McFarlane and Taft on workers' control

Interview with Marcuse
Contents

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COMMENT 1

THEORIES AND PRACTICES OF WORKERS' CONTROL 9
Bruce McFarlane

COMMUNISTS AND WORKERS' CONTROL 20
Bernie Taft

DISCUSSION 27
In Defence of Workers' Control
Workers' Control Today and Tomorrow
Sino-Soviet Dispute
In Defence of the Dictatorship
The Case of Solzhenitsyn
Page from a Diary

INTERVIEW WITH MARCUSE 36

THE ART OF ERNST NEIZVESTNY 40-41

BEGINNING OR END? 48
Warren Osmond
Rowan Cahill

FOR INDEPENDENCE AND PEACE 58
Mitsuhiro Kaneko

BOOK REVIEWS 68

INDEX 77

MURDER WILL OUT. This old truth is again verified as the blood-chilling story of Song My village burst out of the suppression which kept it from the world for 20 months. Of course, this horror was known in Vietnam, along with many other American and allied war crimes, explaining again the unshakable determination of the Vietnamese people to fight to the end for victory and freedom. This one crime, exposed to light of day, will shake the whole foundation of the American (and Australian) case for remaining in Vietnam — the big lie that they stay only to prevent massacre of the “good” Vietnamese (read, the pro-American puppets).

Its impact was correctly stated in a London Times editorial:
The charges affect the reputation of the whole American Army. Unless conclusively disproved they must materially influence the conduct of the war, the negotiations for peace, and even the position of President Nixon. (Times 20/11/69).

An American Army “judicial investigation” will try desperately to whitewash the crime — as the brass has already stated, the US Government interests have to be considered — or pin it upon some junior officer. This is already impossible. It cannot be suppressed, as the Green Beret case was suppressed, nor can it be treated as an aberration. A mountain of evidence exists to show this crime is typical of the whole war of imperialist genocide. The US Army already knew of the crime, for one of its own photographers had taken pictures of the massacre.

Mass indiscriminate bombing by B52’s continues in the South, stepped up since Johnson was forced to halt bombing the North. The atrocities of napalm, chemical warfare and other refinements of technological war as waged by the most advanced capitalist civilisation have partially hidden the brutalising individual cruelty deliberately developed by the Army, under the detached, long distance “button-pushing” mass cruelty dealt out in cold blood, without soiling hands. Yet there is enough — more than enough — evidence that this olympian cruelty is supplemented by deliberate encouragement of mass murder of civilians, burning down of villages, torture of prisoners. This inculcation of cruelty is underpinned by racialism and anti-communist indoctrination,
copied by the Australian Army which teaches its soldiers to “kill those slant-eyed yellow bastards” wearing peasant hats.

The American imperialist power structure — President, Pentagon, press and plutocracy — is directly responsible for Song My and all the horrors of Vietnam. The United States refused to accept the Geneva Agreement, and set to work to frustrate it. The first step was engineering the coup to put its placeman Ngo Dinh Diem in power and, at the end, engineering the coup in which he was murdered. Ironically enough, the anniversary of Diem’s death is now celebrated as the puppet Republic’s “National Day”.

It was the Ngo Dinh Diem regime which began the policy of mass repressions — jailings, tortures, murders. And the Americans backed these actions all the way. When these excesses produced the inevitable counter, peasant uprisings and guerilla fighting, the Americans moved in their troops — first “advisers”, then whole fighting units.

Song My explains some of the fantastic reports emanating from the American side of the war. There was hardly ever a battle report which did not give Vietcong casualties as from four to ten times the US losses, allegedly tallied in that gruesome US contribution to anti-guerilla war, the “body count”. Enough has been written from American sources to know that this was often exaggerated too, but the US figures are a bit less incredible if civilians killed are added to soldiers, and if Song My was not an isolated case. Indeed, the Americans really regard every Vietnamese as a Liberation Army fighter. And they are not so far from the truth; for there is a deep and burning hatred for the US invaders and their South Vietnamese puppets.

The Pentagon recently released their figures of total “body count”. This claimed over 700,000 NLF and North Vietnamese dead in military action, compared with 150,000 “Allied” dead (including 40,000 Americans). This figure is unbelievable except if it includes women, children and old men deliberately killed in military actions, as at Song My.

This terrible slaughter is the final indictment of the American-Australian war, hundreds of thousands are massacred, allegedly to save the Vietnamese people from possible massacre should the Americans withdraw. This is the last and weakest of the American “big lies”, without basis in Vietnamese reality and is only an excuse for the continued effort to “save face” and maintain an American presence in South East Asia. This determination is shown again in the fake agreement to “return Okinawa to Japan”, yet hanging on to nuclear bases in that restive island.
NIXON HAS LEARNT NOTHING from Johnson's humiliation and collapse. Like Johnson, he promised peace with honor, and, like him, is delivering only more war with more dishonour. Behind the facade of peace talk, fake "withdrawals" and protestations of injured innocence, Nixon and his advisers are working out a last desperate strategy for "victory". Key to this strategy is to "Vietnamise" the war, to get Asians to kill Asians — or as US Ambassador to Saigon Ellsworth Bunker cynically said "change the colour of the dead". This is a permanent American imperial strategy which has had many "successes" but is becoming harder and harder to operate.

Nixon's latest strategy will not succeed, any more than did the various strategies worked out by a succession of military and political strategists. Yet the longer the war goes on, the greater the death roll and the more villages will suffer the fate of Song My.

A great and sustained effort is needed to end the war. This will have to be forced upon the governments involved. While this is first of all the US government, the first responsibility of Australians who oppose the war is to force their own government out of the war, simultaneously lifting the campaign against American imperialism to a new level. We should speak out, louder and clearer, for the truth that only the National Liberation Front and the Provisional Revolutionary Government have the program to end the war. Supporting every effort for withdrawal of Australian troops — for this would be a psychological blow to the US war, already unprecedentedly unpopular at home and abroad — it is also necessary to speak out against the US policy of "Vietnamisation". Mr. Whitlam may regard this new Nixon manoeuvre as vindication of his Vietnam withdrawal policy, as he has stated, but this cannot be the position of any genuine anti-imperialist.

Nixon's policy will fail. Vietnamese military and political realities, the position at home and the world climate of opinion all continue to make it impossible for it to work. His appeal to the so-called "great silent majority" met with — Silence. He ignores at his peril the depth and breadth of the anti-war movement. Johnson, too, ridiculed the protesters and called them agents of Hanoi. Vietnam remains the key issue of American politics, affecting every other issue.

MR. GORTON FOUND THIS to be true of Australian politics, suddenly and surprisingly for him. In 1966, Vietnam, the threat of Asian Communism and China's Southward Thrust were
election winners. In 1969, a Gallup Poll showed 55 per cent favouring Australian withdrawal, and suddenly the old bogies were not enough to produce the usual conditioned reflex voting. In this new situation, the Liberal-Country-DLP coalition found itself without a plan of campaign, facing an unresponsive audience, unable to seize the initiative from a smooth opponent whose policies were also smoothed and non-abrasive.

In the deeper sense, these elections were an exercise in consensus politics. The most important issue was Vietnam, and there was a real difference in policies. Mr. Whitlam promised withdrawal by June, and this was an important step forward by the Labor Party. So was the promise to abolish conscription. Yet even here, the Whitlam position was not so basically different from Gorton's as it first appeared. Whitlam's policy is "Vietnamisation"; as already mentioned, he found Nixon's policy agreeing with his concepts. Any conscription would be rendered redundant by establishing an efficient professional army — for what? This question was left open.

On other issues, there were differences, of course. Most important of these was abolition of penal clauses, and there were attractive promises on education, health, housing, pensions. These differences, important in themselves, represented no real problems to the existing setup. This could be seen in two press comments, one before the election, the other after. The first referred to the lack of concern felt in big business circles and on the Stock Exchange as a Labor swing became obvious; the other, gratuitous advice to the Liberals to do as Menzies did: implement ALP policies without acknowledgment.

