". Whatever Gorton may say, the "American Alliance", cornerstone of conservatism's foreign policy, will force an escalation of military spending.

THE VIETNAM WAR therefore remains a central issue for national decision. There is no victory in sight, no apparent end to the cost in lives, in money and in political danger.

With the US Presidential election only nine months away, there has been a new rash of optimistic window-dressing. Westmoreland has spoken of a turning of the tide; Hanson Baldwin says "The Allies are winning". A dogged official optimism emanates from Washington. This scarcely reflects either the military or political situation in Vietnam, and is not convincing either world or American opinion. McNamara has gone, another political casualty of the war, following Maxwell Taylor, Cabot Lodge and many other military and political figures.

In reality, the war is running against the Americans. The battles are still being fought in the areas declared "cleared" a year ago, the most "secure" US bases are still open to National Liberation Front attacks, and daring probes are made up to the very outskirts of Saigon. The NLF forces alternate guerilla and positional battles with bewildering variety and brilliance. Indeed, the NLF Army is proving superior to the US in both strategy and tactics.

Its forces are better equipped than ever, and they have been able to counter every new tactical weapon the Americans have thrown into the war. The helicopter battalions, sky cavalry, worked out by US strategists for precisely this type of war, have failed to daunt the NLF forces, though they did produce an initial dismay. Massed bombing in North and South, defoliation, gas,
fiendishly ingenious and horrible anti-personnel weapons, napalm—all have been tried and have failed to secure superiority. Terror bombing has failed to crush Vietnam's spirit, and a huge toll of planes and pilots has been exacted by all types of defence, including small arms.

The forces opposing imperialism and war and fighting for peace and national liberation owe an enormous debt to the Vietnamese people. Their staunchness, patriotism and military skill have met and are defeating all the strength US imperialism can throw into this war. They have already inflicted crushing political and military reverses upon the US. The Vietnamese people's war is being won because it is waged politically as well as with arms, in the arena of world politics and within Vietnam, where the NLF struggle depends upon popular support from all but those social forces which served French colonialism, the Japanese occupiers, and now the Americans.

The political struggle includes the effort to win a just peace for Vietnam. The Vietnamese have shown themselves willing for negotiations seriously intended to bring peace through a return to the 1954 Geneva Accords. The US has shown it wants only victory and unconditional surrender. When the Democratic Republic of Vietnam announced willingness to begin peace talks if the US abandoned its bombing, Assistant Secretary of State W. P. Bundy made this clear, saying there was nothing to show that the Vietnamese leaders are "ready to yield". Of course they are not prepared to yield, nor will they ever be so prepared, for to yield would be to surrender Vietnam's independence forever. It is both dangerous and absurd to expect Vietnam to yield, and expectations that they might are evidence only of an unrealistic evaluation of the Vietnamese conflict.

The debt owed to Vietnam by the democratic peoples of the world should be repaid by a new effort to force US acceptance of the DRV offer. The demand for an immediate end to the bombing, once confined to the left and the protest movement, is receiving more and more support from world figures like U Thant and, in the USA, from people like Senator Mansfield. A new political offensive uniting all the diverse trends of opinion in Australia and the world in support of this demand is the best way to bring pressure upon American imperialism.

This is also a political demand that confronts the new Gorton Government, an essential component of the united front of all possible trends in the labor, peace and democratic movements needed to mount an offensive against the policies it will pursue and the threats it presents to most Australians.
1907 WAS AN HISTORIC YEAR for the wage earners of Australia, for in that year Judge Higgins in his Harvester Judgment established what was to be the pattern of wage fixation for over half a century. Out of this Judgment came the two-part wage structure of basic wage and margins which was unique to Australia. 1967 was another just as historic year for the wage earners of Australia, for in that year the basic wage was abolished, the total wage was adopted, and the decision in the first full work-value case covering the Metal Trades' Award was handed down.

These events compel the trade union movement to rethink its wage policy, for it is now propelled into a new situation. The following analysis is therefore put forward to assist in developing some understanding of what has happened in order to facilitate the rethinking which has to take place.

The Executive of the Australian Council of Trades Unions at its meeting held in November, 1966, said, "We again declare that the basic wage is the cornerstone of the Australian wages system and the employers' attempt to abolish it should be strongly resisted". But the decision of the High Court handed down on 13th December, 1967, clearly demonstrated that even if it was a cornerstone, it had no legal foundation whatsoever. For the High Court rejected unanimously the application of the ACTU to have declared invalid the decision of the Arbitration Commission of July, 1967, to introduce the total wage and abolish the basic wage on the grounds that it had exceeded its powers.

The decision stated that although the Conciliation and Arbitration Act assumed that the Arbitration Commission would declare a basic wage, it did not command it to do so. Moreover, it would have been illegal for Parliament to command it, as this would have exceeded its constitutional powers relating to the making of laws for dealing with interstate industrial disputes. Nor did Parliament have the power to direct an arbitrator as to
how he should settle such a dispute as to wages, for the constitution required that the settlement of the dispute be left to the arbitrator. So he could consequently settle it in any way he wished, providing that it was within the requirements of the Act.

The trade union movement apparently regarded the basic wage as an immutable part of wage fixation by the arbitration system. This writer must honestly say that he accepted the existence of the basic wage as trustingly as anybody else in the trade union movement until the employers first move for a total wage raised a doubt, and was then astonished to find out that there was ample evidence that its lack of legal standing lay like a time bomb under it waiting to be triggered off.

The total wage concept was not a new concept to the old Arbitration Court and the present Arbitration Commission, as they apparently used it in their wage fixation calculations. This can be seen in the analysis in Table 1, which gives the relativity of the Fitters' and Assistants' total wage and marginal relativities in the Metal Trades Award at each basic wage and margins case, except for entries A, B, and C.

### Table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year Of Decision</th>
<th>Assistant's Percentage of Fitter's Rate (B/W Case)</th>
<th>Assistant's Percentage of Fitter's Rate (Margins Case)</th>
<th>Assistant's Percentage of Fitter's Margin</th>
<th>Year Of Decision</th>
<th>Assistant's Percentage of Fitter's Rate (B/W Case)</th>
<th>Assistant's Percentage of Fitter's Rate (Margins Case)</th>
<th>Assistant's Percentage of Fitter's Margin</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>84.2%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>1957</td>
<td>84.2%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1934</td>
<td>79.7%</td>
<td>22.2%</td>
<td>1958</td>
<td>84.5%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1935</td>
<td>79.0%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>1959</td>
<td>85.1%</td>
<td>30.2%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1937</td>
<td>79.6%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>1959</td>
<td>82.1%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1941</td>
<td>80.3%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>1961</td>
<td>82.6%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1946</td>
<td>81.7%</td>
<td>44.2%</td>
<td>1963</td>
<td>81.3%</td>
<td>30.1%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1947</td>
<td>82.2%</td>
<td>33.4%</td>
<td>1964</td>
<td>82.2%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>86.4%</td>
<td>34.1%</td>
<td>1965</td>
<td>83.0%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1953 A (89.9%)</td>
<td>82.0%</td>
<td>34.1%</td>
<td>1966</td>
<td>82.2%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1954</td>
<td>83.2%</td>
<td>30.6%</td>
<td>1967 B</td>
<td>82.5%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1956</td>
<td>83.7%</td>
<td>34.1%</td>
<td>1967 C</td>
<td>72.7%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A.—Quarterly adjustments basic wage abolished.
B.—First total wage.
C.—Work value total wage.
As can be seen from this table, a problem was created by the increase in the basic wage which gave proportionately more to the Assistant than to the Fitter, so upsetting the total wage relativity. The periodic margins cases therefore were used as a mechanism for restoring the total wage relativity, and in the postwar period they did this with remarkable consistency, for the relativity was maintained within a range of 2.4%. The 1953 and 1954 cases and the two 1959 cases demonstrate the operation of the mechanism most clearly.

In 1953, the total wage relativity had increased substantially to 89.9%, so drastic action had to be taken to pull it back towards the average. This was done by means of the abolition of the automatic adjustments in 1953, plus the margins decision of 1954, which gave 23/- to the tradesmen and nothing to the non-tradesman. The combined effect of these two decisions was to pull the total wage relativity back to 83.2%. By 1959, four increases in the basic wage had increased the total wage relativity to 85.1%, but the margins decision of 1959 pulled it back to 82.1%. The later percentage increases in margins of 10% in 1959, 28% in 1963, 1½% in 1965, and 1, 1½, 2 and 2½% in 1966, were mathematically those which were required to maintain the average total wage relativity in the face of basic wage increases.

It is difficult to believe that such consistency in the adjustment of total wage relativities when margins cases occurred was only accidental. In fact, because of the two-part structure this would be the only way of ensuring sufficient consistency of total wage relativities to give reasonable marginal stability to the wage structure.

In 1952, Conciliation Commissioner Galvin, in his decision in the Metal Trades Award Case made a number of comments on the need to look at the total wage when fixing margins. For example, “I see nothing either in the decisions of the Court on the basic wage or in the language of Section 13(B) of the Act itself which would prevent me from having regard to the whole wage sum when examining the marginal portion thereof.” This was, however, the only margins case where an increase was not granted, as Mr. Galvin refused to do so because of the fears of inflation. So on this occasion the usual adjustment of total wage relativities did not occur and it had to wait until 1953 and 1954.

It could well be asked why at this particular point of time the employers decided to press so strongly for the abolition of the two-part structure which had served them so well for over half a century, and for the adoption of the total wage. The compelling
reason to rethink their wage policy was caused by the big changes brought about by the expansion of the Australian economy in the post-war period. These have created what is now a national economy, witness the leader of the Financial Review of 2nd March, 1967, entitled "Australian Common Market," which stressed the need for the breaking down of State barriers to the establishment of the common market.

The total wage is the key to establishing a national wage to match the now national economy. At the lowest level it would lead to an eventual simplification of the present multiplicity of Federal and State wages for the same classification. The Arbitration Commission in its July 1967 pronouncement spoke of the possibility of abolishing the present locality differentials in the Metal Trades Award caused by differences in the previous basic wages. At present there are the three higher ones of 40c for Broken Hill 65c for Yallourn and Morwell, 50c at Whyalla and Iron Knob, and the lower one for Launceston of 40c less than Hobart. These amounts are quite a small proportion of a Fitter's total wage of around $53 so would not be difficult to eliminate, thus establishing the same Federal total wage throughout each State.

The next moves would then be the elimination of the differentials between the Federal total wages in the capital cities, and the levelling of these with the State total wages. These moves have problems, but the solution of them would be greatly assisted by the existence of the total wage. There now appears little question that it will not be long before all the States follow Victoria in adopting the total wage. This establishment of a common national wage is a long term project that need not be a matter of great concern to the trade unions providing it was not done at the expense of their members.

A more dangerous effect of the total wage to the trade unions is that it will facilitate the employers' drive to implement their full wage policy of a total wage adjusted only according to movements in national productivity. They have strongly pressed this aspect of their policy in past total wage cases, so it would be surprising if they abandoned it after such a resounding success in obtaining one leg of their policy. And in view of their success with achieving the total wage the trade unions should not be too sanguine that they have no hope of obtaining the other leg of their policy. The more immediate advantage the employers expect to obtain from the total wage is in the arguing of wage cases before the Arbitration Commission, for the total wage ends the situation where the unions had two bites at the cherry in basic
wage and margins cases, and confines argument to narrow economic grounds.

**The Metal Trades Award Work Value Inquiry**

After one of the most bizarre cases in the history of the Arbitration Commission a decision was handed down on 11th December, 1967, which fully confirmed the fears that such a case would be to the detriment of the non-tradesmen. For the decision granted the 47 base rate tradesmen in the Award their full claim of $7.40, which was by far the biggest increase ever granted and lifted their rates to $53.40 in Melbourne and $54.20 in Sydney.

The decision recognised the contention of the unions made over the years that skill was under-valued, but for the non-tradesmen it was a disaster. For despite the extensive and well-argued case put on their behalf, a few received no increase at all, most received only a $1 increase, and there was a big gap between the $7.40 for the tradesmen, and the biggest increase of $3.75 for the non-tradesmen.

The decision was a continuation of the thinking in the Interim Margins Decision of December, 1966, which was stated to be designed to widen the gap between tradesmen and non-tradesmen. The sample figures for Victoria in Table 2 clearly show the character of the disaster, for it sets a total wage relativity between tradesmen and practically all non-tradesmen below the previous lowest ever of 1935.

**TABLE 2.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>Fitter</th>
<th>Rigger</th>
<th>Assistant</th>
<th>Process Worker</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Previous Rate</td>
<td>$46.00</td>
<td>$43.85</td>
<td>$37.85</td>
<td>$37.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Rate</td>
<td>$53.40</td>
<td>$47.10</td>
<td>$38.85</td>
<td>$39.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase</td>
<td>$ 7.40</td>
<td>$ 3.25</td>
<td>$ 1.00</td>
<td>$ 1.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% age Claim granted</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>53.3%</td>
<td>21.9%</td>
<td>36.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Relativity</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>88.2%</td>
<td>72.7%</td>
<td>73.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Previous Relativity</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>95.5%</td>
<td>82.2%</td>
<td>81.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1935 Relativity</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>78.8%</td>
<td>78.1%</td>
<td>78.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The decision did little to clarify the mystique of work-value fixation as can be seen from Table 3, which gives recent assessments for the same metal classifications in different awards. For they prescribe widely varying rates for employees who receive the same training, exercise the same skills, do comparable work, and are fully interchangeable between the different industries.
TABLE 3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>Aircraft Industry 28-11-66</th>
<th>Metal Trades 11-12-67</th>
<th>Space Tracking 18-12-67</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Toolmaker</td>
<td>$54.20</td>
<td>$59.15</td>
<td>$52.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fitter</td>
<td>$51.20</td>
<td>$54.20</td>
<td>$50.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant</td>
<td>$39.40</td>
<td>$39.65</td>
<td>$42.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The only thing they do is confirm the comment of Commissioner E. R. Kelly of the Industrial Commission of Western Australia, in his work value decision of 27th May, 1965 (which granted a $4.30 increase to a Fitter), that "A work-value assessment is, in the final analysis, the opinion of the arbitrator concerned."

Perspectives For 1968

The three decisions relating to wages which have been briefly analysed, obviously present the trade union movement with some complex problems that call for the formulation of effective policies to cope with them. The Australian Council of Trade Unions will have need to consider a new wage policy appropriate to the era of wage fixation that it is entering.

The old complex prices and productivity formula approach is now bankrupt, as the base rate tradesman has received the full amount available to him under the formula, so according to the formula there are no further arbitration fields for him to conquer. It was creating problems even before now, for there was general dissatisfaction in 1965 about the paltry claim of a 12/- increase in the basic wage arrived at by the formula. In the light of the work value decision it is interesting that it was criticism from the left which brought about a stretching of the formula to its limit in order to produce a decent claim. If that had not been done the ambit for the work value claim could have been less than the $7.40, and consequently the tradesmen would have received less than they actually did.

The total wage decision raises the question of the tactics to be adopted in the wages struggle. The employers expect with justification that it will put them in an advantageous position in arguing wage claims before the Arbitration Commission. It would therefore be fatal for the trade unions to accept that as their union battleground, as it would give the employers a big tactical advantage. The unions should therefore shift their main battleground to the workshops where they can have the tactical advantage. In any case the implementation of the decision will compel that shift to be made.
For one thing, two major contentious questions arising out of the total wage decision are those of absorption and the flow to other awards, as the employers will fight strenuously to ensure one and prevent the other so that the decision will cost them close to nothing. The Commission has bluntly stated that there should be absorption of the increase in over-award payments, but has put the responsibility on to the employers of ensuring that the increases will be absorbed. The ACTU on the other hand is adamant that there shall be no absorption. Already, at the beginning of January, stoppages of work in support of trade union policy have taken place and big meetings of shop delegates to plan future action are being organised.

The Commission has stated categorically that there shall be no flow of the decision to other awards. This question has not yet been resolved. In the past decisions on metal trades margins quickly flowed into other industries, with the result that considerable numbers of other workers benefited by wage increases. Now, it seems, the workers in other industries will have to take action if they are to obtain increases in wages corresponding to those in the recent metal trades work-value case. The shift of emphasis of the wages struggle to the workshops is also made necessary as it now is the only avenue for improving the position of non-tradesmen. So far as arbitration argument is concerned the situation emphasises the importance of a policy of a "family living wage" as the minimum wage in awards as the way forward for non-tradesmen.

A positive aspect of the total wage decision is that it could open up the way to achieving the major wage objective of equal pay, although precautions would have to be taken to avoid the swindle that was worked on this in New South Wales on the semantics of "equal pay for equal work."

All these major wage questions will have to be resolved in the uncertain economic and political climate created by the devaluation of sterling, the cut in overseas investments of US and British capital; increasing defence expenditure; and the loss of primary production caused by the serious droughts in the south-eastern States. 1968 will therefore be a test of the quality of the leadership given to the trade union movement by the left, right and centre at ACTU, Trades and Labor Councils and workshop levels, and their ability to produce positive policies.
DE Valuation and Dollar Curbs

R. Dixon

In 1968 the Australian economy will face two new pressures—the effect of British devaluation of the pound sterling and the subsequent United States restrictions on dollar investment abroad. Richard Dixon considers where these pressures will be felt and suggests some alternatives to those generally offered.

The devaluation of the British pound and the drastic economic measures of the United States Government to save the dollar from the same fate, raises the question of Australia's economic position and the problems we are likely to face in the future. The economic measures taken by Britain, and the US, the two strongest capitalist powers, are likely to extend and prolong the financial crisis that has gripped the capitalist world. In trying to overcome their economic problems they complicate the position of other countries. As these countries—Singapore, Australia, Japan, France and many others—take measures to protect and bolster up their own economies, we can expect economic instability to grow in the capitalist world.

Although there has been a marked tendency for the Australian press to play down the financial crisis, its impact on Australia is likely to be considerable. Already it has had the effect of bringing into the open the divisions on economic policies within the Liberal-Country Party coalition. Mr. McEwen was overseas when Federal Cabinet had devaluation of the British pound under consideration. He could have returned to Australia within 24 hours but for tactical reasons, apparently, preferred to remain away. According to reports Federal Cabinet's decision not to devalue the Australian dollar was strongly advocated by the Treasurer, Mr. McMahon, and resisted by those Country Party Ministers who were present.