The latter advice is sure to be followed, at least on some domestic issues. That it would even be given, let alone accepted, says a lot about similarity of the party leaders policies and perhaps of their fundamental philosophies. The first report is interesting in itself, but a further question is posed. Was the "neutrality" of big business reflected in the unusual press impartiality towards Labor or rather, the lessened partiality against Labor — reinforced by increased financial and other help? Quite active rumors, and not uninformed, suggest that the unusual profit reported on the ALP campaign was not caused by any huge jump in union donations, nor by the usual and well-known business sources. New donors are suggested; the name of the American Chase National Bank is the most often mentioned.

Of course, this type of "insurance" politics is not unknown wherever two party systems exist. The "good sense" of hard-headed businessmen is so often vindicated by Labor and Social
Democratic politicians that they cannot be blamed for investing in Australian. Wilson in Britain, Brandt in West Germany have not presaged Red Revolution — why should Whitlam be any greater threat?

YET IT WAS A LEFT SHIFT, despite all this. How to estimate the significance of this left swing is becoming a big political question, first of all for the left itself (in its broadest meaning). And this is true for the Communist Party as well as the ALP left, for the New Left, for every left trend. It can be exaggerated, as it will be by those who want to justify some centrist or other theory of transforming the ALP into a revolutionary party. It can be discussed by those who take an anarchist or super-left position that votes don’t matter since parliament is a fraud. But it will be discussed by all.

The vote was an important move away from conservatism, placing the coalition in its only real danger since 1961 — and the danger is greater than then, since it cannot be removed by an economic upswing. In this tangible sense it was an obvious swing to the left. If it was not a conscious move to the left — and this seems clear from the policies involved and some of the social groupings which moved — it provides new opportunities for the left.

Of these, the most intangible is perhaps the most important in the long run. This is the discontent, sensed and felt rather than rationalised, with things as they are. This discontent did not arise directly from economic problems of unemployment and insecurity as in 1961 or more starkly in the 30’s and 40’s. Yet the deep discontent is no less real and its causes are even more significant. The discontent was more with the system, with its effects upon people’s lives and their development as human beings, it is more moral, a disgust and revulsion against inequalities and injustice, against war and conscription, against lies and liars, against the prevalence of double standards, against the obvious manipulation of society by those at the top.

This feeling will not subside, no matter what changes are made by the Liberal Party, under Gorton or any other conceivable leader. (Nor would it have disappeared if Whitlam had become Prime Minister, because its causes would have remained.)

GORTON WILL GO, despite his win over McMahon and his subsequent humiliation of the re-elected deputy leader. Gorton’s style does not suit the more conservative Liberal establishment, although they picked him precisely because his style was seen as
an attractive image. And his personal politics have turned out a bit radical for them, even if it is compensated by an impeccably rightwing posture on most vital issues. Gorton apparently aspires to a type of Gaullism for himself and for Australian capitalism in South East Asia. Like de Gaulle he would create a mythos of Australian nationalism, seek a type of personal rule, and manoeuvre on the international arena, trying to use the divisions between the great powers.

The only trouble is that Australia is not France, and Gorton no de Gaulle. Neither by tradition nor training do the policy makers of the establishment lean to Bonapartism; the Menzies-type ascendancy was rather in the British bourgeois-aristocrat tradition. Australia cannot aspire to any such international independence even as France displayed under de Gaulle — and this was probably punctured by the events of May, 1968. And Gorton himself certainly lacks most of de Gaulle's characteristics, except a considerable vanity, which usually dissipates itself in non-political pursuits anyway.

THE SPLIT IN CONSERVATISM is real and deep. It is compounded of real policy differences, of personal antagonisms (frustrated ambition and wounded pride are deep emotions) and sectional interests. Gorton's new ministry is remarkable for the extremists it has promoted to join W. C. Wentworth, and for some unlikely ministerial allotments. In the latter category Snedden as Minister for Labor must take the prize. Perhaps he did go to University at the same time as Bob Hawke, but this didn't create a beautiful friendship. Nor is he any match for the latter, as their TV encounter showed. Even if it's not true that the Law Faculty at the University of W.A. carried "with hilarity" a motion congratulating Snedden on his earlier appointment as Attorney-General, he is obviously no intellectual giant. And the same might be said of most other Gorton appointments. Thus the disappointed and the bitter will find it easy to seek their revenge.

Divisions like these are not easily healed, even under the exhortation to "hang together or we'll hang separately". They are also caused and complicated by deeper divisions within the system itself. These divisions are over policies of national development, affecting huge monied interests, involving a clash of monopoly groupings. The notorious Trade-Treasury clash, not just between Ministers but also between the capable top policymakers of the bureaucracy, is involved as well (and in fact this difference is itself a reflection of the clash). In the final analysis, it could be said that the clash is over foreign investment and
control of the economy — not so much the principle, but the degree. And this affects everything, including foreign policy. Gorton was not joking when he claimed privately that the CIA was out to get him. True or not, the claim shows how he feels about certain American influences in Australia.

THE NEW POLITICAL SITUATION surely favours the left, although the main beneficiary of the electoral swing was Labor under Whitlam. The Labor Party’s differences remain, although they appear by contrast small. They were reflected in caucus voting for Senate deputy-leader and Executive. The first went to the right (and not to Whitlam’s own preference, Senator Bishop); the second saw some strengthening of the left. Mr. Whitlam is prepared to make concessions to all ideologies for the sake of unity and electoral success. This is easier because he is not first an ideologist, though temperamentally on the right. After all, his overriding ambition is to become Prime Minister, as a personal desire rather than an ideological commitment.

The Whitlam strategy will be a parliamentary offensive, to exploit the divisions, to win the Senate and either force an early election or take over in 1972. This is not a bad reformist strategy, and could well succeed. But the left should not be sold on it. It would contain the movement outside, the best guarantee of defeating Liberal governments and the best preparation for that real challenge to the system which is the objective of all genuinely left politics.

THE STRIKE MOVEMENT IS DEVELOPING fast. Even Mr. Snedden prophesises a bigger upsurge next year, as the ACTU rejects the government “offer” to tone down the penal clauses and the strike wave rolls on. Certain new features of the strike movement are worth noting. The SA rubber mills strike, and the much bigger dispute at Ford, are marked by a stubborn determination to stay out and bitterness against the management’s contemptuous rejection of workers’ claims (in the Ford case, the foreign control is blamed, correctly). Immigrant workers are deeply involved, too, and they influence the determination to stay out longer.

Paralysis of the penal powers, caused by the Government’s fear of mass response to their clear ACTU Congress call, weakens arbitration and in fact raises new doubts about the arbitration system itself. Exciting new possibilities exist for the union movement. The main obstacles to realising these are most important, the rightwing opposition to militancy and action, and then a different type of union conservatism which can affect the left
as well. The main problem by far is the rightwing influence; but effective struggle against the rightwing can itself be hindered by conservatism. The new mood for action will make big demands on all trends in the unions, as will the need for dynamic changes in union programs and structures. The need and possibility for such changes have been shown by the changes demanded by unionists in the old bureaucratic structures, most dramatically in ultimate success of the long rank and file campaign to win and revitalise the AWU in NSW. This is no isolated example; it is the shape of things to come, an earnest of the new mood and its potential.

THE FUTURE OF UNIONISM is one of the major issues facing the workers' movement, the left as a whole and the Communist Party in particular. The Communist Party's coming Congress, now proposed for Easter, will certainly be one of its most important. It is no secret that there is a division of opinion in the Party, which the Congress will have to decide. What is becoming clearer is that this division is not just about Czechoslovakia, but ranges over a much wider field. It concerns the very concept of socialism — and that is the importance of Czechoslovakia. It concerns the concept of democracy, workers' control and self-management, and this in turn raises issues about the union movement and the way revolutionaries should work to modernise this great movement, to bring it closer to the essential challenge to monopoly domination, to the system itself.

Much of the argument about the "leading role" of working class and party makes no analysis of what is meant, nor of how to translate these aims into reality. The developing discussion on trade unionism and its present problems will demand more than generalities and parroting of dogmas. It will be an important debate at Congress and before.

This discussion, already begun more than a year ago, is now becoming widespread in the union movement as well as within the Party. It is very closely connected with the main issue for the Congress, elaboration of the Party's concept of socialist strategy for Australia. The decisive part the working class must play in socialist revolution ensures deep attention to burning issues of the workers' movement and unionism today.

The 22nd Congress of the CPA is sure to be full of interest and clash of views. Serious observers of political developments, no matter what their position, will not be able to ignore the discussions already begun in the Party, and outside, which will continue until Congress assembles.
A lecturer at ANU reviews some of the attitudes to and experiences of workers' control in a paper given to the Sydney Workers' Control Conference held last August.

WORKERS' CONTROL and "self-management" are being discussed widely today in both capitalist countries and in Eastern Europe. Whereas pre-war controversies were on a purely theoretical level, the modern discussion has also been influenced by practical experience with factory control in Yugoslavia (1952-1969), Algeria (1963-1965), Cuba (1964-1968) and China (1967-1969).

It may be useful to define workers' control and self-management differently; although the two things tend to be regarded as one and the same thing in socialist countries, this is not necessarily the case in capitalist societies. Self-management may be regarded as the management of affairs of various institutions by their lower echelons. Hence we get student power, nurses' power, journalists' power. Workers' control involves self-management of factories by the working class, coupled with a working class ideology involving opposition to bureaucracy and to "incomes policies" imposed by capitalists, the State or the Party-state. (In Yugoslavia, for example, they have self-management of factories, but not workers' control in the full sense; they have plant democracy but not full political control by workers' delegates over national issues; they have workers' councils in every enterprise, but not yet a parliament of workers' councils' deputies.)

Workers' control is being discussed today for a definite reason. It is an aspect of a proletarian culture which confronts the hegemony of bourgeois culture. It is, at the same time, a bastion against the tendency of industrial society to produce a hierarchy of scientists, administrators and controllers.

Why is the notion of a working class culture important in relation to the movement for workers' control? One reason was given by the French Marxist writer Georges Sorel1: "the successes obtained by politicians in their attempts to make what they call the proletarian influence felt in middle class organisations, constitutes a very great obstacle to the notion of class war." Sorel goes

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on to argue that the working class movement must be very careful of politicians, administrators and intellectuals who come forward as allies in the revolutionary or syndicalist movement. He points out that their culture is necessarily not the producer-ethic which confronts the competitive, consumer ethic of the bourgeoisie. Such elements, in his view, are bound to destroy a successful revolutionary movement or to take control of a successful revolution. The ongoing revolution requires a massive proletarian culture if it is to survive.

Today, in the industrial societies of capitalism and State capitalism (and including the "workers" states of Eastern Europe), workers' control is the main aim of those who uphold the producer ethic and proletarian culture as a way of living: co-operation rather than competition, productive creativity rather than exploitation of other humans. The highest peak of this ethic is the general strike — O'Shea (1969), Hungary (1956) and Czechoslovakia (1968) illustrate this clearly.

For socialist intellectuals — marxists — workers' control has always been of central interest because in their view socialism can only develop as a radical critique of its dialectical opposite — capitalist or bureaucratic control. The most radical thinkers here are G. Sorel and the anarchist school who also hold that workers' control involves a struggle with trade unionism — that trade unions are the enemy of proletarian praxis and activity, and of the free development of working class creativity. They concluded that organised trade unions have, historically, smashed syndicalism and workers' control — that they are "bourgeois" organisations moulded in the image of bourgeois society.

After 1890, the idea of workers' control and self-management became associated with the theory of socialism. Many revolutionaries saw socialism as a collective organisation of economic life, based on mass organisations of a sectional and functional kind, the members of which could therefore participate in the shaping of concrete decisions, concerning the management of economic questions: Socialism was not perceived by them as a system in which mass organisations merely serve to support authoritarian decisions made by governments.

Thus, in the scheme of Austrian revolutionary Hertzka², there was to be workers' control of factories, while a number of co-equal functional councils, all popularly elected, would administer social and economic affairs. Such a scheme has much in common with Yugoslav experiments after 1952³.

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II

The first exercise of workers' control in the full sense was the Paris Commune of 1871. It was not under the "leadership" of marxists, but of two other labor parties, although both Marx⁴ and Lenin⁵ saw in it the embryo of a future proletarian state. The main features of government under the Paris Commune were

Occupation of all factories and enterprises and their management by elected councils of workers;

Control of the state by elected deputies, all of whom were subject to rotation and recall;

Abolition of the army and the arming of the people;

Abolition of the bureaucracy and the cutting of the salaries of all officials to the average wage.

The Paris Commune failed, however, to fully smash the bourgeois state. In the event it was drowned in blood by the combined forces of West European reaction. In 1918, Soviet Republics, established in Hungary and Bavaria met a similar fate.

Lenin, in April 1917, in his celebrated April Theses advocated a Soviet State modelled on the Paris Commune — a state of no army or bureaucracy separated from the people, political organs made up of elected delegates subject to rotation and recall⁶.

In November 1917 the Russian Railwaymen's Union, Vikzhel, took over the administration of the railways on its own account and acted as an independent power; in short it played the role of a mammoth factory committee exercising workers' control, and recognising no interference from central political authority⁷. However, this event was short lived, and a decree of 26 March 1918 gave to the Peoples' Commissar for Communication dictatorial powers in matters relating to railway transport. Draft statutes on workers' control were, however, drawn up by Lenin on 9 November 1917, within a day or two of the revolutionary uprising. They read as follows:

1 Workers' control over the production, storage, purchase and sale of all products and raw materials shall be introduced in all industrial, commercial, banking, agricultural and other enterprises employing not less than five workers and office employees (together) or with an annual turnover of not less than 10,000 rubles.

⁴ K. Marx, The Civil War in France.
⁶ V. I. Lenin, "The Tasks of the Proletariat in Our Revolution", Loc. Cit.
2 Workers’ control shall be exercised by all the workers and office employees of an enterprise, either directly, if the enterprise is small enough to permit it, or through their elected representatives, who shall be elected immediately at general meetings, at which minutes of the elections shall be taken and the names of those elected communicated to the government and to the local Soviets of Workers’, Soldiers’ and Peasants’ Deputies.

3 Unless permission is given by the elected representatives of the workers and office employees, the suspension of work of an enterprise or an industrial establishment of state importance (see Clause 7), or any change in its operation is strictly prohibited.

4 The elected representatives shall be given access to all books and documents and to all warehouses and stocks of materials, instruments and products, without exception.

5 The decisions of the elected representatives of the workers and office employees are binding upon the owners of enterprises and may be annulled only by the trade unions and their congresses.

6 In all enterprises of state importance all owners and all representatives of the workers and office employees elected for the purpose of exercising workers’ control shall be answerable to the state for the maintenance of the strictest order and discipline and for the protection of property. Persons guilty of dereliction of duty, concealment of stocks, accounts etc., shall be punished by the confiscation of the whole of their property and by imprisonment for a term of up to five years.

7 By enterprises of state importance are meant all enterprises working for defence, or in any way connected with the manufacture of articles necessary for the existence of the masses of the population.

8 More detailed rules on workers control shall be drawn up by the local Soviets of Workers’ Deputies and by conferences of factory committees, and also by committees of office employees at general meetings of their representatives.

However, the organised centralism made necessary by “War Communism” and its aftermath overtook Lenin’s experimental ideas. Later in his Notes on Bukharin’s Economics of the Transition Period, Lenin noted that workers’ control was only possible if combined with a policy of levelling incomes and strong consolidation of the working class as the ruling class in all the cells of society’s economic system. In the 1920 controversy over the role of trade unions Lenin argued that “ours is not actually a workers’ state . . . But that is not all. Our party programme shows that ours is a workers’ state with bureaucratic distortions.”