In the past, because of Australia's dependence on Britain, devaluation of the British pound was immediately followed by devaluation of the Australian currency. The reasons advanced by the Government for not following Britain and devaluing on this occasion was that the Australian economy today is stronger
and more widely based. Also, the pattern of trade has changed so that Australia is less dependent on the British market now than formerly. Further, it was suggested that devaluation of the dollar would not be helpful to Britain as it would nullify the contribution Australia could make to Britain's attempt to improve its balance of payments position. A major reason, that received little attention however, was the role of the United States. To an increasing extent Australia has become tied to US imperialism. Today this country's international policies are based more on the economic and political policies of the US than of Britain, and this was a major influence in the decision not to devalue the dollar. It is another indication of the weakening ties of Empire, now starkly emphasised by Britain's accelerated withdrawal from the East and elsewhere.

Mr. McEwen set out the Country Party case on his return from overseas. In his sharp, critical statement he pointed out that the Government's decision not to devalue, in effect, meant that the Australian dollar was revalued upward in relation to the British pound. This would result, he claimed, in a "giant disability" for export industries dependent on the British market, wool, sugar, butter. Where these and other exports were under a contract price in sterling, the payment for them would be in devalued British pounds, which are 14.3 per cent less in terms of the Australian dollar, so the producer would lose money. As for products not governed by contracts, their prices would have to rise by 14.3 per cent in British currency and this seemed unlikely. Even before the devaluation, prices of wool and some other rural exports were falling, so the producer stood to lose.

Mr. McEwen also said that because of devaluation of the pound British manufactured products would now sell on the Australian and other markets at lower prices in terms of dollars, and therefore, in stronger competition with Australian manufacturing industries. New stresses, he claimed, will be placed on the Australian balance of payment, and on overseas reserves. Mr. McEwen was mainly concerned with defending various primary and manufacturing interests. He did not specifically call for a rejection of the Government's decision on devaluation, which would have split the Government, but insisted upon the establishment of a "special authority" to assess the effects of the British devaluation on primary and secondary industries, and on the basis of its reports, financial compensation to be paid by the Government to the interests concerned.

On December 15, 1967, following a Cabinet meeting, the Government issued a statement defending its decision not to devalue
the dollar, but accepting all of Mr. McEwen's demands. A committee was established to examine the effect of devaluation of the British pound on rural industries. A special inquiry will be undertaken into the Dairy industry to "re-structure" it, which means to eliminate the poorer farms. Thirty million dollars compensation will be paid to the Wheat Board. Urgent aid for the canned fruit industry will be examined. The export problems of the manufacturing industry and the provision of extra tariff protection to meet stiffer competition will also be looked into.

Mr. McEwen's attack against the Government's decision on British devaluation was clearly a blow at the Treasurer, Mr. McMahon, who initiated the move not to devalue the dollar. It showed how deep and far reaching the division within the Government on economic policy is, and how shaky the Liberal-Country Party coalition has become. Later, after the death of Mr. Holt, Mr. McEwen made his dramatic declaration that he and other Country Party Ministers would not serve under Mr. McMahon in a coalition government. This was a crushing blow to Mr. McMahon's personal ambitions to become Prime Minister but it also spelt out even more clearly the sharp and deep differences within the coalition.

Far reaching decisions on both the external and internal economic position of Australia will soon have to be taken by the Gorton Government. These will include payment of compensation and the assistance demanded by Mr. McEwen for rural and manufacturing industries affected by the British devaluation, Australia's balance of payments position and internal economic policy. Whether the coalition government can reconcile its differences sufficiently to survive these problems remains to be seen.

United States and British measures to try and correct their balance of payment deficits and restore their countries' flagging economies will make the Australian position more difficult than ever. Australia's overseas financial reserves were down to $1,145.6 m. in December, and it is now estimated that they will fall to about $900 m. by the end of June, 1968. If this happens Australia's overseas reserves will have fallen almost to a level previously considered dangerous by the Government and its financial advisers. Continuation of the downward trend would mean that the Government, if it follows past practice, will resort to recessive measures aimed at reducing consumption demand and imports.

Australia's balance of payments problem is notoriously difficult. In the year 1966-67 there was a trading surplus of $94 m. but
after accounting for the so-called invisible items — i.e., shipping freights, insurance, profits to overseas companies, and other payments — our balance of payments were in deficit by $120 m. In the current year the trading position is already more difficult and shows a deficit of $34.5 m. to the end of December. What with the drought, which will affect rural exports, falling wool prices and the tougher trading conditions overseas, and the rise in shipping freights, the deficit on trade could very well multiply.

In recent years the Government has looked increasingly to the flow of overseas capital into Australia, mainly from Britain and the United States, to improve its balance of payments position. Canberra figures show that in 1965-66 foreign investment amounted to $658 m. In 1966-67 the amount of $488 m. was down $150 m. There is little doubt that Government hopes for a surplus in the 1966-67 overseas balances were dashed by the earlier curbs imposed by both the British and US Governments on foreign investment.

What is to happen now? The flow of British capital into Australia, following devaluation and the new restraint on capital exports, will decline to a mere trickle. The US decisions are also far reaching. The Johnson administration has imposed a mandatory cut-back to 65 per cent. of the total 1965-66 investment for a group of countries which includes Australia, Japan, Canada, Britain and others. It has called upon companies with investments abroad to repatriate more of the profits they make. It decided to reduce dollar loans (Australia has raised a series of loans in the US in recent years), and to cut US tourist travel and spending abroad. The combined effect of these curbs will seriously weaken the Australian balance of payments position.

There is a strong and growing body of opinion in Australia opposed to the Government’s policy of encouraging unlimited foreign investment. Already many industries vital to our future are owned by foreign interests. Australia’s great natural resources, oil, iron ore, bauxite and other minerals, are very largely in the control of US and other foreign monopoly concerns. Each year a growing volume of profits from those industries is transferred to overseas monopolies. Now another dangerous feature of the Government’s policy on foreign capital investment is revealed, i.e., the growing dependence on the inflow of foreign capital to balance Australia’s external payments. The sudden reduction of this capital inflow has created a serious financial position for us. The crisis in Britain and the US is, thus, extended to Australia.
The financial crisis of Britain and the United States has its basis in economic decay and the decline in the rates of growth of most capitalist countries. World trade has fallen and unemployment is increasing. Another important factor, which applies particularly to Britain, United States and Australia, is the growing strain that the foreign and military policies of their Governments impose on their payment position.

On coming to power the Labor Government in Britain could have improved the economic situation by reducing Britain’s heavy foreign military commitments East of Suez, in the Middle East and in Europe. Instead of this the Wilson Government imposed a wage freeze that has reduced the standard of living. It took recessive measures which has resulted in nearly a million unemployed. The Labor Government’s measures inevitably failed to correct the economic situation. The heavy drain on resources to maintain overseas military bases and commitments was too much for the ailing British economy. Now that the damage is done and the Labor Party has lost much of the mass support that swept it into office, it is being forced by the financial crisis to reduce overseas military expenditure all along the line.

United States imperialism has a similar problem. The cruel and dirty war it is waging in Vietnam is costing in the vicinity of $US2,000 m. a month, a part of which enters into US external payments. The maintenance of huge military forces and bases in Japan, Europe, the Mediterranean and in other parts of the world also builds up the excessive overseas dollar expenditure. Playing the role of world policeman against national liberation movements and other revolutionary activities is a very costly business. The Johnson administration proposes to cut its overseas military expenditure by $US500 m., but there is to be no reduction of military expenditure for the Vietnam aggression.

In the case of Australia, Government defence expenditure has grown, under successive Liberal-Country Party Governments, from $400 m. in 1963 to $1,118 m. in the current year. This rapid rise in military spending was associated with growing intervention in countries of South East Asia, which reached its most dangerous point in the decision to commit Australian military forces in Vietnam in support of US aggression. On top of the financial burden of its Vietnam-South East Asian policies, the Government has committed Australia to heavy expenditures for the purchase of war materials in the United States. These will rise, according to the Treasurer, Mr. McMahon, to $350 m. this year, which is 11 per cent. of Australia’s export earnings. In his budget speech
last year Mr. McMahon said that these military expenditures were nearing danger point for the economy. He said this when the Government was expecting a substantial capital inflow from the US, which would have helped offset the cost of the military purchases in the US. Now it appears, the Government’s expectations will not be realised. Mr. McEwen was aware of this when, as Prime Minister, he urged President Johnson’s special envoy to Australia, E. V. Rostow, that the US Government should give special consideration to Australian claims for easing the dollar restrictions because of the heavy cost of military purchases in the US.

There is no doubt the Australian people are paying a high price for the right-wing policies of the Coalition Government and the indications are that the price will rise still higher. If balance of payments difficulties grow, and this is to be expected, what will be the policy of the Government?

Already there are signs that the Government is shaping up to impose recessive measures. The Financial Review of January 11, 1968, in a careful assessment of the situation suggests that “money will become tight” this year. It expects the Reserve Bank to take financial measures that will result in a credit squeeze. We know, from experience, that as finance tightens up unemployment grows. On wages the Minister for Labor and Industry Mr. Bury came forward to insist that increases granted in the Metal Trades work-value case should be absorbed in current over-award payment and that there should be no flowing over of the increases into other industries. Social services are in decay with pensioners barely existing, and hospital and medical benefits in virtual chaos because of Government financial neglect.

The Gorton Government is trying to maintain the previous policies of the coalition, which have had bad results for Australia. The Government is not in a strong position, indeed it is weak. It has lost control of the Senate. The coalition is in disarray and hangs together precariously. The struggle in the Liberal Party for leadership has left wounds that are not easy to heal. The Labor Party shows signs of resurgence and improved its vote at the recent Senate elections.

Pressures are coming from the labor movement, the youth and from other sections of the people seeking changes in policy, for a new line of advance for Australia to take. What is needed is wider and more developed discussions among all these forces in order to reach clarity and more agreement on future policy, on the best way to build unity and to develop the mass movement for change.
DISCUSSION:

Dialogue on dialogue

FROM ANATHEMA TO DIALOGUE,
by Roger Garaudy.
Collins, 124 pp, $3.15.

ANATHEMA is an appropriate word to include in the title of any book dealing with the relationship between Christianity and marxism. The Vatican decree of 1870 asserting Papal infallibility concluded with the words "If anyone presume to contradict this our definition: let him be anathema". Thus the Roman Catholic church continued its war against civilization, materialism and all the lures and false philosophies which lead to damnation. And that was what would come to all who would not heed the warning: nothing less than anathema and consignment to hell. Of course time has changed the force of the curse but many Christians would still apply the term anathema to Communism.

Still I doubt if many Christians can consider the relationship between religion and marxism without recalling Marx's rankling comment that "Religion is the opium of the people". In a single sentence he pronounced a historical anathema upon a religion which considered itself to have a nobler future than opium.

To many to-day the confrontation is still delightfully simple. It is between a religion which concerns itself with the higher things in man and his ultimate non-material future and which flourishes best in a Western society and an atheistic philosophy which sees religion as little more than the superstructure to a dated system of material relations and a hindrance to the improvement of man's condition.

That a mutual hurling of anathemas should cause any damage to either side is until sought of by the hurlers.

Of course it does cause damage; it reveals the shortsightedness of both the Christian and the marxist, it assumes that there is no need for dialogue and that there never will be. Marxists assume that flux is the essence of history and yet they retain rigid attitudes towards religion. Religion is not fossilized in history, a permanent brake on progress. Christians, likewise, do not apply any rule of hope to marxists. Thus they deny the role that marxists have in drawing attention to the evil and deceptions of society, they deny any common cause with what seems to be acknowledged evil. Yet there are obviously causes in which there is latently no conflict between marxist and Christian and yet where violent conflict exists. On the surface dialogue would seem to be essential and possible. In recent years dialogue has begun.

Professor Garaudy's book examines the nature of this dialogue. The author is a leading marxist theorist and, as the cover states, "an influential member" of the central committee of the French Communist Party. He has participated in the dialogue and thus has some idea of the issues involved. The form of the book shows the change which the title suggests. It is arranged into three sections; an Introduction by a Jesuit, Father Rahner, two chapters by Garaudy on "The Realization of What is Basic by Christians" and "The Realization of What is Basic by Marxists" and an afterword by Father J. B. Metz. Each section deals with problems raised in
dialogue. As is suggested by the chapter headings, the authors seek to find similarities between Christians and marxists on the assumption that these common grounds will lead to further contact and dialogue. This dialogue shows part of the process by which two opposing groups are becoming aware of some of the common problems of our times.

Garaudy recognises that many of the difficulties of a dialogue stem from suspicion and intransigence and tries to counter these. It is plain that in our society, and in ones like ours, social hostility and suspicion is a deterrent to dialogue. Christians who communicate with communists are regarded by their often religiously indifferent brethren as being dupes. In many ways society proclaims an anathema which has more force than the anathema put forward by organized religion. Garaudy attempts to dull some of the suspicions of Christians by taking the experiences of the Catholic church in Poland and the USSR. He argues that true religion is possible in these countries because it has been wrested from the hands of the feudal and tsarist regimes. It is no longer a tool of oppression but one of liberation. This is how it ought to be and perhaps how it is, but Garaudy’s bald theoretical statements do not really tell us much about what is. Surely the logical starting place for any dialogue would be in the Socialist countries of Europe, yet if there is dialogue in these countries then it is not mentioned in this book.

Thus he fails to answer the nagging conviction of many Christians—that marxism as a philosophy of revolution ultimately leads to the destruction of religion. Another problem that remains unsolved is the belief that religion might be an opium which can be used adeptly by any state whether it be capitalist or socialist.

It is important to note that many of these suspicions originate from the fact that both philosophies have influenced men in creating institutions and that these are by no means models of the philosophies which led to their creation.

Paradoxically the inadequacies of these institutions have helped promote dialogue. As Professor Garaudy points out, both the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the Roman Catholic Church have undergone an examination of conscience in recent years. He is referring of course to the Twentieth Congress of the CPSU and the Vatican Council. Both Church and Party have an idea of the future yet this idea has often been frustrated by an inability to recognise the conditions of the present and the nature of man. Religion, in particular, has encouraged indifference to the social conditions of the times and has merely comforted the people and made a virtue of suffering. It has covered social evils. Likewise marxists have held the ingenuous belief that the building of socialism is only a simple transition from “syllogism to idyll”, and have ignored the “road of agony which lies between the dramatic epic of five-year plans and the tragedies of self-management”. One could add much more.

Garaudy makes the obvious point that one of the essential pre-requisites for the continuerc success of both Christianity and marxism is continual self-criticism and renewal. His thesis is that dialogue is an astringent to both marxist and Christian. They acquire some conception of the realities of action and lose the blindness that closed systems of ideology sometimes induce.

The author believes that Christians have had to examine their beliefs in recent years because of three main historical changes. Firstly, the develop-
ments in science have again led Christians to relate their religion to the empirical knowledge of the scientist and to attempt to de-mythologize their religion. Secondly, the success of the socialist revolutions in Europe and throughout the world has led to an examination of the position of the Christian in a Socialist society. Thirdly, the liberation of colonial peoples has led to the re-birth of non-European cultures and religions. These events have, he thinks, led to some purification of religion, history has caught up with it.

Of course the change is slow. It is reflected in the works and thoughts of Rudolf Bultmann, Pere Teilhard de Chardin and Bishop John Robinson. In their own ways they have attempted to remove much of the myth from Christianity and work out what is essential in it. They have, the author implies, attempted to isolate the timeless values of Christianity from the values that it has picked up in its history. Basically they adopt the attitude that Christianity reflects the age of its birth and it is expressed in the myths and philosophical structures of its time. As it developed it adopted other philosophical structures—such as Thomism. Because it was associated with the state after Constantine it acquired a social philosophy and function—the type of function which was removed in the USSR after the Revolution. The task at present is thus to bring Christianity into modern times, to integrate it into “the general trend of mankind”. Then men can see what Christianity is. The marxist with his scientific conception of history can help the Christian immerse himself in a present which is not alien to him; by dialogue the Christian can gain knowledge of the nature of the world. To Garaudy, the Christian is blind if he does not see the value of dialogue.

Similarly he believes that marxism must change with the times and that Christianity can provide it with some of the motives for change. Marxism, like all scientific models, must be verified by experience. Recent years have shown that there is no true model of socialism which can be implemented without modification, just as there is no one model of Christianity. Marxism can become as alienated as Christianity if there is no self criticism. There is always a dialectic between relative and absolute truth in all such institutions, this leads to a plurality of forms.

Thus the anti-Christian Socialism of one time may not be the Socialism which suits another time. Christianity may have been a tool for the enslavement of man. However it may be a source of his advancement in the future. Garaudy believes therefore that marxists should be open and recognise the possibility and need for dialogue with Christians.

He is very enthusiastic about the long-range prospects of dialogue. Perhaps his most impressive thesis is that there are bases “for a common struggle by Communists and Catholics, for a noble rivalry between them in the human contest”. Both have an idea of man which posits a better future for him in this world and both see the world as, in some way, the work of man. Both have a moral interest in the creation of a classless society because, as Gorki wrote: “It is Communists alone, which will create the true conditions of society in which love will cease to be a promise, or a moral law, and will become the objective law of the entire society”. In many ways these words provide a summary of Garaudy’s views and hopes.

These, then, are some of his main ideas. This is a difficult book to read simply because it is sometimes diffi-
cult to find a coherent theme. Garaudy seems to be concerned with presenting sketchily the main issues of the dialogue. He throws out many strands of argument and leaves the reader holding them. Some of his statements are excessively hopeful and utopian but they do provide thought for dialogue. One feels that he might have drawn some distinction between ideas and institutions. If this is a book dealing with the common bases of dialogue between marxist theorists and Christian theologians, then he should not confuse and interchange terms such as “Christian” and “Catholic”, “Communist” and “marxist”, without any apparent qualifications. Such flaws tend to leave gaps in his thesis which are hard to justify. Surely dialogue demands more than just a capacity to blur difficulties and distinctions.

Professor Garaudy’s book is an interesting document illustrating some of the tendencies in contemporary Marxist-Christian dialogue. It is both optimistic and tentative. If the reader is expecting some sort of account of recent relationships between Christianity and marxism in their institutional forms he will be disappointed, this is a book for the theorist. Such an institutional account has yet to come.

T. Nash

FRENCH ASSESSMENTS

THE FOLLOWING IS an extract from Cahiers du Communisme, 7-8, 1967, in which a series of writers, under the heading “On Some Questions of Philosophy”, discuss Roger Garaudy’s recently published work, 20th Century Marxism.

While most of the writers are critical of the work—some of them sharply so—it is notable that all pay unstinted tribute to Garaudy’s work in the development of dialogue between marxists and Christians.

The following is the only substantial part of the whole discussion in which the question of dialogue crops up in connection with criticisms of 20th Century Marxism.