The Soviet Union was, for Lenin, by 1922 a bureaucratic state, unable to bring about such a levelling of incomes. At the March 1922 Party Congress Lenin noted:

What we lack is clear enough. The ruling stratum of the communists is lacking in proletarian culture. Let us look at Moscow. This mass of bureaucrats — who


is leading whom? The 4,700 responsible communists, or the other way round? I do not believe you can honestly say the communists are leading this mass. To put it honestly, they are not the leaders but the led.¹⁰

Later, at the end of 1922, Lenin described the State apparatus as "borrowed from Tsarism and hardly touched by the Soviet world... a bourgeois and Tsarist mechanism."¹¹ Under these conditions, Lenin's ideas about workers' control could not get off the ground.

In the first months following the Soviet October Revolution of 1917, then, various forms of self-management were established in the factories of St. Petersburg and Moscow, but they were replaced, under the stress of civil war, by a system of administration featured by increasing powers of State-appointed directors and a near-militarisation of labor. By 1919 the various "workers' opposition" groups within the Bolshevik Party had posed the need, for a return of workers' control, but the civil war precluded the success of such a re-introduction. With the "New Economic Policy" of 1921, the demand was raised anew for the re-introduction of workers' control in factories as a method of checking the power of the growing bureaucratic strata in the Soviet economy. By 1931, however, the Soviet Government, headed by J. V. Stalin, had removed the last remnants of workers' participation in actual management and had made the State-appointed director the supreme authority in all enterprises, subject only to higher State bodies and unhampered by any control from below.

In the decades that followed the Soviet State and economy was constructed on the basis of a highly centralised system of planning and economic administration. The role of workers was restricted to simply advising how best to increase production and reduce waste. The need of the Soviet State, in 1921, to "call back" the bureaucracy to run the factories and state organs (made necessary by the physical destruction of working class militants in the Civil War) has left a "hangover" in the USSR that is yet to be fully combated. This consists of the tendency of any bureaucracy to protect its power and its privileges, both of which are threatened by workers' control in the factories and self-management of social affairs. While rank and file members of the Communist Party have operated on the same basis as ordinary citizens, this is not the case with elements at the top of the State organs who have a superior access to imported goods, quality housing and foreign travel.

¹⁰ Quoted by C. Harman in International Socialism, No. 30, Autumn 1967, p. 11.
¹¹ Quoted in Max Schachtman, The Struggle For The New Course, N.Y. 1943, p. 150.
In 1963, Khrushchev indicated during his tour of Yugoslavia that the USSR could learn from some aspects (not all) of the workers' council system in that country. But little has been heard of this idea since: what economic "democracy" has been practised has been in the direction of increased authority and autonomy of managers of enterprises in their relations with State organs.

In the process of finding their own "road" to socialism after 1950 Yugoslav leaders constructed a new system based on markets, decentralised administration and workers' management. This system has had profound effects on socialist thought and practice in the last two decades. Moreover, Yugoslavia experiments have had considerable influence in the underdeveloped world, where leaders are not keen on a maximum rate of investment and are looking for ways of finding mass enthusiasm for economic policies.

It was in Algeria that workers' self-management became a crucial plank of official policy. Throughout their struggle for independence, which was achieved in July, 1962, the Algerian leaders had maintained close links with Yugoslavia — which had been the first Socialist country to support their Revolution and had given substantial economic and military aid. Yugoslavia had immense prestige in post-Independent Algeria. It was not unnatural that Algerians should look closely at self-management of the Yugoslav variety.

In effect Algeria had no real Government for four months after Independence. It was only in October 1962 that the first Ben Bella government was formed. In those four months the people themselves in many places took the initiative and operated the farms and factories abandoned by their European owners. They began to spontaneously form "management committees" in a number of places to manage these farms. Over two million acres of the best land had been abandoned. The first act of the Ben Bella Government after its formation was to launch a harvest campaign. The abandoned land and factories were declared "Biens Vacants" (abandoned property) and all transactions in them banned. Decrees published on 22 October and the 23 November 1962 set up "Management Committees" on all abandoned property "only recognising a state of affairs that the working masses in their patriotic and revolutionary spirit had created throughout the country."

When the harvesting campaign had proved a success and famine no longer threatened, the Ben Bella government had to decide the future of the abandoned farms and factories. When the original owners failed to return by March 1963 the Government

promulgated a series of decrees in March 1963 taking over the abandoned farms and factories in the name of the State and entrusting managerial power to elected “Management Committees”. Nearly two and a half million acres of the best farmland was thus placed under self-management as well as some 400 industrial enterprises.

The Algerian experience attempted “autogestion” on a grand scale — grander in many ways than the Yugoslav experience. It threw up interesting economic discussions about the desirable institutional structure of a developing economy and the way this is linked to economic policy.

III

In Western capitalist societies, perspectives about workers’ control are quite different from the theory and practice in socialist states. The biggest movement was the demand in Britain for workers’ control in the railway, coalmining and engineering industries during 1910-1922. Syndicalists and guild socialists were prominent in these struggles. The Trade Union Congress in Britain also supported for a time demands for workers’ participation. The British Labor Party, although not very enthusiastic about these ideas, was forced to include in its 1918 Program “steadily increasing participation of the workers in the control of the railway and mining industries”, once these were transferred to public ownership. After 1920, the TUC and the Labor Party lost interest, especially after the defeats at experiments with workers’ control in the building industries and in engineering firms, brought on by the combined force of the Government and the employers.13

After 1922 the unions were in full retreat in Britain. With heavy unemployment, unions had to fight purely defensive battles, merely to preserve the improvements in working conditions they had achieved between 1913 and 1922. Under these conditions the demands for nationalisation and workers’ control were dropped, although the idea of workers’ control persisted in Labor ranks under the illusion that a Labor Government was the essential prerequisite to the realisation of this ideal.

After 1964, a grass-roots movement for workers’ control of the docks and the steel industry gained momentum in Britain. A number of conferences were held at Hull and Sheffield in which “counter-plans” for the control of these industries were drawn up and endorsed.14 The Prime-Minister Mr. Wilson in a reply to a

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14 See A. Topham and K. Coates, *Workers’ Control*. 

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letter from Hull Conference noted that "workers' participation" was part of Labor policy, but this did not include "workers' control of the Yugoslav kind."

IV

For any social revolution to effectively challenge the capitalist economic power structure, there will have to be an imperative rooted in conflict between technical and economic change and the control over these by the existing institutional structure. Also important is the subjective will to bring about change — the moral drive for socialism. One imperative is the appearance of the “triple revolution” at the very time a small oligarchy has taken control of Australian society. As the impact of the triple revolution unfolds, many people may come to understand the implications of what a “one-dimensional” society is really like. The aim of the New Left is to bring about by educational agitation, demonstrations and other challenges to bureaucratic power, a public awareness of the need to begin the process of self-management of our affairs, because this will be the only way to use the triple revolution for social purposes that are democratically devised.

What do Australian Left writers mean by the “triple revolution”? Basically, it is the simultaneous impact of automation, cybernetics and eugenics. The first element is the upheaval in production due to automation. Automation — the use of machines as controllers of the process of production — is already well developed in the USA, UK and USSR. It is qualitatively greater in its impact than the previous kind of technical change which was brought about through mechanisation. Unlike mechanisation, automation would make a big reduction in the demand for labor, particularly if introduced on a wide front. This would include a fall in demand for white-collar labor, since one of the most important trends is towards low-cost automation of small and medium-scale offices and factories not merely of large ones. As one engineer has put it, "low cost automation heralds a big movement in this direction, giving the ordinary small engineering shop the opportunity for flexible cheap automatic production . . . all these machines do automatically what was previously done by human hands and minds."15

In other words, automation does not affect merely the large mass-production plant. It affects, just as much, the ordinary small engineering shop, and therefore, the white-coated machine minder and the office worker as well.