It occurs in the long essay written by Jean Kanapa. After accusing Garaudy of “a certain wavering between the requirements of relativism and the blandishments of eclecticism” in his discussion of the philosophical notion of concepts, Kanapa goes on: Many other pages of the work, notably those devoted to religion, would seem to call for similar observations.

To take an example touching on one of the most important questions: R. Garaudy rightly remarks that the historically unprecedented acceleration of the development of science and technique, and the very form of this development, “are leading many Christians to re-think their conception of the world”. As a result, such Christians are endeavouring to “dissociate what is fundamental in their faith from the outdated conceptions of the world through which this faith has been traditionally expressed.” From this R. Garaudy concludes: “Thus, there emerges more and more clearly a distinction between religion as ideology and world view, as the cultural form taken by religious belief at one or another stage of historical development, and religious belief itself”.

If this statement refers to the attempt by certain Christians to dissociate, even to place in opposition one to another, their religious belief as they personally experience it, and the form of belief offered by their religion embodied as a church and a theology, then it is true. (This is actually one of the forms of the decay of the church in the socialist countries.)

But if it means that one is acknowledging the real possibility of a dis-
tinction between belief and religion, the statement can only be challenged. The dissociation made by Christians is not between religion and faith, but between a form and content of religious belief (offered to them by their church), and another form and content of religious belief (lived by them personally). It is a matter no less in one case than in the other of a belief which has ideological content and which bears the fundamental features of any religion. To postulate a faith devoid of all religious ideological content is arbitrarily to change the sense of words. And of concepts.

R. Garaudy seeks to justify himself, in another passage, by asserting that a marxist can understand what faith is as soon as he finds himself "at that point where he acknowledges that it is one and the same thing to acknowledge that the world makes sense and to hold oneself responsible for its meaning. Such an engagement of our entire being, theoretically and practically, is traditionally called faith". Now, it is at the very least difficult to accept that religious faith holds man "responsible" for the meaning of the world (a transcendent God plays this role). It is moreover clear that one never really thinks simply that the world "makes sense", but that it makes this or that sense (including the sense of making no sense at all). There is no "engagement" as such, but always engagement in action with this or that objective. The judgment one makes on the meaning of the world, the line of action one takes possesses therefore this or that ideological content. The Christian's belief carries within it an ideological content of a religious nature and this by definition. The engagement of the active communist carries within it a profoundly different conception of the world, of a non-religious nature. It is saying almost nothing to suggest an analogy between their own "faiths".

Likewise, when we read: "Just as it is said: the depth of faith, in a believer, depends on the strength of the atheist he carries within himself, we can also say the depth of humanity, in an atheist, depends on the strength of the believer he carries within himself". It is difficult indeed to accept as a fruit of dialectical reasoning this analogy which is redolent of the commonplace "everyone knows there is something of the atheist about the believer, and something of the believer about the marxist". This type of talk belongs to the "philosophy" of common sense, which certainly tends to reconcile contradictions but which, it must be said, takes no account whatever either of the ideological (scientific) content of marxism, or of the motivation of the marxist.

To take R. Garaudy's proposition literally one would have to conclude that the more the believer is a believer, the more he is an atheist; and that inversely the more the humanist is a humanist, the more of a believer he will be. The distortion here is not in the conclusion, but in the premises.

If, in connection with this formulation of R. Garaudy's, as with a number of others, one did not make allowance precisely for the formulation, one would be tempted to feel impatient at seeing real dialectical relationships reduced to a kind of exchange of civilities. The concern to understand others—and Garaudy devotes himself to this matter with a tenacity and a talent which command respect—ought not to lead to the casting off of one's own personality.

* "Faith ... is the last thing communism needs for its application", wrote Marx and Engels in 1846 in the Circular Against Kriege. The authentic text of this document represents a source of interesting reflections on these questions.
SYDNEY EXPERIENCE

AUSTRALIAN LEFT REVIEW (No. 6, December 1967) made an important contribution with its series of articles under the heading, Marxist-Christian dialogue.

The late Dean of Canterbury in his book Christians and Communism, notes that Communists base themselves on the philosophy of 'dialectical materialism', and strongly challenges the view that Communists should be damned in the eyes of Christians because they are "materialistic."

This question of marxism's "materialistic" views came up in an evening dialogue with two Catholic priests, a Methodist clergyman and a number of young Christians and Communists in Sydney recently. One young Christian said somewhat challengingly, "Dialogue and co-operation is one thing but we cannot compromise on basic beliefs."

Nor do communists seek impossible ideological compromises. The fact must be squarely faced that marxism is based on a materialist standpoint. In dialogue it cannot be glossed over or conveniently ignored. But—as the plain speaking young Christian at our dialogue agreed—it can be calmly and sensibly discussed while at the same time it need not and should not be made an all exclusive focal point posed against dialogue and possible co-operation around wide areas of potential agreement, affecting the peace, security and moral advancement of man.

Together with a positive approach on points of potential unity, marxism, clearly states its basic differences with religion. As Marx and Engels showed (and modern marxists affirm) religion holds the view that man is governed by supernatural forces beyond his control. Marxism, however, holds that there are no independent entities existing outside of space and time.

Marxism fully recognises the existence and important role of the mind, or in other words, the spirit of man. It sees matter as primary and spiritual qualities as related to, and derived from, the material—in turn reflecting back upon and influencing the material.

Briefly, these are the differences, but an important facet of the marxist approach is that, at all stages, it has stood for unity for the brotherhood and advancement of all people regardless of religion or race.

Another important aspect is that marxism has always noted the inherent positive content of Christianity. It has noted that while institutionalised religion has sought to uphold the Establishment, to sanctify and protect the rights of the privileged against the people there is also the opposite tendency in which the humanist base of religious teaching is deeply concerned with the rights of people, with the welfare of man.

Engels makes this clear in his essay entitled On the History of Early Christianity. It included this pertinent passage:

"The history of early Christianity has notable points of resemblance with the modern working class movement. Like the latter, Christianity was originally a movement of oppressed people; it first appeared as the religion of slaves and emancipated slaves, of poor people deprived of all rights, of people subjugated or dispersed by Rome. Both Christianity and the workers' socialism preach forthcoming salvation from bondage and misery; Christianity places this in a life beyond, after death, in heaven; socialism places it in this world, in a transformation of society. Both are persecuted and baited, their adherents are despised and made the objects of exclusive laws, the former as enemies..."
of the human race, the latter as enemies of the state, enemies of religion, the family, social order. And in spite of all persecution, nay, even spurred on by it, they forge victoriously, irresistibly ahead. Three hundred years after its appearance Christianity was the recognised state religion in the Roman World Empire, and in barely sixty years socialism has won itself a position which makes its victory absolutely certain."

And what of the full context of the "opium" reference? This quote is from Marx's essay of 1844—Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right. With the prospect of expanding the dialogue process it is perhaps useful to put the full context of the two relevant passages on record.

"Religious distress is at the same time the expression of real distress and the protest against real distress. Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world, just as it is the spirit of a spiritless situation. It is the opium of the people.

"The abolition of religion as the illusory happiness of the people is required for their real happiness. The demand to give up the illusions about its condition is the demand to give up a condition which needs illusions. The criticism of religion is therefore in embryo the criticism of the vale of woe, the halo of which is religion."

Thus, study in context shows that in the very sector containing the "opium" reference, Marx also shows that "protest against real distress" is an important other aspect of religion.

It is true that there have been distortions in the practical and theoretical work of the world labor movement since Marx and Engels first wrote on the marxist attitude to religion a century ago. These need to be faced, combated and eradicated.

But it is also true that responsibility for this problem does not rest with marxists alone. At periods in history, including relatively recent history, the predominant role of Church has frequently been to serve as a bulwark to reaction while the other aspect, the protest potential of Christianity has been almost entirely muted.

This contradiction remains today. But the most essential thing is that the positive, protest aspect is on the rise.

In America, Catholic priests, Jewish rabbis and Protestant ministers have been in the fore of marches and demonstrations for the cause of Negro freedom. They have faced racist violence and murder and stayed in the fight. Similarly, the moral issues involved in the wholesale murder of Vietnamese men, women and children have seen followers and leaders of the Church vigorously in the forefront.

In Australia, too, church leaders and followers are increasingly active in different sectors of the peace and progressive movements.

The changes within the Catholic Church are particularly noteworthy. There has been the famous Pacem in Terris of Pope John XXIII. There has been the marked degree of change in the Church's social doctrines from Leo XIII's Rerum Novarum ("New Things"), the quite conservative encyclical of 1891, to the comparatively liberal Populorum Progressio ("Advance of man" or "Progress of the Peoples") encyclical issued by Pope Paul in 1967. (For an informative essay on this subject—see The Encyclical 'Populorum Progression by Libero Pierantozzi, Peace, Freedom and Socialism, No. 6, 1967.)
For too long in Australia there have tended to be divisions among the Australian people on religious grounds. These have been fanned by extremists on both sides. They have played quite a serious part in holding back the potential and need for unity in the labor movement, the peace and progressive movements of the Australian people generally.

Such divisions do not benefit the ordinary people. They benefit the forces of privilege against the people. They impede the interests of peace and accelerate the already dangerous rapid world drift towards nuclear calamity. They hold back the rich possibilities for social, cultural and moral advance.

If the process of dialogue can assist to overcome these divisions; to make it more difficult for extremists to set Christian against Communist; to set religious unionists or peace workers against the materialist left winger, it will have performed a practical service of far reaching importance.

The marxist attitude is clearly that the “believer” and the “non-believer” can find common ground for advancement of man.

Indeed, room for such co-operation exists within the Communist Party itself. Italy provides a striking example. Approximately two million Italians are members of the Communist Party yet, according to a 1963 estimate of Palmiro Togliatti, the late general secretary of the Italian Party, “probably the majority of the total number of members are believers.”

Joint action and association between believer and non-believer for such objectives as peace and economic security can clearly be achieved without demanding, (or pretending to achieve) unreal compromise between the basic materialist philosophy of marxism and the spiritual stand of Christianity.

It simply means joint readiness to seek more realistic attitudes that place appropriate emphasis on mutual search for paths to serve both man’s immediate moral and material needs and to help guarantee fulfilment of his ultimate destiny in a world seriously threatened with nuclear extinction.

For their part, there is growing evidence that Australian marxists are prepared to adopt a flexible readiness to listen and learn from other people’s ideas free from dogmatic and sectarian attitudes. What degree of success can be achieved remains to be tested in further development of Australian dialogue.

W. J. BROWN

NOT THAT HE NEEDS DEFENDING

IT IS understandable that the academicians of literature, history, anthropology and folklore should either denigrate the work of Robert Graves or try to hush it up. That anyone not similarly tethered to the job of preserving things as they are should do the same is unaccountable except on the grounds of ignorance.

Graves is no johnny-come-lately. He has produced a hundred books in fifty years, all of very high standard and all uncommonly diverse. Poems, translations and lectures on poetry; autobiography; plays, short stories and essays; history and historical novels; studies in anthropology and mythology; satires; science-fiction; criminology; a collection of folk-ballads; a highly original opera-libretto. The diversity is astonishing, and the high standard is indisputable.

Name Graves, and at once the military historian thinks of his Lawrence and the Arabs; the murder-fancier thinks of They Hanged My Saintly
Billy; the old soldier thinks with gratitude of Goodbye To All That; and probably the philatelist thinks of Antigua Penny Puce. To every reader, his own aspect of Graves; but Graves thinks of himself as a poet, and that is both fundamental and fundamentally right. It is the mind of a poet that informs and unifies this vast and varied output—the mind of a man to whom beauty is inseparable from truth.

Truth is a slippery word. One can speak of scientific truths, moral truths, truth meaning fidelity, truth to one’s word, and the meaning alters a little bit each time the context changes. But it is the poet’s job to wrestle with this slippery Thetis until she relents and melts into human shape to become the mother of immortal children.

Graves in prose is concerned with establishing or re-establishing historical truths about, for instance, Milton, matriarchy, mushrooms, or the War of American Independence. This has made him a thorn in the pillow of those who prefer sanctified lies.

Graves in verse is still more deeply concerned with emotional truth, truth-to-experience. He avoids tub-thumping, tear-jerking and affectation as fastidiously as a cat avoids mud. Some readers find his verse “dry”, and I think he would not resent the epithet. A good Hock or an Amontillado is dry in the same sense: not adulterated with glucose or treacle.

At present he is being quite widely misreported as having said that poetry is, or should be, written only for poets. What he actually did say, in the preface to Poems 1938-1945, was: “I write poems for poets, and satires and grotesques for wits; for people in general I write prose.” There is quite a difference between “Poetry is . . .” or “Poetry should be . . .” and “I write . . .”

The actual statement makes good sense on several different planes of meaning. His poetry is “for poets” in the sense that it will pass the strictest professional inspection for honesty, clarity, brevity and technical skill. He makes no attempt to please Church or State, moralists, recruiting-sergeants or polic...en. T. S. Eliot may write platitudes for parsons, Ezra Pound may write filth for fascists, Dylan Thomas may stack on his thunderous double-talk act to impress innocents and simpletons; but Graves writes poems for poets.

The people who are indignant at the notion of Graves writing for poets are presumably under the impression that poets write, or should write, “for everybody.” But this has never been possible; and it is less than ever possible in a sharply-stratified class society. Most living Australian poets would be horrified at the notion of writing for Menzies or Brigadier Spry. Burns certainly did not write for the unco guid. Paterson deliberately ignored the fashionable literary circles of Sydney in his day. And in writing “for poets” Graves is clearly not writing for the Pound-worshippers, the beatniks, the Thomas-fanciers or even the Catholic poets of today.

Graves has in fact given a much less elliptical definition of his audience, and of any poet’s audience, in the fifth of his Clarke lectures, 1954-55. He defines it as “the widest possible extension of the circle of the poet’s potential friends.” And he adds the warning that a poet who tries to win a larger public than this by writing down to it is guilty of professional misconduct.

It seems strange to me that people should have made more fuss about this merely verbal crux than about the fact that he wrote The White Goddess. In this startling book, a prose work written with a poet’s insight,
Graves re-establishes the truths that Lewis Morgan and Federick Engels discovered about matriarchy and primitive communism. He has dispersed the conspiracy of silence in which academic anthropologists have long buried the question, and started a thoroughly enjoyable and lively fight over it.

It would be a waste of time to wonder whether my enjoyment of Graves' poems springs from my being a poet or from being a potential friend of the poet. I am far more absorbed and enlivened by his beautifully documented demonstration that every genuine poet has the right and the duty to declare himself an enemy both of God and of Mammon.

JOHN MANIFOLD

TOWN PLANNING?

The publication of Organisation for Strategic Planning by the Town and Country Planning Board of Victoria, The Future Growth of Melbourne by the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works and Sydney Region Growth & Change Prelude to a Plan by the State Planning Authority of New South Wales drew this comment.

URBAN PLANNING, in the post war years, has failed miserably to meet the urgent problems of the cities, especially population growth, industrial development, and the ever-growing motor traffic.

Planning authorities in Melbourne and Sydney, in an effort to find a solution to this problem, have recently advanced new proposals.

In Melbourne the Minister for Local Government called upon the Town and Country Planning Board to prepare a review of planning policy for the Melbourne region. The Board had recently acquired the services of a passed-over planner from Sydney but even so could hardly be regarded as an organisation renowned for energy, initiative or ideas. It had plodded on for years producing meaningless little plans, conducting no research or analyses of Victoria's urban problems. This request for a sweeping review of the planning of the Melbourne region was, however, an opportunity to comment on an area out of the Board's ken and firmly in the field of its competitor—the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works.

The Minister did the "right thing" and sent a copy of the invitation to the Board of Works inviting their views on the matter. Both organisations set about preparing reports. A competition ensued to see which would get in first. The Board of Works won the race but their report probably suffered as a result. Not that the Town and Country Planning Board could claim much kudos because most of their report is the work of a private consulting organisation, reflecting effectively the poverty of resources committed to planning in Victoria. Neither organisation has anything which resembles a research section and both are short of trained analysts such as economists, statisticians, political scientists and so on.

In New South Wales the State Planning Authority engaged in a long overdue re-examination of the problems of the Sydney region, prodded into it, no doubt, by the Minister for Local Government who is notoriously "anti-planning". The Minister's cynicism is well placed because the Planning Authority has little to show for the three and a half years of its existence, except perhaps an unenviable record of high staff turnover and wastage among its professional level officers. As a public relations exercise the Authority has produced a document entitled Prelude to a Plan which is claimed to be a discussion
of the problems facing the Sydney region and of “strategic planning” as a process.

All three reports are interesting because they begin by spelling out the magnitude of the population growth in Sydney and Melbourne expected by the turn of the century. However, there is little attempt to translate these projected population levels into meaningful figures, and in none of the reports are any planning objectives discussed save in extremely vague terms.

*The Future Growth of Melbourne* is an uncritical assessment of the activities of the Board of Works over the past decade or so. It effectively says “all we need to do is have more control over a larger area and everything will be all right.”

The report contains a series of plans purporting to indicate possible forms of growth. No supporting economic or operational analyses are presented and it is fair to conclude that none were conducted.

Similarly *Prelude to a Plan* gives no indication of what the future planning process and goals might or should be. It flies no kites and evades discussion of all the main issues which have thwarted planning in Sydney for so long. It does give a “pot pourri” of information, much of it interesting but irrelevant. In discussing recreation and open space no reference is made to the “Green Belt” which was such a critical part of the County of Cumberland Planning Scheme. Is this because the concept is now passé or is it because so little of it remains? Do the releases in 1966 and 1967 presage its complete abolition? Some of the illustrations are superb and the presentation of the material is very good; it is a pity that the content does not reach the same standard.

Nowhere in either of these reports is there any discussion of the ways in which urban investment by all the government agencies should or could be integrated.

On the other hand *Organisation for Strategic Planning* appears to be a more useful, though limited, contribution to the discussion of planning problems in Melbourne.

Given that the report presumes that urban areas are constantly in a state of flux, it is difficult to understand why it is assumed that the existing central area must have its dominance defended at all costs. One wonders too whether the current drought in Melbourne will mean anything in terms of the availability of water for future population growth. The second half of the report is a useful summary of a proposed planning process but one wonders whether its political implications have been worked out.

The organisations producing these reports have no reason to feel smug and complacent. They have barely begun their tasks. They need to reassess their attitudes to the public. One hopes that the public interest in these reports will generate an awareness of the political nature of the planning process. We need to encourage planning organisations to keep the public informed, to take a positive lead in advising the public so that the necessary political support may be generated for their plans.

RONALD STACEY

TECHNOLOGY AND TRANSPORT WORKERS

TRANSPORT plays a most important role in the development of the country and its industries.

In this age of technological change, ship owners, transport companies, railways commissioners, harbor trust
experts, engineering companies and government representatives are making big changes in the Australian transport system. In view of the fact that these changes are already seriously affecting transport workers, the question arises: what are we in the unions going to do about it in the common interest of all workers in the transport industry?

It's true the task is not easy. A lot of trade union conservatism will have to go. Some officials will have to get down off their high horses, and their responsibility to the working class will be put to the test.

Changes on the wharf and in the railways are of particular interest. Mechanisation and container transport is estimated to cut the membership of the Waterside Workers' Federation from about 20,000 odd today to 8,000 within the next ten years.

In the railway service, in spite of the starvation of funds by the government, many changes have taken place or are in the process. Diesels began to replace steam locomotives about 1949 and by 1965 two and a half million more train miles per year were being run with 133 fewer locos. This means 266 fewer crew members and all that goes to keep a loco on the road. As dieselisation develops, the district loco shed disappears, taking with it the whole of the loco maintenance staff, office employees and others.

The opening of the standard gauge line saw the introduction of the centralised traffic control, which wiped out many signalmen's jobs and other safe-working positions in the north-east of Victoria. This system is now being extended across the Overland route and consequently many more jobs will be lost.

In the western district the system of staff exchange that operates has enabled the department to eliminate many safe-working jobs. Many Assistant Stationmaster's and Stationmaster's positions have been abolished. Flashing light and boom barrier installations have meant the loss of job opportunities for track workers broken down in health or suffering permanent injuries.

Mechanisation of resleepering, along with the development of the cyclic system of maintenance of the tracks will cut the track force in half. Instead of an average of one man for every three miles of track, there will be one man for every six miles.

The Hump marshalling yard at North Melbourne, which is being built at an estimated cost of $9 million, will eliminate a great number of jobs such as yard foremen, shunters, pilots, signalmen, number takers, point cleaners, etc., and will break up and marshal trains in less than half the time now required.

The computer installed at the Railways Administrative Offices is not there to make life easier—it is there to cut out work opportunities for the white collar worker—and this is precisely what it does.

The effect of change in the Railways Workshops has been a little less dramatic, but the future will be no less drastic. Steel processed rolling stock is being superseded by aluminium because new processing methods have increased the efficiency of this type of material, particularly for bulk haulage.

When a worker is displaced by new methods of production, there is a tremendous gain for the employer, whether government or capitalist. The savings are his weekly wage, annual leave, long service leave, sick pay, liability as a workers' compensation case, retiring gratuity, superannuation contribution and the various fringe
benefits that have been won from time to time.

I have dealt with the railways in a little more detail because this is the industry I know best. We are facing a revolution in transport and we need a revolutionary approach to these problems that life is forcing upon us. The complexity of the union set-up involved and the rapid changes taking place demand immediate action.

Within the short space of ten years, workers in the transport industry could be cut by half. These changes taking place in a new industrial world demand that the trade union movement as a whole develop a new and modern concept of working class unity. I firmly believe the most important task that faces transport workers is the formation of one big transport union in which we will have both unity and strength.

L. Loye

WELFARE OF ETHNIC MINORITIES

I am writing to you on behalf of the Communications Committee, one of the bodies concerned with preparations for a Conference being organised by the Australian Council of Social Service, to be held from 19th to 24th May, 1968. The title of this Conference is "The Welfare of Ethnic Minorities", and the Conference venue is the University of Queensland.

It is felt by the organisers of the Conference that this subject will interest many sections of the Australian community, and that as many people as possible should be advised of the details of the Conference.

Would it be possible, in the near future, for details concerning the subject, venue, and time of the Conference to be published in your Journal?

Yours sincerely,

(Miss) L. Macdonald,
Box 1088 N, G.P.O., Brisbane, 4001.

Australian Marxist Research Foundation

RESEARCH DIRECTOR

Applications are invited by this new Foundation for the position of Research Director. The Foundation is presently establishing a centre in Sydney and the initial functions of the Research Director will be to work under the supervision of the Board to collate available national and international material of interest to the Foundation, plan symposia and lectures, prepare the publication of a newsletter and plan research programs for scholarships which will be made available by the Foundation.

Applicants should be interested in the labor and socialist movements and familiarity with library and research techniques would be valuable. Academic qualifications are desirable but not essential.

Salary will be by negotiation.

Applications giving full personal particulars, details of education and experience to be submitted to the Board Chairman, Australian Marxist Research Foundation, c/- Box A247, Sydney South Post Office, Sydney, 2000.

Applications close 1st March, 1968.
Challenging the viewpoint of Radovan Richta published in ALR No. 3 1967, Dave Morris expresses another opinion on the extent and potential of scientific development. The author, an engineer, was a victim of the Petrov Commission smear, who later worked as a specialist in China, and latterly in the Soviet Union. The editors invite further discussion of these issues.

JUST WHAT IS the “scientific and technological revolution”? In particular, are the views of Richta re-published in Australian Left Review No. 3 of 1967 sound?

First, the author is a philosopher, and, as such, it is as well to look first at his conclusions. In his last paragraph he says “In all probability it will take decades for the scientific and technical revolution to become the predominant process in the areas where it does not encounter social obstacles.” So even in favorable areas it will still take decades before it becomes the “predominant process”, and, presumably decades more after that before is seriously alters the actual structure of existing industry decisively.

Second, I realise that both the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and our own Party have, in their documents, accepted the existence of the scientific revolution as a fact, but it would be a bold man who claimed to evaluate it in terms of actual rates of improvement in the people’s well being or in terms of food in the bellies of the hungry.

Third, Richta’s use of some statistics should be closely looked at. For instance, he, like his colleagues, often talks of industrial productivity increases as if they were exclusively caused by “scientific” invention, research, and new technology. The truth is that the overwhelming proportion of all rises in productivity are due simply to economies of scale. These are well illustrated by the example from the Petroleum Gazette quoted by your correspondent in the article “Wicked Waste” in the No. 4 issue of ALR dealing with refineries and synthetic rubber plants. To double the physical dimensions of a typical plant multiplies the area of all metal surfaces in the plant by four and raises the cost in about the same ratio. But it multiplies the volume of all working vessels and
of the materials in process by eight, that is the capacity rises eight times for a four-fold increase in cost.

This raises the fourth point. If productivity is largely increased by economies of scale, what then is the real effect of automation cybernetics, atomic energy, nucleonics, computers and all the rest with which the various writers on technical subjects make such effective play? As regards "atomic energy and nucleonics" we may take it that it is almost a complete blue duck. In spite of occasional ministerial sunshine statements in the United Kingdom, there is very little chance of economic electrical power from uranium for many a long year, except in a few quite isolated localities far from all thermal fuel sources. With most of the cost of research charged off to public account (always with the hope of side developments to bomb production), atomic electric power has proved a complete economic disappointment over the 15 years or more of its development, even though in Britain rather dear coal and ruling class hatred of the miners provided powerful incentives for its use. But behind this situation is another key fact—that in industry as a whole power costs are less than two per cent of costs and all fuel costs less than four per cent. Only in special cases, such as electrochemical plants producing copper and aluminium, are power costs in any way decisive, and in consumer goods industries such as food processing and textiles, power costs are infinitesimal. The idea that an age of cheap power in abundance will be an age of plenty for all is science fiction.

What then of cybernetics and computers? There is no doubt whatever that there are very large savings of staff to be made in purely routine business activities, working out wages sheets, invoicing, stock control card entries, ledger entries, etc. In very big organisations such as banks, post offices, insurance companies and corporations, very big white collar staff savings are quite likely and possible and are already in progress. To what extent these will mean greater productivity handed on as benefits to the workers may be doubted, but at least some improvement in overall productivity is available as a source of eventual benefits. As for the direct applications to industry, such as process control, automated production or assembly lines, the results to date are trifling mainly because they save labor in industries wherein labor costs are already very, very low indeed, such as oil refining, chemical processing, power generation, etc. But behind all this experience is another fact that is seldom recognised — nearly all of the scientific revolution applies primarily to matters of control, not to production at all.

But economy is primarily and generally and mainly a matter of production costs, not costs of or improvements in control as such.
It is indeed very fine to be able to steer an ocean liner on the “optimised” most economical course, with all meteorological facts allowed for, but it really saves very little as compared with the best judgment of an experienced navigator. Not only so, but the computer is itself an extra maintenance commitment, and often a big one. Nowadays maintenance costs of delicate control equipment are often comparable to operating costs of the plant as a whole. Production costs depend mainly on economy of materials, expense on storage, labor and scale of work to ensure overall economy. This fact alone ensures that only very rare cybernetic triumphs have any appreciable effect on costs, at least in industry. Stories about factories with 40 per cent engineers, 40 per cent technicians and 20 per cent skilled tradesmen are usually simply untrue. They may refer to the testing and finishing section of a rocket making and assembly complex that may produce one or two rockets a year or something of that kind. But any pretense that, in any major industry, the design trend is towards factories occupied only by button-pushers in white gowns nearly half of whom have diplomas or degrees, is simply false.

And what of the plastic “revolution”? Most of what is called plastic is, of course, synthetic rubber. The total tonnage of all plastics manufactured in the USA these days, after fifty years of development, is only a couple of million tons per year, as compared with one hundred and twenty million tons of steel. In textiles plastics of various kinds run to about 30 per cent by weight as an adulterant, mostly, for mixing with natural fibres, and the use of additive stabilisers to reduce deterioration on aging becomes ever more complex and troublesome. So many “new” developments are merely alternatives to existing materials, alternatives that kick a place for themselves by advertising campaigns and then give way partially or entirely to some new fad.

Another much advertised new material once thought to have an “unlimited” future is aluminium, also now subject to considerable excesses of production capacity in the USA and the “older” economies.

Interestingly enough aluminium is being displaced in aviation, in domestic equipment, and in space technology by the even more expensive stainless steel. As a material of general use in construction aluminium has failed entirely to establish itself, except in the rare marginal cases when other materials are in short supply.

Turning now to Richta’s use of figures, his table on page 57 quoted from Hajek and Toms, claims to illustrate the increasing share of “intensive” factors (technology, skill, organisation) in economic growth as contrasted with the share of “extensive” factors.
(the labor force and capital). This pretends to separate the allegedly “scientific” factors—technology, skill and organisation—from labor or “labor force” or, presumably, “labor power” in the traditional marxian sense.

It implies by definition what it seeks to prove, the presence of a new factor of growth and therefore, presumably, of production, namely “science”, regarded and considered as existing, as a force in its own right, independent of the main factor—the laborer, whether unskilled, skilled or technically trained. But science is inherently tied to and develops with industrial skills, it seldom leads them and usually serves to explain development that has already occurred and to consolidate the rear of the advance, and to renew the advance in detail by development of new materials specifically suited to particular conditions. To attempt to separate “technology, skill and organisation” from “labor force” borders on elitism and recalls Burnham’s long dead “Managerial Revolution”. The figures quoted are meaningless.

Richta writes: “If at present the number engaged in scientific research in the USSR amounts to 2.2 per cent of those engaged in the national economy (the percentage is 2.1 in the USA) while the share of those engaged in the education and service industries is 11 per cent, in the future the share of these groups will equal or perhaps even exceed the share of those engaged in industry.” The figure of 11 per cent in the “education and service industries” apparently refers to the item normally printed in Soviet statistical handbooks under the heading “Education, Health, Science, Scientific services and Research”, while the latest figures for those engaged in industry—called “Manufacturing and Construction” are 35 per cent of the work force in the USSR and 33 per cent in the USA. In the USSR the proportion is growing steadily while it is very slowly falling in the USA. As everyone knows the recruits both for industry and the “service” industries come from agriculture and forestry, the percentage of the national workforce in which has fallen between 1958 and 1965 from 42 to 32 in the USSR and from 17 to 14 per cent in the USA. Indeed a large part of the national increases in productivity claimed by both the socialist and capitalist economies, results simply from the increasing mechanisation of their agriculture, but that is another story.

Why then should it be predicted that the numbers in “Education and Service” will rise to above 30 per cent of the workforce? Of those in scientific research, at least eighty per cent in the USA are engaged on the “defence” and space programmes and some at least of the corresponding 2.2 per cent in the USSR must be so engaged. Is it really essential to assume a huge increase in these? The health service now demands about 4 to 5 per cent
of the workforce. Must sickness really increase until it demands the aid of three times that percentage of the workers? Much the same applies to education, which will indeed, demand a few more per cent of the workforce than at present, but scarcely an increase that would bring the totals of service workers to over thirty per cent of the whole, or that would cause the relative proportions to change places.

Another fact habitually overlooked by those who try to compare figures from bourgeois sources directly with the results of experience in the socialist countries is that there are huge categories of service or "tertiary" workers in the capitalist countries that either do not exist at all in the socialist countries or else exist only in quite infinitesimal numbers. Among such are the real estate workers, brokers, financial employees of every kind, debt collectors, and employees of such departments as governmental supply, commerce and taxation, which scarcely exist in the socialist countries. Insurance is another "industry" that demands huge staffs to sell and to administer every single individual policy, while the numbers engaged in wholesale and retail trade in such a country as the USA are more than three times the corresponding percentage of the workforce thus engaged in the USSR. Such facts as these make statements concerning the service industries in the tabulation at the bottom of page 37 quite futile. To suggest that at the "Onset of the Technological Revolution" (undefined), 20 to 35 per cent of the employed workers should be in the service industries in addition to 11 to 16 per cent in "Trade", is merely covering up the fantastic labor wastes inherent in an "advanced" capitalist economy.

Admittedly, some of the points made by Richta show that he is well aware of the essential unity between researchers and technicians as "an indivisible part of the working class" at least under socialist conditions (v. page 38). But his misleading use of figures promotes social and political blunders such as a belief in an imminent age of scientific wonders just around the corner, an age of enormous increases in productivity, increases so great that even the workers in capitalist countries will be able to receive improvements in their well-being on an impressive scale.

Meanwhile in this scientific paradise only a tiny proportion of the scientist's work is even remotely connected with direct production in industry; much of it applies to communications, to controls, to information storage, to energy production, to administrative choices, to long term corrosion prevention, to "optimisation" of process regulation, and similar matters not one of which affects the real overall costs of production by more than one or two per cent, either singly or in combination.
Meanwhile many computers are used only for information storage, their control capability sections standing idle, because the cost and trouble involved in programming them properly is simply too great, unless, of course, they are used to control space vehicles or test missiles.

Most of the very, very few improvements which really do offer promise of significant cost economies that may affect the living costs of the population slightly are due simply to an extension of well-known principles of design to new levels of application on an adequate scale. Such cases are the extended use of containers in transport, the use of tonnage oxygen in the smelting of steel, the new very large tankers, power generators, blast furnaces and rail wagons. None of these involve any new scientific principles, and result from normal engineering development rather than "research". Richta speaks of the universal "imperative of growth" which nowadays in the West "determines the basic mass of practical solutions and practical questions (theory) of growth." As every socialist knows, the only thing about capitalist growth that is "imperative" is the political imperative to make a good showing in comparison with the far higher growth rates of the socialist countries. Britain and America are notorious for their low growth rates, and even the show window piece of the capitalist world, Japan, has of late suffered from heavy decreases in output of key industries which even the Vietnam war orders from the USA have done little to relieve. When one deducts the natural rate of increase of population and the "natural" rate of inflation of the currency from the money values of the apparent growth rates of gross national products in the major capitalist economies the net growth rates begin to look puny indeed. Incidentally, many capitalisms which show moderate growth rates also maintain huge reserve armies of unemployed over long periods of years, to help restrain demands for wage increases.

Another point to be considered when evaluating the latest scientific developments is that in many cases the new development merely introduces a replacement of existing devices, that involves little saving in costs, and merely an increase in convenience or improvement in appearance. Such a case is that of the transistor which merely replaces the thermionic valve. To announce that the scientific development of transistors has created a huge "new" industry worth billions is quite a distortion of the facts. It has merely done so by destroying the market for the thermionic valve, in the main, and has done nothing to increase employment, economy, or human well being, except in a few rare non-typical instances. Much the same applies to other "replacement" industries such as residual oil fuels or uranium replacing coal, various new household gadgets like clothes dryers and hair curlers, plastic
paints and so on. But even when the benefits result they are often quite intangible, of no economic or social significance, or of trifling magnitude except in terms of minor convenience or (advertised) appearance of the ultimate product.

Another factor of decisive importance under present conditions is the continuous decay in the quality of the various parts of the national production pattern. Most of us have read of Parkinson’s three laws of bureaucracy: 1—Work expands to fill the time available for its completion; 2—Expenditure rises to meet income; 3—Growth means complexity, and complexity means decay. In most cases computers obey rule one, in that no sooner does one give calculating staffs the chance to do far more calculations in a given time than ever before than they immediately invent the occasion to make the said calculations. This applies especially to technical designers. With them in particular, computations expand to fill the computer time available for their completion. Every national budget illustrates rule number two, but rule three is the one that most fully typifies the current trends of capitalist growth. Complexity is the leading feature of the eternally multiplying basket of semi-shoddy goods of the “mass consumption” economies which are held in such veneration in the “affluent society”. Nearly all such goods can be replaced by the various services of the public utility networks in a socialist economy, which would eliminate whole industries making mass produced “consumers’ durables” that are now the hope of those who predict “high” growth rates in bourgeois economies.

In sum, the scientific revolution is certainly not another industrial revolution like that caused by steam and the factory system. Of its many widely different aspects only a few will have significant effects on the economy, including those computers that are used to displace large numbers of white collar routine clerical workers. Other developments of significance are usually due to the normal progress of scale economies and design, and have nothing to do with any “scientific” innovation. The stories that large proportions of the workforce will become scientists and/or technologists are ridiculously overdrawn. The reverse process is at work as well, though some moderate increase in the proportion of trained men is to be expected. In particular, the scientific revolution will not, of itself, either give a new lease of life to the entrepreneurial economies or even of itself, greatly accelerate the growth of planned economies. There are no “push button” factories in manufacturing industry, and even in processing plants the maintenance workers increase as the operating labor costs decline. Above all else in judging the social effects of any technical change we need discrimination, and in the discussion of the practical effects of the new age of scientific wonders this is the precise quality that has thus far been conspicuously lacking.
THE CARTOONIST as we know him is a modern phenomenon. He has his ancestors in lampoons and broadsides dating back to the Reformation and beyond, but maturity is reached only with the age of mass media. The cartoon then escapes from the role of illustration to a wordy text and begins to express itself directly in visual imagery. Gradually the text becomes more and more subsidiary, often being no more than the "punch line", though rarely dispensed with altogether.