We can no longer think of the "offsetting "effects — extra employment — of higher productivity of the economy. The pro-

ductivity will not come in the form of *more production from more employment*, but in the form of *higher real product per man hour with a reduced labor force*. Automation replaces workers because machines can be made to exhibit *intelligence* — to set up goals, make plans, consider hypotheses and recognise analogies. This is a completely new threat to the use of humans as factors of production. It is quite definite, as scientists have pointed out, that "a computer can control industrial processes . . . in fact industrial engineers can now devise processes so intricate that it would be difficult, if not impossible to control them with human workers."\(^{16}\)

These tendencies will be re-inforced by the second aspect of the triple revolution — *cybernetics*. It was not for nothing that the founder of the theory of cybernetics, Norbert Wiener, described it as the "science of control". Cybernetics studies systems of elements interacting on one another — it has established that the behaviour of a system depends not only on the way in which its elements operate, but also on the way in which the elements of the system are "coupled" to one another. This is a revolution in communication and knowledge, and its widest application in industry and technology has been to produce self-governing machines and devices — machines which repair themselves and other machines; machines which are self-regulating; machines which need no human beings.

*Eugenics* is the development of the science of population control. It has been greatly influenced by cybernetic theory, as well as other experiments (such as the experiments of injecting a foetus with chemicals to counter certain tendencies such as homosexuality). Population control, nightmare of Aldous Huxley, is already within the reach of any ruthless dictatorship. How far off is the full impact of the triple revolution? Probably not more than 30 to 50 years. It is no longer in the category of space fiction. Few scientists will regard it as "fantastic", or disagree that our present generation may have the last opportunity to change society before a system akin to Brave New World is established.

The implications for any "leftist" are quite clear: the triple revolution cannot be left to the Establishment to introduce and control. Automation and cybernetics on a wide front cannot be combated by strikes. They will provide the Establishment with unheard-of and irrevocable power, unless self-management of production and planning is understood now, practised now, in preparation for bringing the triple revolution under social control.

The New Left seeks mass direct action against the Establishments — big and small, in order to give people experience in self-

confidence. It does this because it seeks to ensure the non-bureaucratic character of post-capitalist society. It holds that the infallible road to totalitarianism is Fabian tinkering and ALP-type “socialism by stealth” which excludes the mass of the people from control. A major task of the New Left, then, is to shift the whole focus of the debate about social change.

In Australia, we are still at the stage of arguing about the technicalities of economic management and the improvement of our bourgeois political system. But these were issues of the 1930's too — a period of excitement in which the proposals advanced may be regarded in retrospect as the left wing of normal progress rather than the right wing of revolutionary change. For the long-term future, the criteria for reform needs to be more “revolutionary” than this, in the sense that they cannot be granted in the present conditions of the economic system. More particularly, the areas chosen for long-run reform need to be somehow linked to a new burst of idealism and enthusiasm for really “brave new worlds”. They ought to go beyond mere “economism”, material demands and class interests.

The first sphere of activity is to reduce the social dominance and economic power of the controllers of big business. The second might be to cut down the role of the state and its intrusion into the individual's areas of action. The third should widen the scope for self-management in economic and social life — in the workplace, in local government, in intermediate planning bodies of all kinds. Even today these demands are “revolutionary” — each challenges a power-point of the capitalist system.

A number of basic dilemmas arise, however, in putting forward programs of workers' control and self-management at this point of time and within the framework of a capitalist society. We would be wise to spell them out as bluntly and brutally as possible.

1 Any genuine demand for workers' control in a capitalist factory must require the opening of all books and financial accounts in order to test whether extra costs of safety, higher wages, etc., really "threaten" investments and markets. You cannot divorce workers' control over union organisation, dismissals, speed-ups, etc., from control over business affairs. Workers' control cannot stop at the level of "strengthening shop-steward committees" and policing of production technique and work discipline. It soon escalates into a more militant threat to control over the enterprise. Militants should always encourage this escalation, especially when met with “no capacity to pay” arguments.

2 There tends to be a clash between syndicalists and others who propagate workers' control as a revolutionary objective and the
reality of modern trade union structures and attitudes. Unions embrace a large number of non-revolutionary workers and even the most militant are forced to dilute revolutionary objectives they might otherwise uphold. Worker control advocates are then faced either by reformist unions which are purely defensive, or revolutionary union leaders who are ineffective in this direction in the current phase of capitalist development.

3. Workers' control presumes workers' control within unions. Union officials cannot advocate this concept for society unless they practise it themselves. Such workers' control of unions would probably involve the right to recall officials, to impose average wages on officials, to make all strikes automatically "official" and to automatically reject all forms of "income policy" at the industry or national level.

4. All social-engineering blueprints about planning, nationalisation, workers' control, etc., under capitalism tend to fail, not because political strategists and social-engineers cannot draw, but because the rules and perspective they are forced to adopt are distilled from the very structure they wish to do away with, and the application of such blueprints, even if possible, tends to reinforce that structure. This is the danger of ready-made schemes for co-participation or even workers' control of the docks, etc., which are made within the basic rules of the game of capitalism. Workers' control under these conditions will be unable to fight effectively. Eventually, they can be transmuted into productivity agreements and other compromises: into instruments for disciplining the workers.

5. Any really socialist concept of workers' control of production has a definite relationship to workers' power or control of the state — under both capitalism and socialism. All programs which ignore the existence of these relationships, and just assume that workers' control is possible in capitalist production will be likely to succumb to bourgeois pressures. This means that any conference or movement promoting workers' control must carefully study:

- the contemporary role of the union bureaucracies;
- the role of the state in a system of neo-capitalism and state monopoly capitalism;
- the compatibility of reformism and revolution.

It would be wise to incorporate the results of such analysis into any program of workers' control.
Bernie Taft

COMMUNISTS AND WORKERS' CONTROL

The following article is based on a report made to the National Executive of the Communist Party in October. Following the report a resolution was carried unanimously supporting the concept of workers' control and calling on communists to promote it in unions and workplaces.

THE RECENT DISCUSSIONS on workers' control in Australia reflect a general revival of interest in the demands of workers' control in modern form. There have been widespread debates among socialists in Western Europe on some of the theoretical and practical questions involved in such concepts as workers' control, participation and self-management. The discussion reflects a deep feeling of the need for social control, for workers' rights and for an effective voice, for grass roots democracy.

The purpose of this article is to focus attention on the demand for workers' control as an important medium for a socialist strategy in advanced capitalist countries. It is based on the estimation that the factors which have brought this demand to the fore in other countries operate increasingly in Australia and provide favourable conditions for propagation of workers' control. The revival in the demand for workers' control is due to several factors:

1 The changed conditions in industry, due to the scientific and technological revolution. This has lead to greatly increased production, often with fewer workers, to changes in working conditions, to greater mobility, to job evaluations, often to increased intensity of work, to the loss of some jobs and to a growth of the need for skilled workers. These are changes which have a far-reaching effect on the workers, but in which they have no say. It leads to a growth of the feeling and the demand that they ought to have a say in developments which directly affect their lives.

2 The development of the modern, "mass society", the growth in size of institutions and of bureaucratic structures leads to an increasing feeling of insignificance among ordinary people, of being unable to be heard, of being ineffective in this society. The demand for forms of direct control can be seen as revolt against the big institutions, against the increasingly depersonalised character of the mass society. Such things as take-overs and far-reaching technolo-
gical changes often leading to decisions affecting the future of workers involved being made from afar, seem to have an irresistible, over-powering character. It seems too big, too overwhelming and the individual appears powerless before it. The big and bureaucratic structures are often (precisely because of their very size and bureaucracy) not able to cope adequately with the requirements of a rapidly changing society. They even become obstacles in the way of necessary changes. This is a complex and growing problem for all mass societies.