Even with this new pithiness the art of cartooning has reached its height only when a major talent has been able to flourish without restriction. This has happened when the cartoonist’s views have coincided with those of his employer, especially in crisis conditions, or when an enlightened employer has allowed him freedom from editorial control. From such situations have emerged, among others, a Daumier, a Vicki, a David Low and a Bruce Petty. It is almost axiomatic that a tame cartoonist, or a cartoonist without a viewpoint, can not be a good cartoonist.

Because of the topicality of newspaper cartoons, to be successful they need direct and trenchant political or social content. This means that the cartoonist’s attitudes to a wide range of experience are laid open to public view. Not only his draughtsmanship and inventive talent, but his personal character is under constant stress and scrutiny.

Australia has an honourable history of cartooning. Our best cartoonists stand up well under even the severest scrutiny. Beginning in the 1850’s, the first major contributions were made in Melbourne Punch by Nicholas Chevalier, followed by Montague Scott, then T. Carrington. Montague Scott then worked for Sydney Punch from shortly after its foundation in 1864. Chevalier, though competent as a cartoonist, was primarily a painter, and in any case did not stay long in Australia. Carrington was fundamentally an
illustrator with little capacity for satire. His rather quaint cartoons often creak at the joints as they laboriously act out the points of an accompanying legend. Scott, a much better draughtsman, was able to create convincing visual metaphors to carry his message. This work continued to appear in various publications until around the turn of the century.

Cartooning comes of age, however, with the advent of The Bulletin in 1880. The first staff artist was William McLeod, who had been a cartoonist in Brisbane. In 1884 he was joined by an American, Livingstone Hopkins, better known as "Hop", and a few years later by Phil May. The incisiveness and linear verve of Phil May established a model of style for many later cartoonists, but he only stayed a few years. Though The Bulletin sustained many other artists its satirical mainstay in this period of its greatness was "Hop". Remarkably inventive, with a flair for fantasy, he was wide in his interests and quick in his indignation, but always genial and humane. He and his fellow artists contributed to the contemporary current of nationalism and republicanism; egalitarianism mixed with chauvinism; democratic sentiment; and opposition to exploitation. The ferment of these ideas in and

"Big John" Forrest of W.A.
Will Dyson's 1904 caricature of a dominating colonial politician whose stature was considerably diminished when he moved into the Federal sphere.
around *The Bulletin* was undoubtedly a catalyst, helping writers and artists to develop to the full.

The Bulletin remained a haven for some of Australia's leading cartoonists even after its greatness had faded. From 1901 Norman Lindsay was for more than half a century one of its principal artists. David Low in World War One, and Percy Leason during the ' twenties and ' thirties carried on and enriched the tradition. These were at the head of an Australian school of cartoonists, nurtured by *The Bulletin*, by Smith's Weekly, and by various labor and radical publications. The tradition retained its vigour through changing historical circumstances. Hal Gye, Will Dyson, Bancks, Gurney and Finey—these are just some of the well-remembered names from the past. The traditional forms have largely been replaced in the past decade or so, but these artists have their counterparts today in cartoonists such as Rigby, Molnar, Tanner and Petty.

These artists are a very varied group. Molnar makes sophisticated and graphic use of line and mass; a contemporary brashness marks the topical grotesqueries of Paul Rigby; Tanner leans most heavily on traditional caricature and the plausibly incongruous situation. The most original and convincing, however, is Bruce Petty. Though clear enough from his daily cartoons in *The Australian*, this is abundantly demonstrated by his excellent new book.* Petty's *Australia Fair* is a cartoonist's eye view of Australia today. There is plenty of whimsy and humor, but it is no prettified view. Our civilised apathy, cynicism, opportunism, self-delusion and outright affluent greed are stripped bare by every means at his disposal. And these are considerable. Irony, satire, telling juxtapositions, straight reportage, iconoclasm and caricature are informed by acute observation and wide-ranging knowledge. Technically Petty is just as varied. His apparently artless but penetrating draughtsmanship is reinforced with ad-mass symbolism, collage, apt quotation, and flexibility of style. These are all part of Petty's individuality, which is inseparable from his humanity. In this respect Bruce Petty is a true heir to "Hop", Phil May, Scott, Finey and Leason. His treatment of mankind is fundamentally sympathetic. He always favors the underdog—and more often than not the underdog turns out to be a starving Asian, one of our serenely ignored Aborigines, or a Vietnamese victim of our "all the way" war.

In his daily cartooning Petty captures a world of meaning in the visual image. This book enhances the image with dialogue and running commentary which must establish him as our most literate cartoonist. An Aboriginal says from the shelter of a bag humpy, "If my father gets a job we're going to move up into the

* Bruce Petty, *Petty's Australia Fair*. Cheshire, $4.25
16% poverty is high but when you think of India's 82% you don't feel so bad.
slums.” The press blazons its motto: “Fearless and Harmless”. Television makes its debut: “To ensure a high quality and an imaginatively Australian Television service, transmission licences were carefully allocated to whoever had the ready cash.” And Australia proudly boasts its national sport: “Winning.”

Here is an artist akin to Thurber, Searle, Heath Robinson and others of like calibre. Petty is able to maintain a personal vision and has the means to incise it into the public consciousness. The involutions and complexities occasionally complained of in his Saturday morning forays are a distinct virtue in the book format, where browsing brings unexpected rewards. These are made more pleasurable by the book’s superb design and reproduction.

In marked contrast the book Cartoons of Australian History,* collected and edited by Peter Coleman and Les Tanner, is disappointing in almost every respect. The compilers have tried to produce “a cartoonists’ history of Australia” and feel compelled to

* by Peter Coleman and Les Tanner, Cartoons of Australian History, Nelson. $3.95.1
apologise that it is not "sober and balanced". They fail to appreciate that cartoons are contemporary documents, not historical essays. Like any other historical documents they require selection and interpretation. A "cartoonists' history" is impossible simply because the newspaper cartoonist has never set out to be comprehensive. Though aware of this essential tendentiousness of the cartoonists these editors fail to draw the appropriate conclusions.

We can not expect the cartoonists to write history for us, but their perceptions and pre-occupations can give us insights into otherwise obscure issues. Coleman and Tanner have started with known history, classified it in arbitrary fashion, then tried to hunt out cartoons to illustrate every aspect. The result is some over-compressed and debatable history, tenuously related to a somewhat incoherent assortment of cartoons.

A historical work on Australian cartooning can be successful only if it begins with a thorough study of the cartoons themselves. This is the fundamental weakness of this book. Its authors have given no attention to the cartoonists, whose creativity and motivations should be basic to such a study. This is surprising, considering that one of the authors is a practising cartoonist.

If you are interested to know which cartoonists are represented you will find them neither named in the index nor acknowledged under their drawings. This omission disguises another weakness of the book—its wild imbalance. Tanner himself is represented by nineteen drawings and Norman Lindsay by twenty-two, while Bruce Petty rates a mere four and Molnar only two. Important artists such as Will Dyson, Percy Leason and Alex Gurney are missing altogether. The book does not claim to be a compendium of cartoonists or a history of cartooning, but these deficiencies are too great to be overlooked. Will Dyson was especially incisive and masterly as a caricaturist, bringing to maturity the trend begun by "Hop" and Phil May. Percy Leason, another of our most accomplished cartoonists, captured the interests, conflicts, crises and illusions of the 'twenties and 'thirties in a series of brilliantly satirical inventions. Alex Gurney, the creator of "Bluey and Curly", helped to perpetuate the image of the easy-going, fair-minded Australian character.

These are just some of the notable omissions from the ranks of the cartoonists. Just as serious are the omissions and imbalances of subject matter. Though these also are partly due to the pre-conceived scheme imposed on the material, much of the blame must be attributed to the obviously minimal research carried out for the book.
"Yes, you are improving the place, I'll have to increase your rent", by Percy Leason, The Bulletin, November 15, 1933.
The authors list Australia's three major political issues since Federation as conscription in World War One, the Depression, and the Age of Menzies. These themes could be well represented from the wealth of cartoons they engendered. Yet in this selection the personal antics of Billy Hughes receive as much attention as the conscription conflict. The Depression fares a little better, mainly through inclusion of Finey's telling contributions to the Labor Daily, but Percy Leason's political and social saga from The Bulletin is unaccountably missing.

The Age of Menzies is an indefinable sort of subject. The period and the politician are reasonably well covered, but the book avoids some recent issues of importance to both history and cartooning. Where for example are Petty's memorable and moving cartoons on the Vietnam war? Or some evidence of the campaign by Oz against censorship and conventional morality?

There is imbalance even within the work of individual artists. Norman Lindsay is well represented, but not by any of his numerous early attacks on monopoly and Australia's penetration by foreign capital. In other instances the text is belied by the pictorial material, particularly when assessment of the past is distorted by currently fashionable views of history. The worst to suffer in this way are the more radical trends. It is odd indeed to find the Labor Party described as "the main non-liberal party."

All this seems evidence that the volume has been hastily thrown together—a conclusion confirmed by the poor standard of production. Proof-reading is at a very low level, causing constant irritation and leaving some pictures wrongly labelled. Most of the cartoons are very badly reproduced. Some of the old wood engravings are printed in line, while others are reproduced in half-tone, with consequent loss of clarity. Excessive reduction of size may account for this treatment in some cases, but for other pictures the reasons remain elusive. It is interesting to notice that both of the books under review were printed in Hong Kong—and to contemplate what some of our earlier cartoonists might have made of the fact!

There is a risk that students and research workers will mistakenly treat any anthology of material from the past as an authentic historical source. It is a negative merit of Cartoons of Australian History that its defects eliminate such a risk. Meantime a comprehensive work on Australian cartooning has yet to make its appearance.
ANALYSING THE PAST

ANTONIO GRAMSCI: THE MAN

A lecturer in politics at Monash University contributes the first of a series on the famous Italian marxist Antonio Gramsci. The concluding part of this article will be published in the next issue of ALR.

Later articles will consider Gramsci's understanding of Marxism and particularly his concept of hegemony, his views on the role of a socialist party in advanced capitalist countries and on the role of intellectuals and intellectual activity.

The author, who started work at sixteen, educated himself through matriculation and part of his degree while working at all sorts of manual and clerical jobs. He has travelled widely and speaks four languages. He spent a year and a half in Italy in 1956-57 and almost a year in 1962-63 learning the language and something of the Italian labor movement.

ANTONIO GRAMSCI'S work is already well-known in European countries, but has yet to be translated at length into English. In Italy he is the rage, his Quaderni del Carcere,* in which most of his thought appears, selling 400,000 copies between 1948-57. In France his work has been translated and widely read, especially in left wing circles. The present policy of the Italian Communist Party, which has such a distinctive stamp, is partly a result of that party's espousal of Gramscian marxism. In the French Communist Party, while his ideas have not acquired a hegemony, they are very influential. Dispute exists as to his real merit as a marxist theoretician but, I feel that he was underestimated by the writer who said "Gramsci is a marxist of the calibre of the early Kautsky, and compares favourably with Plekhanov and Rosa Luxemburg. He is a marxist in the great tradition of Marx himself, a thinker with an open mind, disciplined in the search for truth." The reader of these articles may judge for himself the merit of Gramsci, recognising that the articles may fail to do Gramsci justice. He could, if he wishes to inquire further, read the only three texts in English, which are, in order of merit, John Cammett's, Antonio Gramsci and the Origins of Italian Communism, Carl Marzani's,

* Prison Notebooks — Ed.
The Open Marxism of Antonio Gramsci, and Louis Mark's, The Modern Prince and other Writings.

This article is about the man and the social context in which he expressed his ideas, as philosophy cannot be understood independent of the context in which it was evolved. Today, political philosophy taught in universities is dominated by the school which maintains the contrary and seeks for eternal values in political philosophy. Thus the ideas of John Locke are taught as relevant political ideas today without pointing out that they were written in a particular sort of society, that of the green England which existed at the end of the seventeenth century. More importantly, it is not considered relevant that Locke wrote his theory in response to certain political conditions and that his theory was inspired by a desire to justify a certain political system. In other words, the conditions sine qua* Locke would not have written what he wrote, are dismissed as irrelevant. To study ideas in historical and social context is dismissed loftily as "political biography". There can be no doubt that the people who maintain that the social context is irrelevant are conservative apologists, no matter what reasons they give for their refusal to discuss ideas in historical context. To illustrate my point: at Monash university the views of Edmund Burke on the obligations of an elected representative are taught without emphasising that Burke's "speech to the electors of Bristol" was delivered in an oligarchic society where there was no thought of democracy existing in reality and that therefore what he said can have no relevance to a society in which liberal democratic government prevails, as he was talking about a different problem. Furthermore, to compound the misdeed—for the students swallow whole the notion that Burke is relevant today rather than merely belonging to the history of political theory—teachers do not teach the countervailing theory espoused and associated with socialists, above all, that the delegate has an exhaustive mandate and is not free to refer to his own conscience. Conscience is far too frequently interest writ large.

So Gramsci will be studied in historical context as the eternal verities which any man expresses can only be found by studying his thought in historical context and then deriving the verities. Those readers acquainted with Gramsci's thought will recognise that the ideological framework in which this essay is written is that of Gramscian marxism. For this I make no apologies. Indeed, I hope that the vulgar marxists will be suitably shocked to discover that there is no attempt to give explanations solely in terms of

* Without which — Ed.
economic determinism. Gramsci himself pointed out, with greater perception than any marxist philosopher since Marx, that:

We must fight theoretically as primitive infantilism the attempt to explain every fluctuation of politics and ideology as an immediate reflection of some change in the economic base of the structure. This nonsense is sometimes even presented as an axiom of historical materialism.

... The point is that any phase in the development of the economic base can be studied concretely only after its development has been finished. We don't pay enough attention to the fact that many political actions are due to internal organisational necessities, the needs to maintain the coherence of a party, a group, a society.

Nor will there be any attempt to glorify the working class. Gramsci, while an intellectual, was innately egalitarian. He felt all men were thinking men, and all had their part to play. However, the object of the revolution was not to secure the triumph of popular values. Rather it was "to lift up the people" to the level of "higher" philosophy which would in the first instance be the preserve of intellectuals. The revolution was not to better the worker's lot, but in bettering him, to change him.

That the ideas of a man are really only comprehensible and facts relevant in historical context is revealed in the amusing fact that Gramsci's paternal ancestors were Albanians who had come to Italy in 1821. This fact is not of relevance to Gramsci's political ideas, though it would be if he himself had come from Albania in, say, 1960. What is of relevance is the fact that he was born at Ales in Sardinia in 1891 to a father who was a mainlander and a member of the administration and to a mother who was a Sardinian of pure blood and more petty bourgeois/working class than his father. Being born in Sardinia meant that he was born to the problema del Mezzogiorno, or more precisely, to that of Italia isolana. The date of his birth meant that he was born when this problem was reaching its greatest height and when hopes of a better social life, which had prompted so many southern Italians to support Garibaldi, had died.

The problema del Mezzogiorno is the central problem of Italian history and has remained the central problem. It embodies a complex of social, political and economic inadequacies in Southern and Insular Italy. Considered in historical perspective, the problem was the result of the reactionary nature of the social, economic and political systems of the pre-unification Southern States and the mode by which Italian unification was achieved. While Sardinia was actually part of the political system of the Kingdom of Sardinia whose capital was Turin, it shared the general cultural characteristics of the South. Crucial to understanding the South of Italy, the Mezzogiorno, is an understanding of the miserable
poverty in which the bulk of the people lived when Italy was unified. A Neapolitan prince, Ferdinand II, once said that Africa began at Naples. It could more truly be said that it began at Rome, for the Papal States were more reactionary even than the Two Sicilies. The people lived in such poverty because of the extreme exploitation they suffered at the hands of their feudal landlords. Most were peasants, often having the status of feudal serfs. They worked the huge latifondi which were owned by absentee landlords and the Church, on a predial labour system. Late in the 18th century the Neapolitans under Tanlago, had attempted to introduce more modern methods of agricultural production, which sometimes precluded the coming of capitalism, but on the whole the agrarian system had not changed since the fall of the Roman Empire. What had changed was the productivity of the land. From Sicily and Apulia being the golden granaries described by the ancients, they had become barren, poverty-ridden, wastelands. This decline was due in great part to the inadequate methods of cultivation and the determination of the owners to screw the last drop of blood out of the peasants no matter what the long term losses.

Meanwhile, despite the periodic scourge of cholera and typhus, which swept through the sea-ports of the South, (including those of Sardinia), despite the malaria, the infant mortality rate, the low life-expectancy and the famines, the population had grown. In the 19th century there was no longer sufficient land to go around and huge numbers of peasants either worked as day labourers for somebody else, or starved on their too-small holdings, half of whose produce often had to go to the absentee landlord anyway.

Hundreds of years of such conditions had resulted in the emergence of certain cultural patterns among the people of the South and the islands. First of all the individual's object was to have his immediate family survive. Morality, social conscience, class unity, political affiliations was subordinate to this. As one despairing politician from the North said "Politically, the Southerner is absent". This is still true to some extent today. Their dreadful poverty often led them to become brigands as this was more lucrative than agriculture. Before unity brigandage was so prevalent in the South and in Sardinia that it was in many cases licensed (for a fee). The South and the islands had well developed criminal sub-cultures, represented by the Camorra and Mafia. Brigandage is still rife in Sardinia, so much so that guests from the sumptuous Costa Smeralda resort are warned not to leave the "pale of settlement." It has been pointed out in many places,

* Of peasants, attached to the land — Ed.
notably in the Massari report, which the new kingdom of Italy released soon after it came to power, that brigandage was often a primitive form of social protest. This should not hide the reality that these brigands often preyed on the peasants who looked up to them as “mafiosi” (arrogant, i.e. not resigned to their lot).

In such a society nobody trusted anybody else, and except for these criminal associations, there were no unifying institutions. There were no political parties among the peasants. Even the church was not to be trusted. They lived atomised existences in family units, starving, and living in such spiritual and moral degradation outside the family unit, that they were compared unfavourably with “bedouins and africans,” groups regarded with particular disapprobation by the Italian educated.

Of course, not all Southerners or islanders lived thus. Apart from the nobility who lived in capital cities while their middle men exploited the peasants, there was another social category to be perceived, the governmental bureaucracy. Until unification, this had been Southern in composition and was characterised by being more corrupt and venal than the middlemen on the latifondi themselves. This bureaucracy already bore the characteristics of the Italian bureaucracy today. It was over-large, filled with placemen, lacking in technicians, corrupt, inefficient and more parasitic than serving a social function. It usually voted with the powers that be, but to pinch a metaphor, politically it was present and on sale to the highest bidder.