3 The experiences of the socialist countries have added to the search for suitable forms of working class control. The socialist countries too face the problems of the mass society, the dehumanising aspects of the industrial system, the lack of involvement, alienation and non-participation. The deformations of socialism and the developments which flowed from them gave rise to a new search for suitable forms of social control. One of the stated goals of the economic reforms in the socialist countries is to achieve greater participation by the workers in various forms of local management as distinct from the centralised directive form of management of the industrialisation period, though the results so far achieved are not very great.

4 As many of the pressing economic problems have been partially met, other, and often new needs come to the surface. The May '68 events in France which gave rise to various forms of self-action and local initiative, and which revealed a latent revolutionary potential, brought a new impetus to the discussion on rank and file control, direct democracy and workers’ control as part of a socialist strategy for advanced capitalist countries.

In Australia these questions are not yet on the agenda to the same extent partly because large-scale retrenchment, unemployment, retraining of big sections of the work force, intensification of work (which exist, of course) have not yet assumed a mass character in our expanding economy, which can still absorb some of these problems better than other comparable countries. In addition socialists have been tardy in introducing these matters into the organised working class. However the trend is in the same direction. The problem is clear enough, but solutions differ. Even the terms “workers’ control”, “participation” or “self-management” have different meanings to different people. Broadly there are four types of responses, or solutions offered to these problems:

1 There are those who say that workers’ control is an illusion without first establishing a socialist system and that Socialism is workers’ control. That means that the demand for workers’ control is identical with the demand for socialism. This view is based on a double misunderstanding. Firstly workers’ control does not mean
workers “taking over” under capitalism. The ruling class would certainly not stand by and watch that. Workers’ control is a means of gradually preparing the conditions whereby social change is placed on the agenda.

Secondly, it is surely a simplistic belief that socialism automatically solves these problems. Lenin in The Threatening Catastrophe And How to Avert It written in September 1917, before the October revolution speaks of “Control, supervision, accounting . . . encroaching upon the omnipotence of the landowner and capitalists . . .” He certainly did not see workers’ control as identical with socialism, but as the means of preparing the conditions for the socialist transformation.

2 There is the utopian reaction which revives some of the old anarchist ideas, which ignore political struggle and political power. They often counterpose workers’ control to political struggles, political parties and the trade unions, in some cases to all trade unions irrespective of policies and attitudes.

3 The reformist approach is orientated towards “partnership” with the owners, towards reducing workers’ dissatisfaction by giving them (or rather some of their representatives) a voice, a feeling of participation, at the same time preserving the sacred rights of the owners of industry. “Participation” gives the workers’ representatives responsibility without substantial rights when essentials are involved. It is a method of integrating the workers’ organisations into the capitalist system, of adapting them to the needs of capitalism. In West Germany where a good deal of practical experience in participation exists, many workers’ representatives have been “absorbed” on the Boards of the big concerns.

This is an element in the new strategy of the ruling class, which has found that it can now absorb a great many workers’ demands that previously seemed fundamental, and which it had to reject. The scientific and technological revolution has provided it with new opportunities for adaptation. This is shown in wage struggles. It is possible for the ruling class to “give” increases and wages and higher living standards in the shape of more consumer goods without in any way altering the division of income.

Certainly in the post-war years there has been no notable change in the distribution of wealth. Studies in Britain have established that, contrary to popular belief, there has been no change in the distribution of income during the last century. (Between 1870 and 1950 wages’ share of the national income in Britain has varied between 36.6% and 42.6%). This occurred despite economic expansion and higher living standards in terms of more consumer
goods. Where there have been changes, they have, on a global scale, not been in favour of the working class. In West Germany, where much has been made of the new "prosperity for all", 305,000 families (1.7% of households) own 35% of all private fortunes and approximately 70% of all means of production. In addition to the above, where necessary the ruling class can recoup wage increases by a variety of devices such as price rises, taxation policy, decline of social services, or the rising cost of some social services.

It is interesting to note that whereas in the past many employers regarded participation as a dirty word, today it is the conscious policy of the more "enlightened" employers and their industrial psychologists to encourage workers' participation, to give a feeling of "belonging" and of course, to prevent them from taking a revolutionary path.

All this does not mean that militant struggles for economic demands have lost their importance. It does mean that the ruling class seeks to channel all workers' demands into avenues that the system can absorb. This capacity for absorption is considerable, certainly much greater than many socialists believed. This means that in present conditions militancy on economic questions can generally be contained. Of course the employers prefer docile trade union leaders, but they can cope with the militants that confine themselves to economic demands. What they really fear are demands that go beyond this, demands that challenge and encroach upon their sacred rights of decision making, of undivided control, of ownership and non-accountability. The same applies to areas of war and peace, of defence and foreign policy.

4 A revolutionary approach to workers' control

We are dealing here with workers' control as an issue under capitalism. After the ending of the capitalist system this problem takes on new forms, centring around workers' self-management.

Workers' control does not mean workers running industry under capitalism. It does not even mean workers controlling industry. It means workers having some control over the way in which the capitalists run industry, over their decisions, and having a growing measure of control, which encroaches more and more on the sacred domain of the ruling class. It means controlling the controllers. It is not participation as described above, although what many workers understand by participation are in fact measures of workers' control. It should not be counterposed to the trade unions, although it has a distinct role to play, which gives full scope to the knowledge, initiative, and creative ability of the workers on the job.
The demand for workers' control has revolutionary implications, it is an important means of advancing the fighting capacity and revolutionary orientation of the working class. Correctly approached it is a demand that cannot be fully absorbed, yet which is realistic, sensible, and which can gain mass support. The demand for workers' control has only real significance if it fits into and is part of a wider revolutionary strategy. It will only get accepted and succeed in its aims if it is seen in this light.

In Australia the prospects for a fundamental change in society, for a social transformation are not short-term, they are rather long-term. A revolutionary is one who works towards realising such a perspective, preparing it step by step, that is, creating the preconditions for such a radical change. It can hardly be claimed that all those who aim at a fundamental change in society are consciously and systematically working towards it. There is certainly no consensus or even a systematic conception of how to achieve it, and work towards it.

Socialism as a goal will never be achieved unless some of its values are demonstrated and practised now. In a society where other values predominate (lack of concern for others, the ethos of the "consumer society", apathy, lack of involvement, etc.) the need for socialism will not be felt and understood in a mass way, unless its values contest and successfully contest the established values of the present society. Workers' control has this feature — it is a vision of the future society, it prepares the worker to run society, it acts as a safeguard that socialism will become the kind of society that we are aiming for.

Capitalism rules in Australia today not by force, but because its ideas and values dominate society, because of its hegemony in ideas. The workers, by and large, accept this. A viable socialist strategy must be based on an objective analysis of the Australian working class and its ideas and attitudes as it is today, and of the likely trends of development. There have been two significant changes in Australian working class attitudes in recent years.

Firstly, a notable growth of militancy among significant sections, especially the younger and more highly skilled workers, including some white collar workers. This is generally confined to economic questions and is often associated with views of the trade unions as successful pressure groups. This militancy is growing, whilst of course, a large number of workers are not yet involved in militant struggles of any nature.

Secondly, along with greater militancy there has also grown a greater acceptance of capitalist values and of the capitalist system, socialist ideals have dimmed, there is a growth of preoccupation
with material things and a wider penetration of the ethos of the consumer society.

The growth of the technical intelligentsia, and the more highly trained and better educated workers, with their widening horizons has led to a growing feeling of alienation among these generally better paid workers. They feel the contradiction between the role they play in the process of production and their lack of power in decision making. They feel disfranchised and the need for a voice. It is these workers who exert pressure for trade union democracy, and the modernisation of the trade union movement. This is an important leverage point for revolutionary activity.

A viable socialist strategy for Australia must be based on contesting the hegemony of the ruling class. It must prepare the ground by challenging capitalist values with socialist values. This can not be left until after the socialist revolution, for there will be no socialist revolution unless and until this contest is won. This calls for a total challenge to all the bourgeois values of our society. The old strategic concept which was largely based on a major economic breakdown, now increasingly felt to be unrealistic, has not been adequately replaced. Such a vacuum helps the spread of bourgeois ideology. Certainly there will be political and social crises of different kinds in the future but unless socialists' ideas achieve dominance we will not be able to take advantage of such crises.