When unification came, it came as a result of the extension of Piedmontese hegemony over the rest of Italy. The puritanical, bourgeois, industrial and industrious Piedmontese were horrified by the conditions and qualities of the South. Fortunato also suggests that they were surprised. Coming in with the fervour of the moral do-gooders, they resolved to clean it up, (provided, of course, that this did not clash with their interests). They conducted a long war of a guerilla nature against the banditti before being defeated late in the century and coming to terms with the system. There is even a reputable theory held that the Southerners have converted the Northerners to their morality through a gradual permeation of the administration and government of Italy. The Piedmontese also immediately removed most of the Southern bureaucracy extending their personal and their administrative system to the South. This did not last long as the parasitic bureaucracy of the South soon ingratiated itself with the new masters and was back in command, ready to do its duty as petty tyrants, as much as it had ever done. Now however, there was a leavening of Piedmontese and Northerners in the South.
The Southern peasant was disillusioned by the new regime, from which he had hoped for an improvement in his lot, something he conceived in terms of more land. The object of the Northerners soon emerged as the exploitation of the South for the benefit of the North. If the Southerners' lot did not get worse after 1861, it certainly did not improve. After unification, peasant risings were so frequent that a characteristic method of Northern government of the South was martial law. One of the greatest of these risings was that of the Sicilian fasci in the year Gramsci was born and while the Italian Socialist Party was being formed. It marked the height of Southern disillusion with the situation brought about by Northern exploitation.

Much of the southern peasants' resentment was owed to the terrible tyranny of the administration. Salvemini wrote:

When the corruption of ruling classes of a country has reached the point of bestiality in which the Southern bourgeoisie has sunk, a crisis sooner or later becomes inevitable: the lower classes shake off the cruel yoke which oppresses them, sack and commit crimes, obliging the ruling class to renovate itself. 14

Indeed, some of the Southern intellectuals became alienated in 1861-1900 and through them anarchist doctrine was introduced to the South of Italy. The majority in Gramsci's childhood still belonged to the corrupt.

Gramsci belonged to the class of dominating corrupt bourgeoisie. His father was born and bred in Gaeta, a classical southern town. He was, to judge from his disapproval of his son's socialist leanings, an establishment man. In 1897, he was sent to jail for five years for "administrative irregularity" (the nature of the irregularity is obscure, but Gramsci's mother was always worried that Gramsci had been sent to jail for doing something dishonorable, which suggests that his father may have been diddling the books or taking bribes). This left Antonio's seamstress mother to support seven children. They moved from his birthplace to the malaria ridden town of Ghilarza.

Gramsci's family's position as members of the bourgeoisie had never been very stable, his father was only a minor official. The loss of the father for five years precipitated the family into the dreadful existence of the petty bourgeoisie who have fallen into the proletariat. While they lived in miserable conditions, without lighting or running water, it is difficult to be sure whether this experience, between the age of six and eleven, turned Antonio Gramsci to revolutionary solutions, to socialism. Nowadays, it is believed that it is in situations like that which had overtaken Gramsci's family that the bourgeoisie will turn to revolution.
However, it must be remembered that children are usually shielded from the worst suffering. This appears to have happened with Gramsci, who continued at school throughout the period when his father was in prison. He, himself, suggests in his letters that his mother shouldered nearly all of the burden. Certainly, Gramsci was still fairly confident and showed little of the disorientation which might be expected of a child for whom the fall from grace had meaning. Probably he resented his father's failure.

Only when he was eleven was he precipitated into adult life, working long hours for little pay in his father's office. His father felt that despite his talent he could not be kept at school as the extra two pounds a day of bread was needed in the family. Gramsci resented this bitterly. His main reason for resentment was his deformity. At the age of four he had been dropped, badly injured, and was given up for dead. He had recovered with a permanently hunched back. He was always very reticent about this deformity, which left him permanently sickly and at no time did he demand pity. While the psychologists may fasten on this as an explanation of his later political leanings (another Rosa Luxemburg?), there is no evidence that it was anything more than one factor in his make up. Clearly, it made him unable to work as a labourer and his personal security depended on his maintaining his position in the intellectual bourgeoisie. His father's action in withdrawing him from school condemned him to the no-man's land where he would for ever be afraid of becoming a worker who could not work. He knew he could not survive long as a labourer.17

In the following two years while he was close to the working class, if not of it, he learnt with his own eyes about the terrible conditions of the contadino* of Sardinia.18 Then at thirteen his mother and sisters sent him back to school with the extra savings that they had made. He attended first the ginnasio at Santa Lussurgiu and then in 1908-11 the Liceo Giovanni Maria Dettori at Cagliari, the Sardinian capital. Here he revealed a great ability at classics, where as a primary student his best marks had been in mathematics.

By 1910 his political opinions had started to form. He wrote an essay in that year, "Oppressed and Oppressors", in which he praised mankind's incessant struggle against oppressors and he read Avanti, the socialist newspaper, regularly.19 He was obviously becoming alienated from the section of society to which he belonged. Any explanation must take into account the fact that he starved himself to remain at school. However, he now knew personally of the

* Peasant — Ed.
suffering of the peasants of Sardinia and shared their resentments. Later he wrote of the "pains of Sardinia, the miseria of the Sardinian peasants and workers exploited by all the capitalisms: by the English one which exploits the mines, by the Piedmontese one which exploits the railways, by the Roman one which exploits the grazing land, by the Italian State which each year carries away millions and millions of taxes which are not returned in any form and which serve to lighten the tax burden of the mainland". He may have had personal experience of the banditry which this poverty caused especially after the unification, and identified it later as a primitive form of social protest. He was strongly separatist in his sympathies, a feeling provoked widely among Sardinians by the exploitation by the North, Sardinia being the first of the Italian regions to form a separatist party. His hostility towards the rich and privileged and towards the Italian state administration and the mainland was still more the result of his personal experiences and knowledge of the problema del Mezzogiorno than reading of socialist texts.

Before becoming a committed socialist of marxist opinion he left Sardinia to attend the University of Turin. He arrived there in 1911 and won a scholarship which barely kept body and soul together. He was placed fifth in the examination, an examination in which Palmiro Togliatti was placed second. Togliatti remembers a "young man, dark, little, apparently very poor too, whose body seemed suffering and whose eyes were large and shining." They became close friends soon after, although Gramsci was enrolled in the faculties of philosophy and letters and Togliatti in law. Another close friend at this time was Angelo Tasca with whom Gramsci lodged in 1911. Gramsci embarked on an ambitious course of studies and at his first examinations did brilliantly receiving 30 in geography, 30 in glottology* and 27 in Greek and Latin grammar. It appears from his activities in 1911 and 1912, that he still wished to become a professor as he had in Sardinia. It is therefore arguable that he still wished to escape from his social origins as much as to change the system which caused the suffering they entailed. His unusual ability was evident from his publications on linguistics in learned journals and from the fact that one of his professors invited him to draw up the courses in that subject. However, at the examinations in the spring of 1914 he received much worse marks. This may be due to the conditions of starvation in which he lived, but it was also probably due to his increasing interest in socialism and the Socialist Party. The year after he discontinued his university course, although he still

* = Glossology, the definition and explanation of terms, or more broadly, linguistics — Ed.
seems until 1918 to have aspired to winning a degree in glottology. His friends and teachers felt that he could have had as many degrees as he liked, so remarkable were his talents. Gramsci was to develop into a true intellectual filled with contempt for the narrowness of the academic.

Two main factors impelled him towards socialism. First there was the influence of some of his teachers and secondly, the influence of the Young Socialist Movement.

Turin university was an isolated outpost of liberalism in a conservative city, ruled by the huge car-manufacturing complexes. It was not dominated by marxist philosophers as Italian universities had been in the nineties, but many of the professors had been socialists in that period and retained their sympathies. The man who most influenced Gramsci was the professor of literature, Umberto Cosmo, who was a follower of Benedetto Croce. Later Gramsci wrote very harshly of Cosmo and then regretted it, acknowledging that he was greatly indebted to Cosmo and had been excessively harsh. Gramsci’s acquaintance with Cosmo extended beyond the lecture hall. Evidently Cosmo used to lend or give money to Gramsci and his circle when they were in excessively penurious circumstances.

From Cosmo, Gramsci got not only his Croceian philosophy but also, that rare quality in Italians, his puritanism and his cult of political honesty. His beliefs on the obligation of the North to the South also derive from this period.

Cosmo was also a follower of Gaetano Salvemini, himself an alienated Southerner, who at that time enjoyed the status of Grand-Old-Manship among Southern if not Northern socialists. Salvemini’s socialism was highly humanitarian and intellectual and had as much to do with the values of the Enlightenment as with the values of Marx. Gramsci was later to attack Salvemini too, but at the beginning of the war almost heroworshipped him.

Through common enthusiasm for Salvemini, Gramsci built up contacts with members of the Socialist Young Federation of Turin whom he met in various clubs and bars in the neighbourhood in which he lived. Since his arrival in Turin he had had contact with Socialists (e.g. Tasca, who was a founder of the SYF) but he began to draw closer to the youth movement in 1913. The Youth Movement, too, had started with positivist beliefs and was moving via reading of Prezzolini, and Salvemini’s paper Unità towards a more militant socialism. It took some time for Gramsci to finally join the Socialist Party, something he did with Togliatti in 1914.
What really converted him to socialism, though as he himself admitted and as his actions during the war showed, it was a somewhat nebulous socialism, was his observation of the elections in Sardinia in 1913.29 Tasca later wrote that Gramsci described to him in a long letter that he "was struck by the transformation produced in that area by the participation of the peasant masses in the elections, although they did not know how to and could not yet use their new weapon to their own advantage (per conto loro)". As the mode of his conversation suggests, he was still concerned with the way in which socialism could help the Southern peasant. In 1914 he played a leading part in the attempt to get Salvemini to run for the Turin seat which Salvemini turned down. This support for Salvemini's candidature indicates that Gramsci was still a humanitarian socialist. He had not yet clarified his ideas. Indeed, during the war he favoured interventionism, while the official policy of his party was not to support the war. This error of judgement damaged his reputation and his attitudes at this time were frequently used against him in his disputes with the socialists after the war. Furthermore, he showed some signs of admiration for Mussolini, who was the Socialist Party Secretary until early in the war. Mussolini also supported Italian participation in the war. One of the reasons for this support was Mussolini's militancy, something Mussolini reputedly derived from Sorel's theories.

In explaining this vacillation, it must be remembered that Gramsci was born in Italy when the theories and groupings associated with fascism, socialism and idealism had not yet been separated. Crocean theory was, for example, both a source of idealism and marxism. Croce, himself, after a partial and disillusioning honeymoon with marxism of the sort taught in Italy in the 1890's turned temporarily to fascism, before turning away from it again. This was also the heyday of revolutionary syndicalism which dominated the socialist movement and which also provided some of the ideas behind fascism (though not in Gramsci's estimation).30 The first and second decades of the twentieth century saw in Italy, as elsewhere, a widespread alienation among the young of Italy which provided a seed-bed for both socialism and the nationalist movements which started to grow after 1911. It was possible before 1914 for a socialist to find himself in very strange company. It would be a fascinating study tracing the reasons for the number of socialists who ended up in the fascist camp, after having been honest and ardent socialists in the war years. It is salutary for socialists to realise, that fascism is not the "tool of monopoly capitalism" alone, it is also a mentally disturbed working class movement, especially in its early stages.
During the war Gramsci was, however, reading widely and acquiring a deep and authoritative understanding of theories associated with the working class movement. Most influential at this time were the theories of marxism and their syndicalist variants.

At this time he was working as a journalist on the Turin socialist paper *Grido del Popolo* and for *Avanti*. His articles written under the heading *Sotto la Mole* enjoyed considerable popularity. He himself through his dedication and his learning was accepted more and more as a theoretician. He also began to immerse himself in working class activities and life, living with the working class and like them. This gave him an invaluable advantage over the other theoreticians of the socialist party, and there were many of them, because they had completely lost touch with the Italian masses. Gramsci therefore knew how the workers of Turin felt and experienced at first hand the rising radicalism of the war.

In Turin the workers had been becoming more and more militant as conditions for the working class grew worse and worse in 1915-17. This continued the tradition of militancy which had ruled in that city for some years before the war. Indeed, the Turin workers and Italian workers as a whole became so militant under the pressures of wartime rationing and fall in standards of living that there were several armed risings in Italy during or just before Italy entered the war. The Italian situation in 1917 can be paralleled quite fairly with that in Russia and it remained so for some three years after 1917. It is a matter of debate whether a revolutionary situation existed in Europe during and just after the war. However, it seems beyond doubt that a situation which could have led to revolution if correctly utilised was present in Italy. Gramsci, close to the workers, was conscious of this unease, something he considered could be felt.

He was, early in 1917, groping towards his own understanding of marxism. In *La Citta Futura,* a paper which was all his own work and which only appeared once, in February 1917, he wedded Crocean idealism with marxism. Interestingly there were already similarities with some of Lenin's thought, though Gramsci had read no Lenin. Most of these similarities fell under two heads. First the rejection of the evolutionary theories of marxism favoured by the mature working class parties of Germany and secondly the introduction of the notion of will in utilising revolutionary situations. Both Lenin's and Gramsci's theories were activist theories emphasising the need for conscious activity before a revolution could be conducted. However, there were crucial differences of emphasis and content which make Gramsci's theory as a whole

* The City of the Future — Ed.
"qualitatively" different from that of Lenin. He argued that it was necessary to capture the masses' imagination for the revolution in the way that the revolutionaries (he meant intellectuals) had captured it before 1789, by establishing a mythical ideal state which all men could work for. (In the case of the French Revolution it had been the Rights of Man). Hence the first task was a struggle to secure the acceptance of an idea. Here his Croceian heritage looms large. Gramsci noted with some gratification that in Italy there was no ruling ideal state (there were borrowed and inappropriate models from overseas—note that the Statuto of 1848 was an unhappy attempt to wed Rousseau and British constitutional principles) and that therefore the ruling ideal did not have to be defeated before the new ideal Citta Futura could be introduced. I note, in anticipation, that he revised his opinion on this somewhat later, but in the revolutionary situation of 1917 it did not appear that any notion of an ideal state had hegemony over the minds of Italians.

To destroy or retard the development of the line of thought somewhat vaguely sketched in the Citta Futura came the news of the Russian revolutions. They had an enormous impact in Italy as they did elsewhere. In the Italian working class, Gramsci not excepted, Leninist theory was widely adopted as a sort of infallible guide on how to make a revolution. The result was the development in Gramsci's thought in 1919-1920 of theories which almost contradict those which he developed in La Citta Futura and which later formed the core of Gramscian thought which is valuable today. It is in this period that Gramsci was in the Leninist tradition. Even so, in his writings of this period can still be detected a wedding of ideas he had developed before Lenin became his mentor. Later this lack of purity was condemned by the Comintern as erring towards syndicalism.


2 J. Cammett, op.cit., p.190.

3 See for example the Gramscian ideas in Cahiers du Communisme June 1963, p.74 but note that the French leaders are quite hostile.

4 Carl Marzani, op.cit., p.5.


11 E. Hobsbawn, “*Primitive Rebels*” (Manchester, 1957) for a good example of this thesis. It must be considered next to accounts of terrorism against the peasantry such as those given by D. Dolci, *Waste*, (London, 1963).

12 N. Valeri, op.cit., p.63.


15 Gammett, op.cit., p.10.


17 J. Harvey, op.cit., p.114, “Many nights I cried secretly because my whole body was in pain” [as a result of carrying heavy loads]

18 *Lettere dal Carcere*, p.674.

19 He is reputed to have read it from the age of fourteen years.

20 *Ordine Nuovo*, p.323.

21 Ibid., p.86; See *Lettere etc.* p.161 for an account of being fired upon “Certamente era una comitita di buontemponi che voleva divertirsi a spaventarci” writes Gramsci and it was not “una storia di briganti,” but he could not have been sure.

22 See N. Valeri, op.cit., p.60.


24 J. Cammett, op.cit., p.17.

25 *Lettere dal Carcere*, p.412, 466.


27 Among Salvemini’s writings on the Southern peasantry see *Problemi educativi e sociali dell’ Italia di Oggi*.


29 Ibid.


Bill Parkinson

Bill Parkinson, who recently retired as General President of the Miners' Federation and as member of the National Committee of the Communist Party of Australia, talks to Theo Moody of his life and work and of his hopes for the future of the working-class movement.

IN 1847, the boy William Parkinson began work in the coal mines in Durham, north-east England. He was seven. His father, a miner, as his father had been before him, carried the lad to and from the pits each day on his back. It was in the nature of things in coal-mining Durham that, when William grew up, his son and, later, his grandson, also William, should go to work in the mines.

"The cottage where I was born on November 15, 1907, was only a stone's throw from the pits and, since I came from a family of miners (he was the fifth-generation miner) what else should I do?" says Bill Parkinson, who retired in November last after 13 years as General President of the Miners' Federation of Australia.

Times, however, were slightly more enlightened when the younger Bill entered the mines. He was twice the age at which his grandfather had started—14, then and now the minimum age in Britain at which pit boys could start work. (In Australia it is 16).

There were other opportunities, too, for young people. Young Bill was something of a football genius, and he was given full opportunity to make use of it. In 1919, when he was 12, he played international schoolboy football against Scotland, and against Wales and Scotland in 1920, becoming the first schoolboy in England to win three international caps. "Schoolboy football in those days had as big a following as the senior grades," says Bill. "When I played for England against Scotland at Stamford Bridge in 1920, there was a crowd of 42,000."

In 1924, the mining Parkinsons turned their backs on sooty old Durham and its mines for what seemed the brighter prospects of
the mines of Australia, and soon two generations—the father, Bill and his brother Jack—were carrying on the family coal mining tradition at Mt. Keira, on the south coast of New South Wales. (When Bill’s father retired on a miner’s pension he had spent 52 years in the mines “at the point of the pick”).

Bill found that work in the mines in Australia was just as tough as back in England (he calls mining “the dirtiest, most arduous and probably the most dangerous work anywhere”) and the owners just as greedy and as careless for the welfare of the miners. That fact, and the inspiring militancy of the Australian miners and their Federation in the constant struggle for better wages and working conditions nurtured the political and industrial education of Bill Parkinson—an education that carried him eventually to leadership of the Federation, and to recognition by both workers and employers as one of Australia’s most outstanding trade union administrators, advocates and orators. (As an orator Bill Parkinson is a most impressive platform figure. Short, solidly built, with a face as rough-hewn as you’d expect a miner’s to be, he is no thunderer; his calm reasoning as much as his eloquence is his strength).