The problem is to find suitable forms of counter-hegemonic activities. Workers' control is such a form. Designed to restrict the bosses' powers step by step, it prepares the working class for the ultimate contest. For workers' control to be part of such a counter-hegemonic strategy it must be based on some of the following considerations: It is no substitute for political action, or for other revolutionary struggles. It should not have an anti-trade union edge, particularly where the official trade union supports and encourages it. It should include such demands as restriction and control over the bosses' right to hire and fire, speed-up, work organisation, allocation of jobs, safety on the job. It should set out to transform participation into control by such measures as full and regular reporting back on all discussions and negotiations with the employers to mass meetings on the job; the right to recall by workers of representatives they are not satisfied with; no responsibility of workers' representatives for decision arrived at jointly (which is designed to restrict the workers' freedom of action). The demand for no secrecy of any negotiations is also vital for this purpose. "Opening the books" is another important demand of workers' control.
As part of such a strategy many long-standing trade union demands assume a new content. This includes such demands as — right of job organisations and of trade union representatives, the right of entry, the right to meeting on the job, changes in the ACTU Charter on Shop Committees, abolition of penal powers and other restrictive legislation, which ties the trade union movement to the Arbitration System. The struggle for industrial unionism assumes a new significance in these conditions.

All this will inevitably be resisted by the employers, as it challenges the basis of the capitalist system in the workplaces, and trains the working people for the challenge. It is an offensive strategy, which seeks to bring about structural reforms, which the ruling class is forced to accede to, but which changes and undermines its domination. Structural reforms as we understand them, are anti-capitalist reforms of structures within the capitalist system. Here much depends on how these reforms are achieved, the aim with which they are carried out not only what they are.

We should put forward such demands and policies and encourage such action around them as will further our socialist aim and will weaken class collaboration while strengthening workers' control; will weaken preoccupation with limiting defensive issues while strengthening the trend towards action on wider issues; will weaken the trends to confine the workers' attention to economic questions and will lead them to interfere more and more in the sacred domain of the employers and their government — the political questions. Workers' control will help to build the bridge between the immediate and long-term questions. The more radical atmosphere in the country, the growth of dissent, and anti-authoritarian sentiments, the shift to the left in the ACTU all combine to create favourable conditions for the development of the movement for workers' control.

CORRECTIONS

In Harry Gould's contribution in the last issue of ALR, the word "placemen" on page 32 inadvertently appeared as "policeman". The error is regretted.

An unforgivable error crept into my review of Poverty in Australia in the last issue of ALR. The activist whom I called "Garrie Henderson" was in fact Garrie Hutchinson, a former president of the Melbourne University Labor Club. I was not referring to Gerard Henderson, a former president of the Melbourne University DLP Club and a leading "threat expert" on the New Left. I apologise to Mr. Henderson for any pain or distress that may have been caused by my mistaken praise of him.

John Playford
IN DEFENCE OF WORKERS' CONTROL

TOM SUPPLE (ALR No. 5) seems to consider that in the present situation the concept of workers' control is entirely utopian, and that the only responsibility to the working class is to "build the Communist party, challenge the society, and prepare for final victory."

Despite his profundity of jargon, he himself indulges in utopian fantasy if he sees the victory over capitalism as the final victory. If we have learnt anything at all, it is that the transition to socialism is not so simple, unless of course one denies the problems and contradictions that so obviously exist in countries where capitalism has already been abolished. We can avoid these contradictions if we understand and acknowledge them, but not if we ignore them, and the relevance and capacity for leadership of the Communist party must consist in not only understanding where it wants to go, but also where it doesn't want to go.

The internationalist responsibility of the Communist Party of Australia is to build socialism, not to distort it. It is all very well to run up a slogan demanding the socialisation of industry, it is another thing to develop the means by which this might be achieved. Nonetheless, the contribution by Tom Supple does demonstrate the necessity to be aware of the limitations of the concept, both as a tactic and as an objective. We need to carefully delineate between what would be conducive to socialist transformation, and what would be simply anarchism. This is not to underestimate the part that the concept could play in the struggle for socialism within contemporary society, nor its relevance for established socialist society. For socialists, it will be a means, not of reforming capitalism, but for abolishing it. For socialists it will be an industrial tactic and a major stepping stone to socialism: for reformists only an objective in itself.

The concept does have a profound relevance for pre-socialist society. Orthodox nationalisation of industry, where the workers are not prepared for or do not understand, the processes of self-management and workers' control, necessarily leads to the creation of a bureaucracy with conservative tendencies, thus making the transition from nationalisation to socialisation difficult. However, if the Australian working class is fully aware of the meaning of workers' control, industrial democracy and socialism, and this understanding facilitated in practical terms by the existence of "pockets" of industrial democracy within, and perhaps in defiance of, the capitalist structure, then obviously the transition to fully socialised industrial processes is more practicable and much more possible.

Our attitude to this depends on the kind of revolution we are seeking. It sometimes seems that in seeking the creation of a socialist state there is a tendency to over-emphasise the "state" at the expense of the "socialist" content. It will be probable that the transition of industry (from capitalism to socialism) upon the overthrow of capitalism in this country will not proceed along a single front, and
there will be some industries (accord-
ing to the degree of "socialist con-
sciousness" of the workers involved) 
that will lend themselves to immediate 
socialisation rather than orthodox 
nationalisation and "State" manage-
ment. Thus there would exist side by 
side perhaps, both socialised and 
nationalised industries. However the 
obvious significance of the difference 
between them would tend to expedite 
the socialisation of all industry.

Workers' control or industrial dem-
ocracy is not posed as an alternative to 
socialism, or merely as a desire for 
consultative status or limited partici-
pation, for sharing management with 
the boss, but rather the democratic 
right of workers to determine and 
control their own destiny.

For socialists, the "Dictatorship 
of the Proletariat" need not mean that 
workers exercise such dictatorship only 
through elected representatives. On 
the contrary, such a dictatorship can 
be entirely consistent with industrial 
democracy and workers' control; it can, 
in short, be a dictatorship exercised 
directly by the working class in the 
form of industrial democracy. The 
relevance of workers' control as an 
industrial objective with very wide 
political and social implications will 
be readily appreciated by those who 
genuinely seek a socialist transfor-
mation of Australian society. There is 
an obvious need for greater clarifica-
tion as to precise meaning, and the 
possibilities for its application to par-
ticular industries needs to be elabor-
ated upon, but the real task that will 
confront socialists will be to under-
stand and overcome the problems in-
volved in the organisational and 
propaganda work necessary for achieve-
ment of the objective.

The Australian worker remains 
overwhelmed by the capitalists divine 
right to management. To establish in 
workers a consciousness of their own 
democratic right to determine and con-
control their own destiny — industrial 
self-management — is a most difficult 
task. Yet it is a problem that must 
be resolved if such a concept is to 
be realised. This is a fundamental 
problem for the Left, and a concerted 
and united effort will certainly be 
necessary if such a socialist conscious-
ness is to be established.

The fact that attempts have been 
made to create a wider democracy in 
the industries of socialist states in-
dicates that there are divergencies of 
principle and application. There is no 
clearly marked path or "model" on 
which Australian socialism might be 
based, and there are thus tremendous 
opportunities for serious discussion as 
to the kind of socialism we are seek-
ing, and the way in which it might be 
achieved.

The Communist Party of Australia 
and Australian Left Review render an 
invaluable service to socialists, the Left 
generally, and Australian workers, by 
bringing the question forward for 
discussion.

H. Austin

WORKERS' CONTROL 
TODAY AND TOMORROW

UNDER the appropriate title of "Politi-
cal Myth or Mirth" Tom Supple has 
written an interesting comment against 
the possibility of socialism (ALR, No. 5, 1969).