Soon Bill was deeply involved in union activities. In 1926 he left Mt. Keira for a spell in the northern coal fields, but he returned to the south, and from 1930 to 1937, working in the Burragorang Valley, he was Secretary of the Nattai-Bulli Miners’ Lodge. In 1937 Bill Parkinson returned to Mt. Keira and was there until 1947 when he was elected President of the Southern District of the Miners’ Federation. It was in these years that Bill Parkinson’s political education grew apace.

Bill was a Labor man, as his family had always been. “Until 1938 I had always voted straight Labor,” Bill says. “It was about this time the Hughes-Evans group formed the left-wing State Labor Party in New South Wales and I was so impressed by their policies that, in the 1939-40 State elections I voted for their candidate, Bill Frame.

“About this time I was becoming interested in Socialism, too. It was a two-mile walk to the Mt. Keira mine and I used to make it each day with a bloke named Jack Smith, an old socialist. He and I would argue all the way about politics, about Hitler and Stalin and the war he said was coming. I had known there were Communists in the Federation, but it hadn’t concerned me very much. Now I was becoming really interested. Then one day Jack Smith handed me the booklet, The Socialist Sixth of the World, about the Soviet Union, by the Dean of Canterbury, the Rev.
Hewlett Johnson. I read it and re-read it, I was so impressed. I suppose you could call that the turning point.” In 1943 Bill Parkinson applied for and was admitted to membership of the Communist Party, “and, before I knew where I was, I was selling 43 Tribunes a week at Keira and had recruited another nine blokes to the Party.”

It was as a well-known and highly-respected Communist that Bill Parkinson was elected Southern District President of the Federation in 1947, and General President in 1954, succeeding the late Idris Williams. He held the position unopposed until his retirement in November. He was also General Vice-President for all except one year from 1947 to 1954, and for 14 years a member of the Miners’ Pensions Tribunal.

The mining industry has always been a turbulent one. The mineowner, notoriously a greedy employer, has always fought tenaciously against any improvement in miners’ wages or conditions. But the last 20 years, as turbulent as any in the history of the industry, have been years of great victories for the miners; because of the vigilance and unity of the leadership and the rank-and-file, the great technological changes in the industry, the mechanisation, have been accompanied by important gains for the miners.

But they have not been won without cost. In the 1949 general strike—which resulted in the miners winning long service leave payments—Bill Parkinson, then Southern District President, was one of five miners’ leaders jailed (he got six weeks for contempt of the Arbitration Court). The others were General President Idris Williams, General Secretary George Grant, Western District Secretary Jock King and Southern District Secretary Maurice Fitzgibbon.

Now, on his retirement, Bill Parkinson recalls some other notable events—tragedies, victories, setbacks—of those years:

The 1947 dust demonstrations, when 2,200 miners, their wives and retired miners demonstrated in Sydney against this menace, which was resulting in 10 per cent of South Coast miners coughing their lungs out every year. The improved conditions won by this demonstration are now known to every dusted mineworker in New South Wales.

The 28-day stay-in strike following closure of the Glen Davis mine. This strike resulted in workers for the first time in Australia receiving equity and alternative employment.
A tremendous change took place in the industry in 1954 with the Federation finally agreeing to extraction of pillar coal by mechanisation. This year also saw the beginning of heavy re­trenchments among mineworkers and, for the next four years the Federation was constantly engaged in struggle to lessen its impact. This long struggle culminated in the massive Town Hall rally in Sydney, which led to the Automation Inquiry, and the Federation's policy of full employment compelled State and Federal Governments to release money for public works to absorb re­trenched miners.

The miners in 1960 lost out in the protracted court hearing of their claim for a 35-hour week, but the extra week's annual leave granted gave what had been a miners' dream for many years — three holiday periods in each working year*—breaking the monotony that mineworkers are called on to endure as a result of being cut off from fresh air and sunlight for a quarter of their working lives.

1961 saw an event that brought pride to every member of the Federation—the 700-mile motorcade of Queensland miners from Collinsville to Brisbane in protest against the State Government's action in closing the Collinsville State Mine.

In 1966 the Federation was able to have the Long Service Leave Award substantially amended. As a result miners today have what are probably the best long service leave provisions among Aus­tralian workers. In the years since then the Federation was able to win substantial improvements in Miners' Pensions.

There were mine tragedies in those years, too: 1954 was the year of the Collinsville disaster when carbon dioxide claimed seven lives. It was only chance that it was not 107. In the same year carbon dioxide killed two miners at Helensburgh. 1965 re­corded the death of four miners in the Bulli disaster and 1966 took the lives of five men at Wyee.

Of these and earlier tragedies, Bill Parkinson says: "The undeni­able fact is that the coalmining industry, per capita, is the third largest killer in Australia, the only causes of death greater than fatal accidents in the mining industry being heart disease and associated conditions and all forms of malignant cancer."

Bill Parkinson says of what he believes to be tasks still ahead of the Miners' Federation:
"Number One on the list is the need for greater activity against the criminal war in Vietnam. I am convinced the organised trade

* Three weeks at Christmas, one week at Easter and one week in August-September school holidays.
union movement could play a much more important role to bring about an end to this war. Miners, like many other workers, have never confined themselves to narrow self interest and they know that wider political issues affect their lives. The Vietnam war is being paid for in many ways and it carries in it the risk of atomic war which could lead to world-wide destruction.

"Second task is the shorter working week, yet to be achieved.

"Third is the amalgamation of unions within the coalmining industry. I believe this to be imperative.

"Fourth is finalisation of the mineworkers’ pension scheme.

"Last, but not least is the need to develop a greater social consciousness of the tremendous threat that monopoly capitalism means to the Australian people and the international working class—and the fact that socialism is the only answer. Unity within the working class can and will determine this issue in favor of the working class.”

Indeed, Bill Parkinson is convinced that unity of all forces of the left is the supreme need of the day. Of all his achievements as President of the Miners’ Federation, Bill Parkinson is proudest of all that he has left it completely united — a condition that did not exist when he took over; the bitter political differences in the leadership then were seeping down to the rank and file. That has changed so much that, of his association with Federation General Secretary Bill Mahon (who has since died), Bill was able to say:

"I think our close, happy and successful association has proved conclusively that difference in party affiliations proves no obstacle when two men, charged with responsibility, are prepared to sit down and work at problems of their membership in a manner of unity, complete co-operation, trust and sincerity, one with the other, in the interests primarily of our members but at all times, generally, of the working class.”

Bill Parkinson says: “The thing is to sit down and talk it over and try to see and understand the other bloke’s point of view. My grandmother in England was something of a philosopher. She used to say to me: ‘Well, now, there’s a little bit of good in the worst of us and a little bit of bad in us all.’ It is in that belief that I have tried to operate within the Miners’ Federation.”
EVATT THE ENIGMA, by Allan Dalziel, Lansdowne Press, 186pp, $5.50.

WHY IS IT that, hardly had the Warren Commission completed its report on the assassination of John F. Kennedy before a whole library shelf of analysis, criticism and contradiction poured from the typewriters of American journalists, lawyers and academics, whereas here in Australia, 13 years after the inauguration of the Petrov Royal Commission, the only exposure of this most scandalous episode in Australian politico-legal history has been undertaken by a Communist writer and predictably treated as a non-book by press, pulpit and parliament?

Alan Dalziel, in his lively and perceptive recollections of H. V. Evatt, attributes such tame acceptance and apathy in the face of political outrage to the "sheeplike" characteristics of the Australian community. But was not Professor Hugo Wolfsohn closer to the mark when he suggested (some years ago in Dissent) that the distinguishing mark of Australia was not the conformism of the populace but the narrow philistinism of the Establishment?

In the United States the pundits and the dissenters are constantly engaged with one another, and their controversies rend the air in every direction. Here, until very recently, they have lived in separate worlds, and the media which might have brought them into abrasive contact served rather as supine props of the elite. The public, deprived of the nourishment of independent information and informed dissent, has inevitably displayed helplessness in the face of many issues outside the range of its immediate experience.

Most intellectuals reacted to their enforced isolation by various forms of academic introversion, in which state they could safely be disregarded. A minority identified themselves with the parties of political opposition, inviting the kind of massive discrediting for which this country ought to be notorious. Of these latter, Evatt was the most distinguished example, and it is a testament to the power of the Establishment that he finally became its star victim. The fact that his weaknesses and erratic qualities aided in his own destruction detracts not one whit from the malevolent ruthlessness of the campaign perpetrated against him.

The Petrov Commission was the climax of Evatt's struggle with the legions of conservative orthodoxy, and Dalziel rightly concentrates upon this period in outlining both the causes which animated Evatt and the response which he gave. Here he appeared both at his best and his worse, rambaging like an enraged bear against the highly organised conspiracy which opposed him and at the same time hitting out wildly against the imaginary foes which his suspicious and demanding mind conjured up at every turn.

When Prime Minister Menzies first pulled his Petrov rabbit out of the hat in April 1954, Evatt made the extraordinary mistake of taking it seriously and treating it in a non-partisan manner. The truth is, as Dalziel notes, that Evatt was never at home in the hurly-burly of the political game, and in this arena could easily be outwitted by the wily Ming. Evatt could intrigue with the best of them, as Dalziel again brings out with accounts of his secret meetings.
with Santamaria and other representatives of the Catholic Right, but the single-mindedness of his own ideals and ambitions blinded him to the interests of others and led him to treat them with a degree of opportunism which soon earned him a deep distrust.

A thorough-going egocentric and individualist, accustomed to remoteness from the throng by his many years of intellectual studies and his judicial duties, Evatt belonged more to the style of the labor aristocrats of England (Dalziel shrewdly mentions the name of Laski) than to the rough-hewn stamp of the Australian labor politician. An ebullience verging on larrikinism could not hide the arrogance and brilliance which divided him from most of his colleagues. He was attracted to the Labor Party, not by its traditions, but by the fact that it seemed the most appropriate vehicle for the nationalist and democratic values to which he was dedicated. He was in no sense a social reformer, and hence many of the central concerns of labor, and its divisions into Left and Right, meant nothing to him. He would cross such, to him, irrelevant boundaries in search of the backing which he sought to feed his overwhelming sense of personal mission.

His causes were those of the liberal nationalist, and he will be remembered as a foremost Australian patriot, a champion of the rule of law, a civil libertarian and a committed supporter of the concepts embodied in the United Nations Charter. On the High Court bench, as President of the UN, as Attorney-General and leader of the Labor Opposition he pursued these ideals with a zeal and courage unmatched by any other political luminary in our history.

It is easy to say that Evatt was inconsistent. His actions during the Coal Strike of 1949 were unquestionably in conflict with his civil liberties principles. He, who prided himself on the title of democrat, was autocratic in temperament and unmerciful to those who fell out with him. But, in a world where politics is invariably the art of trading principles for advantage, Evatt was conspicuous for the long line of names and titles bearing witness to the implacability of his commitment — Ratliff and Thomas, Devanny, Kisch, Communist Party Dissolution Act, 1951 Referendum, Petrov.

Evatt was baited into the Petrov Affair by wicked imputations against his personal staff. Once compelled to delve into the intricacies of its political chicanery he fought it with a tirelessness, courage and skill which soon led its authors to find an excuse for barring him from further participation. I had the opportunity to observe him closely during this period, and was amazed at the stamina and dedication of the man. Working uninterruptedly 20 hours a day for weeks on end, reducing all those compelled to keep up with him to physical wrecks, he surged on without apparent effect, fortified from the daily hamper basket which his chauffeur brought to a park near to the courthouse and the whisky flask which he carried in his hip pocket. Nevertheless, the strain did tell. The affair became an obsession, provoking irrationalities which estranged close supporters and admirers. The simultaneous break which he forced with the Industrial Group elements within the ALP seemed to drain the last reservoirs of strength and political acumen which this strange mercurial personality could summon up.

If ever Evatt needed to tap the popular springs of the labor movement, it was in the aftermath of the Petrov Affair and the split in the Labor Party, when he was desper-
ately trying to launch his party on the path of a political comeback. But he did not know how to do it. He had no populist attributes, and thought that the working people would follow his star blindly. He could not effectively combat the absurd pro-communist allegations made against him because he so little understood the world of politics. In point of fact, I doubt if he ever bothered to define his attitude to Communism very seriously; in the world of his ideas, it would rank as but another system, and in that political game wherein he stumbled so often communists were only one of the many elements which at various times he sought to harness to his chariot. So far as his own credo was concerned, it was conventionally liberal; thus he could speak convincingly of the 1951 Referendum proposals as "utterly non-British and the very antithesis of the glorious traditions of our race."

Mr. Dalziel's book does not pretend to be either biography or political history. Consequently, it does not supply answers to some of the most intriguing questions in Evatt's career—for example, the factors which led him to make his abrupt and shattering break with the Industrial Groups in 1954.

But it does trace the highlights of Evatt's outstanding life as barrister, historian, judge, statesman, politician and defender of public liberties. More valuable still, it describes with admirable objectivity the virtues and weaknesses of this astonishingly erudite, wilful, impetuous Australian. It is obvious that Dalziel himself is still not immune from the power of Evatt's personality, and attributes to him qualities which, in other contexts, he is conscientious enough to qualify or discount. Only those who did not know the man could be surprised at this. Evatt may not have been the most eloquent of advocates, but the force of his intellect and his overpowering self-confidence could easily oversway one's better judgment.

In some senses, Evatt was a political failure. But there is no question that, intellectually and morally, he stood head and shoulders above his arch-enemy, the Prime Minister of the day, not to speak of the puny figures at the moment of writing contesting the leadership of the Liberal Party. He deserves a definitive biography, but in the meantime he has been served well by his astute and humane secretary.

Rex Mortimer


Observations of Australia by travellers from overseas are frequently heard and read; less frequently heard or read are those comments made by Australians about other countries, especially on the earlier years of this century and the second half of last century. This anthology has brought together a number of such passages in which Australians have recorded their reflections and feelings on encounters abroad.

All the passages are selected from letters, memoirs, fiction or direct reports, written by well known literary figures. This could be regarded as a limitation but as Leonie Kramer points out in her Introduction to the book, the major works of these writers seem to declare them chiefly local or else narrowly nationalistic. However, one will be forced to reject this notion and see that not all Australians are uncritical and lack insight when they emerge from their southern isolation. For indeed, as the
passages move from the more historical ones, such as Henry Handel Richardson’s *The White Cliffs of Dover* and Rolf Boldrewood’s *England Home and Country*, in which the colonies are compared with the Old Country, to the more recent ones on the Vietnam War and the New York of this decade, the changing attitude of Australians to their own country and their deeper involvement and concern with the rest of the world is made obvious.

Unfortunately, this involvement has often been brought about by war. Thus, nearly half of the selection deals directly or indirectly with this subject. A. B. Paterson writes in the unfamiliar role of a war correspondent relating his encounters with men and situations in the Boer War. In *A Mexican Patriot*, Vance Palmer lucidly describes a skirmish between the Federal troops and the rebels. Then there are Hilda Freeman’s intriguing memories of the joy with which the Germans greeted the possibility of war. Another view of German patriotic enthusiasm is given by A. H. Chisholm in his description of “The Fuehrer’s meeting”. Action in North Africa is presented through an extract from a book of Alan Moorhead. The beginnings of the Spanish Civil War are introduced by the personal experiences of Nettie Palmer who was informed by her milkman that “a military rebellion’s broken out in Barcelona”. Hal Porter perceptively examines Post-War Japan.

Other aspects of Australian experience abroad include A. G. Stephens’ *Journey to Chicago* and Allan Ashbolt’s *New York in The Sixties*, written a little over half a century later. Both dispel the myth of American greatness, a mere creation of the American genius. Despite some concessions, their conclusions are also very similar. “The dollar is almighty, and even the cent comes within an ace of omnipotence.”

Mary Gilmore explains the ideals of the utopian communistic, Colonia Cosme, and gives an outline of her own life in that Paraguayan settlement. Sarah Bernhardt and Madame Marchesi are interviewed by Katharine Susannah Prichard in Paris. In two *Letters from London*, Henry Lawson gives advice to young writers and, with some feeling, describes the markets of Chapel Street. Other passages by Gilbert Murray, Christopher Brennan, Frederic Manning, Martin Boyd and Denis Warner are to be found.

Of course, in such a selection something is always omitted. But the diversity of the experiences which have been included and their manner of presentation are most adequate as a commentary on Australians abroad, and, undoubtedly, will arouse interest and provoke thought on the relationship of our country and the outside world.

**Janice Nash**

**BRING LARKS AND HEROES, by Thomas Keneally. Cassell, $3.75.**

THE HIGH acclaim that this novel has received seems to me symptomatic of a general impulse to over-praise a work because it is written by an Australian. Excessive praise of a work that simply does not merit it, can be detrimental to an author as well as misleading to the reader. A case in point is that of Judith Wright, whose early work was received with an enthusiasm that was inspired not so much by her poetry as by the fact that she was both female and Australian. The virtue of being Australian cannot however continue to conceal the shakiness of much of her work, and such is the case, though to a lesser extent, with Keneally.
Bring Larks and Heroes is Keneally's third novel. It is an interesting but essentially patchy work, and to acclaim it "the long-sought Great Australian Novel" is as ridiculous as it is misleading. In a penal colony in the south Pacific in the late eighteenth century (one whose conditions and terrain resemble those of Australia of the same period), Corporal Halloran takes a "secret bride", Ann Rush, since there is no Catholic priest to consecrate the union. Much attention is devoted to this issue and Keneally's concern is not so much with the ethics of the situation as with the contrast between the firmness with which Halloran keeps this unauthorised oath, and the shaky loyalty he accords his official oath to king and country.

We observe Halloran undergo the several physical and mental torments that a vicious system can impose on a man, and Keneally well makes live this colonial society of the late eighteenth century, and presents with force the brutality on which it is based. Halloran does not however seem sufficiently compelling a character to sustain the focus of the narrative. Keneally deliberately does not dwell on Halloran's personal torments—we see him always in a situation—because he intends us not to identify with the character but to see him as part of a more general situation—that of the ordinary man suffering at the hands of arrogant authority.

The hundred small humiliations suffered by both felons and officers at the hands of their superiors, are forcefully presented, and Keneally well shows how men work off such frustration and humiliation in savage treatment of their "inferiors". The novel is however flawed in that Keneally fails to achieve a balance between the presentation of a particular story (Halloran and Ann's), and its part of the novel as a whole.

Halloran's tender idealism with Ann points a contrast with the brutality of regimental life, but the emphasis on secret marriage and the strain it places on Ann's conscience, all seems not to have much purpose—in fact, Keneally has a tendency to introduce philosophical or theological arguments that are given a scope too large for the artistic purpose they serve. Hence Keneally at times seems to be putting his own ideas into Halloran's mouth, as for instance, Halloran's reflections on hanging which are hardly in keeping with his general character.

Halloran is moreover an essentially ordinary marine. His is a more sensitive and demanding conscience than most, certainly; but to see him as a sort of extremely aware Christ-figure on a spiritual journey (as some reviewers have suggested), fails to take account of the fact that Keneally places Halloran by gently ridiculing his idealism.

The affairs of Halloran pale in significance beside those of Mr. and Mrs. Blythe, in whose house Ann is kitchen-maid. Old Mrs. Blythe is a bitter, ulcerated woman with a "pious gut" that Mr. Blythe devoutly hopes to crack by starvation. Mrs. Blythe has an excessive concern for Ann's virginity, and Keneally whose manner is often elusive, only hints at the curiousness of the attachment between the old woman and the young girl. Much of the novel's force comes from the rather sordid manner in which this withered old woman identifies with Ann. (Interestingly enough, in the novel's stage version, "Halloran's Little Boat", shown recently at the Independent Theatre, Sydney, the perversion in the attachment is more strongly emphasised when Mrs. Blythe performs a grotesque sort of can-can on the occasion of Ann's death.)

Though parts of the novel are slack and it is sometimes difficult to
see the direction in which affairs are moving (as with the revolt at the Crescent), small incidents and portraits stand out excellently, especially those of the luckless Quinn and of the eunuch, Ewers. As for the "contemporary relevance" of this work, I doubt that one can always demand that a work have such relevance, though Halloran is partly the type of man destroyed by a brutal system, and the bitter (but at times acutely funny) relationship of the Blythes is always pertinent. This is not a "great" novel, but is nevertheless well worth reading.

Kerin Cantrell.

**DYNASTY,**
by Tony Morphett.
Jacaranda Press, 430pp, $4.95

"THE BOURGEOISIE . . . has left remaining no other nexus between man and man than naked self-interest, than callous 'cash payment.' . . . (It) has torn away from the family its sentimental veil, and has reduced the family relation to a mere money relation."—The Communist Manifesto.

Tony Morphett could well have used this quotation as a frontispiece for his new novel, Dynasty, an absorbing story of a dirty family fight for control of a newspaper empire. The theme is an affirmation of the Manifesto's thesis: three sons of an ageing newspaper proprietor, motivated by naked self-interest, are involved in a plan to steal from their father control of his newspaper. The father knows it and the action, which takes place over one day in the newspaper's board room, concerns the old man's attempts to undo the plan.

There are six men involved in the take-over plot the three sons, and three other directors—the editor of the newspaper, and a lawyer and a businessman who are interested in the paper purely as investors. They are all, in effect, creations of the old man, but it soon becomes clear that filial and personal loyalties will have no meaning here; it's just a greedy brawl for power and ownership.

As the board room battle is about to be joined, the old man muses: "They were going to get him . . . because he was sixty-eight. . . . Because his body had been born sixth-eight years before. And they were going to get him because he had taken this newspaper and made and moulded it. . . . His body had lasted too long for them, and today they would try to get him. Very politely. Very formally. All i's dotted, all t's crossed. Every manner well mannered. Every hungry set of eyes lowered. He had done things like it himself. Always so much politer than a court. No caps black, and every handshake golden."

Thus the stage is set and, from there, Author Morphett employs the very effective device of examining in depth each man concerned in the dirty little drama, the story of their lives and hopes, loves, adulteries and perverisions, and of the influences and motives that had brought them to the stage where, this day, they have to decide whether they are going to knife, or not knife, the old man.

At the close of each man's story, the novel moves back to the board room as the subject just dealt with, in his turn, votes on the elder son's motion to kick the old man upstairs. The shifts and twists in the board room fight keep the action moving swiftly and excitingly.

In the background are the deals, the pressures, the lobbying, the spying, the hidden hatreds, the bedroom blackmailing and counter-blackmailing, and there is, in the end, not a clean pair of hands among the lot of them. As each man has to declare himself,
the reader knows just why he did it—for power, for revenge, for preservation. And who wins? The reader can find out for himself. Except for the point Morphett seems to make that, in such an affair, there can be no real winner. Just a lot of soiled people.

Tony Morphett has drawn his characters well, though not with any great depth. He has shown considerable skill in having his characters (with three exceptions) nameless. Perhaps he has overdrawn the character of Unk, the dedicated editor, with his driving ambition to get revenge on the man who had filched his father’s newspaper.

Who are the other people modelled on: I don’t think Tony Morphett has meant to portray any known Australian newspaper identities, past or present. The central character, the old man, I would say is a composite picture.

All in all, this is a good novel, a praiseworthy attempt to lift Australian fiction from the suburbs and the bush track. Surely this must be the first Australian novel set in the boardroom of a big industry. A minor flaw is that, because of the flashback method involving characters so closely interwoven, there is necessarily repetition and some flagging in action.

I think a more valid criticism would be that Tony Morphett has been too gentle in his treatment. Given that his story is not a pretty one, the Australian newspaper industry is a much dirtier business than he has pictured. Some of the takeovers that have occurred among Australian newspapers have been much bloodier and more sordid affairs than that in Dynasty. This reviewer once worked on a metropolitan newspaper on which was a fellow reporter, a junior on the finance page, a very amiable fellow whose only visible assets were his weekly pay packet. Now he controls the whole shebang, and the ousted proprietor was left a (relatively) poor man. How he did it I’ll never understand.

The newspaper proprietor of Dynasty is a man of some conscience and integrity (for instance, he fights his sons to maintain his editorial policy of opposing the Communist Party Dissolution Bill). Show me a newspaper proprietor like that and I’ll show you Lasseter’s Lost Reef.

Dynasty also tends to over-romanticise the newspaper industry. There are too many characters, dedicated editors and reporters, with that mythical ink in their blood. If such exist I have not met them in 40 years in the business.

For all the merit of Dynasty—and it has plenty—many readers may not accept the lavish praise bestowed on it (on the dustjacket) by publisher Stephen Murray-Smith as “adding significantly to the achievement of the novel in this country.” But they should not let that deter them. Dynasty is well worth reading and you don’t have to be a newspaper man to enjoy it.

Tom Lardner

A PROPHETIC MINORITY, by Jack Newfield. Anthony Blond. $2.80.

ITS CRITICS, of whom there are many ranged throughout the entire political spectrum, call it half-baked, idealistic to a fault, and naive. Its supporters, which include men of the calibre of Michael Harrington, see it as courageous, dedicated and existential. Its practical accomplishments, often overlooked by those who write it off as nihilist or chronic rejectionist, are impressive by any standards. It sees itself as the product of the generation “class of sixty” and beyond,
and it gave birth to the slogan—"You can't trust anyone over thirty." It is the American New Left—a phenomenon which is at yet too new, too complex and too ill-defined by all the usual guide-lines to submit to easy classification, politico-social analysis and interpretation.

Nevertheless, this committed author's book gives a sensitive and clear portrayal of the nature of the New Left, its origins, growth and achievements, its motivates and direction and its place in the confused blur of the current American and world political and ideological scene. In particular the work examines the relationship of the New Left with the older and more traditional left wing parties.

This child of the sixties was conceived immediately after the prince of a new emergent liberality had kissed the sleeping beauty of public conscience and awareness which has lain dormant through the Eisenhower decade of the fifties—a decade when the under-thirties were known as the "silent generation." Newfield dates its actual birth in February 1960, when four negro students staged a now legendary "sit-in" at a segregated coffee lounge in Woolworths Store, Greensboro, North Carolina. In a manner which was soon to be symptomatic of the age, the incident triggered off social explosions almost nuclear in magnitude, and a chain reaction of sequences involving "sit-ins", "teach-ins" (even a "sing-in" on one occasion) and massive demonstrations by both colored and white protestors throughout the United States.

Movements came into being which are now regarded as power points of the New Left loose federation—the better known being the Student Non-violent Co-ordinating Committee (SNCC) and Students for a Democratic Society (SDS).

The SNCC did not take long to acquire its heroes, legends and martyrs for it had within its ranks young men and women who were prepared to penetrate unarmed and alone, the racially prejudiced "deep south" of the United States, to encourage registration of Negro voters. Newfield tells of violence, terror, and murder, condoned and unpunished by law. His chapter on "Amite County" in Mississippi—an area which New-Lefters dub the "Ninth Circle of Hell"—evokes admiration for the courage and practical dedication shown by the young crusaders, and horror at the stench of the hate and violence laden atmosphere which his pen conveys.

The achievements of the New Left in making effective the legislation which gives the Negro the right to vote and which has made practicable the dream envisaged in the legislation to integrate all institutes of learning have been impressive. Where no Negroes were registered, over a thousand are now on the rolls. Where civil rights workers were persecuted and victimised they can now move freely around many areas of the deep South and local leadership is developing. The sacrifices and ordeals of students like Meredith in the cause of desegregated education have not been in vain.

But the New Left does not confine itself to civil rights issues—although adherents have been active in that field. The SDS has done much to rally supporting protest against the American aggression in Vietnam and South America.

What basic ideals spur these young people on? And why New Left? Newfield holds that what is basically new is its ecumenical mixture of political traditions that were once murderous rivals in Russia, Spain, France and the United States. It contains within it, and often within individuals, ele--
ments of anarchism, socialism, pacificism, existentialism, humanism, transcendentalism, bohemianism, populism, mysticism and black nationalism. It abhors exclusionism holding that “human freedom and participation should be extended, that every individual is noble and that a new society based on love and trust must be created.” It rejects definition—holding that too much definition and debate on definition leads to factionalism—the disease of theology and, as they see it, of the “old left.”

New Lefters reject absolutely the artificial and materialistic values of the Western World with its computer mentality, racism, poverty and war. They revolt against the institutions of impersonalising bureaucracies and are sickened by the hypocrisy that divides America’s ideals from her actions. They see this hypocrisy too in the attitudes and actions of many leaders of the community.

They reject dogma, dislike formal organisation and hold that an individual should sustain himself by healthy liberal and pragmatic thinking rather than from the brackish well of formulated thought and crystallised credo. Children of a new age, they deplore the mindless anti-communism so prevalent in the US (and of course in Australia). Most New Lefters cannot recall the excesses of Stalinism or the incidents on the reverse side of the Cold War coin. They can see around them however communists who have helped the legitimate forces of national aspirations to throw off reactionary regimes, they have seen communists denied freedom of speech and other civil liberties, they themselves have been the victims of persecution, and they have knowledge of the nefarious activities of the CIA.

Nevertheless they also reject many of the traditional socialist and communist creeds. Not because they consider them a “menace to freedom and our Way of Life” but because they see them as irrelevant. They see their own politics as a response to their domestic experience rather than as an ideology shaped primarily by the Soviet, Chinese and Cuban revolutions. Of the “old Left” Newfield says—“I also suspect the Hereditary left will not grow much, because it is too weighted down . . . because it misses completely this generation’s indictment of impersonal bureaucracies and the existential void of the middle class.”

There are faults which are acknowledged. The New Lefters are weak on providing creative alternatives to many aspects of the life they criticise. They are often hopelessly romantic about violence and authoritarianism, and there is a strong element of irrationality and anti-intellectualism in its ranks. Not that intellectualism is absent. Newfield seems fond of referring to C. Wright Mills, Albert Camus, Paul Goodman, John Stuart Mill, Max Weber, Peter Kropotkin, Franz Fanon and Herbert Marcuse. The names Bob Dylan, Phil Ochs, Tim Leary and Allen Ginsley also appear as embodiments of the New Left ideals. Apparently some over-thirties can be trusted—at least to some extent!

The New Left will not die a natural death, but its growth can be stunted, mutated or it can even be brutally murdered by the spirit of the new McCarthyism which is manifesting itself at all levels in American society today. This ranges from the denial of the right of a lawfully elected State Legislator to take his seat because of his declared opposition to the Vietnam war, to the restriction of free speech and the frequent beatings up and even murder of those advocating New Left ideals. The going will become tougher in 1968.

The New Left may indeed be a prophetic minority. It is certainly a
minority. Its estimated quarter of a million adherents in the USA means that only one in eight hundred Americans subscribe to its ideals. It could well be something that will grow and help purify the present poisoned air of the "Free World." On the other hand it could be something which flowered too quickly in the deceptive short lived thaw of the Cold War and is now destined only to wither in the face of the harsher climate of "reality." Only time will tell.

G. STANLEY MOORE


CONGRATULATIONS are due for those responsible for the reprinting of this valuable outline of trade union development in Australia up to the end of the First World War.

Originally published in 1921 as one of a WEA Series on economic, political and social studies, the work remains the only national history of trade unionism in existence.

Sutcliffe's History provides essential background material for any study of Australian trade unionism. It reveals its origin in the craft benefit societies coming directly from or patterned on those of the British Isles and shows how the pattern changed, with the taking on of characteristics flowing from the "wide, brown land," in the formation of mass organisations, particularly in the pastoral and mining industries.

The book is particularly useful for students in its painstaking chronicling of the many moves to bridge distances and cut across State boundaries to bring into being nationally representative bodies.

The great need for such outlines is almost self-evident. In a thought-provoking foreword, G. W. Ford, of the University of New South Wales, has much to say about the paucity of written trade union histories. ... "In particular, authors of high school history texts almost invariably include glowing accounts of the growth of such industries as wool and steel ... yet with rare notable exceptions these writers barely mention, let alone discuss, the contribution of sweat, blood and tears of the workers, whose toil, sacrifice and tragedy were the real life blood of our developing industry."

Bravo, Mr. Ford, for a refreshingly enlightened approach!

On the other hand, it must be said that there is little of "sweat, blood and tears" in Sutcliffe's rather colorless story. It is an outline of the institutions built by the workers, with an emphasis on parliamentary reflections of them, rather than of their industrial struggles. Some of the outstanding battles of the 1880's are not even mentioned, the big clash of the 1890's is given but cursory treatment, as is also the case with the 1909-10 struggles and the general strike of 1917.

Mr. Ford himself criticises the work for its lack of attention to syndicalist influences and emphasises its narrowness, but, of course, the author himself categorised it as "a preliminary step to a more exhaustive and intensive examination". It is not really an interpretative work at all in the sense of E. W. Campbell's analysis of Australian labor history from the marxist standpoint or Brian Fitzpatrick's history of the labor movement. Hence, the value of the book is limited, but it is very valuable, nevertheless.

Surveying the rather bleak field, Mr. Ford has brickbats for both academics
and trade unionists for their lack of appreciation of the need for recording labor history. In my view, the approach is valid. I would go further, indeed, and assert that trade union officials, with rare exceptions, underestimate the value of even taking the elementary step of preserving and classifying their records, let alone ensuring that their story is told.

Mr. Ford correctly complains of an "anti-intellectual" approach on the part of some union leaders, but I have a word for the intellectuals, too! Academics should do much more to encourage trade unions to do their job by rendering material assistance and extending publication facilities... it is an open secret that University pigeon-holes are stacked with documents on trade union history, written as theses, unhonored and unpublished.

Mr. Ford does well to emphasise the value of trade union history. He points out that the general reaction to industrial crises is to cry for some new law or "a more severe application of old laws" rather than to study the historical causes of the crisis. I would underline that by making so bold as to say that trade union leaders would not make so many mistakes today if they had examined what happened yesterday.

Sutcliffe spoke prophetically when he wrote, in 1921, that the trade union movement would be called upon to play "a most important part in the solution of economic and social problems after the war." The period was to see perhaps the greatest ferment of ideas in labor history, leading to the adoption of the socialisation objective by the Labor Party, the attempts to form a One Big Union of the working class, and the formation at last of a national trade union centre in the Australian Council of Trade Unions.

Sutcliffe's words apply with equal force in this period, after the second world war.

Has comparable progress been made? Material on origins and early development like that provided by Sutcliffe's *History* is essential reading, and the chronicle needs to be brought up to date. And the vast changes that have been made in industrial technology and the class structure of Australian society need to be thoroughly examined from the standpoint of the role, policies and mission of the trade union movement. The quickened interest in labor history which Mr. Ford goes so far as to call "a new era", of which the reprinting of this book is an example, gives some promise of the need being fulfilled.

**EDGAR ROSS**

**ERA OF MAN OR ROBOT?**

*by G. Volkov*,

*Progress Publishers, Moscow, 183 pp, 55c.*

**THIS SMALL PAPERBACK** deals with the sociological problems of the technical revolution and no one concerned with today's and tomorrow's world can afford to miss reading it. The author surveys the vital sociological issues, many of them controversial, which spring from the current swift scientific and technological progress. This is done from a marxist view of the trends and laws of technical and scientific development. It raises vigorous polemic with anti-marxist and reformist theories and conclusions.

Some woolly thinking and careless use of terms revealed in the Communist Party pre-Congress discussion could have been avoided and greater clarity reached on the issues of the day had this book, particularly its final chapter, been available. So if you want to know the difference between the "second industrial revolution" and the "scientific and technical revolution", and lots more, be sure you read this booklet.

**VIN BOURKE**
THE FREE UNIVERSITY

These days when everything has a price tag something free is, at least, novel.

Sydney’s Free University commenced late in 1967 in a near city house where students pay nominal fees and lecturers are unpaid. In a range of courses upwards of 100 students are already participating.

The response is not because fees are nominal or that status will be achieved which can later be exchanged for lucrative employment. The Free University offers no degrees.

Like similar American experiments it is a reaction to present day universities where market value replaces the real meaning of learning, inquiry, research.

Terry Irving, one of the founders of the Free University, expressed it this way:

“The trouble with our mass university is not that it is helping Australia to achieve the objectives of economic growth, but that it does not ask the purpose of economic growth. And by not concerning itself with ends, its means atrophy.”

In an initial appeal of the committee for the Free University, aims were stated thus:

“It is in spirit, not in cash—it will get no government grants, no scholarship scheme. It grants no degrees and offers no status. It is a small group of students and teachers who come together outside the established university system because they find that system inadequate. It takes on the major tasks of a university—advanced research and advanced-level teaching related to its research—but extends its interests to issues and subject-matters frozen out of the regular university courses. It is based on co-operation instead of competition; it breaks down the formal role-division of student and staff, inferior and superior; and experiments with teaching methods. Ultimately, it stands or falls by the enthusiasm of its members.”

Initially enthusiasm has not been lacking and courses will continue through 1968. Those wishing to participate should call at the Free University, 30 Calder Rd., Darlington. No formal qualifications are required; but courses will be pitched at university standard.
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