Control of the means of production 
and society by the working class is a 
"romantic catchery" in which "objec-
tive conditions are glossed over with 
the spirit of romance."

Where, Cde. Supple asks, is the State 
apparatus while the working class is 
taking over? One might say — in the 
same place as they were in Petrograd 
in 1917, when the working class took 
over.
It is true that modern capitalism poses different problems, and difficult problems about finding the road to socialism (and the CPA is currently attempting to face up to these on the basis of realities.) But it is not true or adequate to pour scorn on the possibility of worker control, and pepper the comment with little homilies about adventurism.

Tom Supple’s approach assumes that advocates of socialism want the workers to take over in isolated pockets of factories, within the capitalist system — but such a road to socialism would be absurd and disastrous. He is reading into “workers’ control” an image of his own.

Workers’ control can be nothing else but socialism. The importance of raising the question of socialism in this terminology is twofold:

Firstly, the idea of workers’ control gives a vital political content to socialism — it distinguishes between sorts of socialism; it establishes the type of socialism for which we aim in Australia, democratic and controlled by the working class; it clarifies our opposition to bureaucratic distortions of socialism, and all its consequences.

Secondly, the question of workers control is an important tactical question, in linking the day to day struggles of the working class with the only real basis for a lasting solution — the establishment of socialism. Because each day to day struggle is in embryo, and spontaneously, a striving, on the given issue, at the given moment, to establish the control of the boss by the working class; it is the basis and starting point for the complete takeover of all social institutions.

To resist raising the question of workers’ control is to divorce the immediate day to day struggles from the winning of socialism; is to treat socialism as something distant, abstract, and separated from present-day class life. It is to become a “reformist” in practice.

To oppose workers’ control must mean ultimately not to be a socialist, to reject the teachings of Marx and Lenin, to glorify the distorted form of State socialism which may have been an historical necessity in the USSR, but is not what we want in Australia.

The anti-working class idea of dictatorship by the elite is well illustrated by the arrogant claim in Tom Supple’s article that the challenge to capitalism “is the property of the vanguard, that being the Communist Party.”

That challenge is the property of the working class, who will decide in accordance with life who amongst themselves will be promoted as a vanguard.

BRIAN T. CAREY

SINO-SOVIET DISPUTE

JOHN SENDY’S article on the Sino-Soviet dispute is at complete variance with the views of the world communist movement and, one must say, with the facts of history.

The article sets out to convince its readers that the Soviet-Chinese antagonism is a normal state of affairs, that socialists should not take sides, and that if villainy exists between the disputing parties then the evidence condemns the Soviet Union.

To substantiate these claims Sendy quotes from official Chinese journals, and from other observers who, however sincere, would be quite unconscious of the relation of class forces operating in China and throughout the world. In this he has the ideological concurrence of E. Aarons.

Sendy says that the Soviet Union has always been activated by its own national interests, its border protec-
tion; that the Chinese revolution took place in spite of the USSR, and that its reverses and catastrophes up to 1958 followed from the advice of Stalin and the comintern. In fact, says Sendy “when the Chinese under Mao Tse-tung went against Soviet advice they won victory, weakened imperialism and seemed to strengthen the communist movement”.

A perusal of anything official from Chinese sources up to 1958 would show that this is not true. Every then politician knew that after the revolution in 1949 the United States became obsessed with one idea, the destruction of Communist China, and every material resource was given to Chang Kai-shek to accomplish this. It was the military strength, and firmness to internationalism, of the Soviet Union that frustrated this. In a similar way, but of course in different circumstances, the Soviet Union is fulfilling the same role in Vietnam.

The Chinese always acknowledged this. In his work “The Great Friendship” of 1953, Mao Tse-tung said “Following the teachings of Lenin and Stalin and relying on the support of the great Soviet State, and all the revolutionary forces of all countries, the Chinese communist party and the Chinese people achieved a few years ago a historic victory”.

Sendy deprecates the Soviet aid to China. Here again the claim runs counter to the facts and the universal conclusion. China was a feudal country. It is a country of peasants; the biggest in the world, with an industry and a proletariat almost negligible. Its ideological troubles, its strange marxian concepts, have their roots in this. I would suggest to comrade Sendy that a serious marxian analysis of anything Chinese should start not with a criticism of Stalin, the comintern, the USSR or of Chinese leaders (these are incidental) but with the material conditions of life, social practice, the class forces, which alone could help us in understanding Chinese ideas, strange interpretations of marxism and other attitudes.

The Chinese problem is basically one of transforming the country into a modern socialist industrial state, and whatever be the difficulties and complexities, she cannot do this alone, and in isolation from the socialist world. It’s a tragedy that leading communists here cannot understand this. This was recognised and acted upon up to 1958. Of this there is not the slightest doubt.

Up to then the Chinese were fulfilling realistic plans, with appropriate aid from the Soviet Union, with the help of ten thousand technicians and with a like number of Chinese experts being trained in the USSR. So much so that the Peking Review of April 1958 spoke out — “The backbone of the Chinese socialist industrialisation was being erected”.

What happened to China since then and why she has insulated herself and become hostile to the world, and in particular to the Soviet Union, is not answered objectively, correctly, by Sendy.

Nor can we go along with his endorsement of a bourgeois writer’s assertion that the main thing about the Sino-Soviet dispute is the struggle for leadership. When Sendy says that this is the “crux of the matter”, and when Aarons agrees, one is tempted to ask them which side do they support?

What we have here is a right revisionist line. Neither can one go along with its opposite, the dogmatic line which defies change and denies that China is a socialist country and identifies Maoist policy with the true revolutionary aspirations of the Chinese people.
New facts emerge and will continue to emerge, compelling re-thinking about the problems of socialism and the relations between socialist countries, and as is often the case when something new has to be explained we have departures in thought, in politics towards extremes. John Sendy belongs to the extreme which has the endorsement of his party, but which nevertheless is, under the pretext of developing marxism, losing sight of the class struggle and its international manifestations in the conflict of two world systems. Socialism is on one side. Imperialism is on the other.

G. BURNS.

IN DEFENCE OF THE DICATORSHIP

AN ARTICLE by Communist Party of Australia Vice-President John Sendy (ALR Aug.-Sep. '69) is headed “Dictatorship of the Proletariat?”. The significance of the question mark becomes more obvious as one reads the material for, in fact, Cde. Sendy sets about to undermine the whole concept of proletarian dictatorship, one of the most important in Marxism-Leninism. One method of doing this is throw a heap of confused ideas on to the question in an article listed as “a contribution to untangling the confused concept dictatorship of the proletariat”.

Developing his assertion that the concept is confused, Cde. Sendy says: “What is the dictatorship of the proletariat? As one examines the development of the theory from Marx’s time to the present it’s like chasing a mirage — one can never quite get to it.” His very next sentence reads: “Certainly in practice, it is, at very least, extremely doubtful whether the dictatorship of the proletariat has been ever accomplished.”

How is Cde. Sendy in a position to make such a judgment about practice when he admits he doesn’t understand the theory?

But is Cde. Sendy really so unknowing about the dictatorship of the proletariat? If so, it seems remarkable to say the least that a national leader of the Communist Party should be in such a position. Or could it be that the Party leadership is now in the process of abandoning the dictatorship of the proletariat, and Cde. Sendy’s article is to be seen more in the light of this than as an expression of one comrade’s barrenness of thought?

One cannot help but make this suggestion in view of the CPA national leadership’s behaviour. For example, the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia Central Committee (see Nov. ’68 resolution) condemned the right wing of the Party which advocated pure democracy and a free play of political forces. But the CPA leadership supported the right wing because such a free play approach fitted in with its own non-Marxist ideas of a fair go for all class forces — worker and capitalist alike — under socialism contained in the Draft Democratic Rights Charter.

At this point it is worth recalling Lenin’s statement in State and Revolution: “Only he is a Marxist who extends the recognition of the class struggle to the recognition of the dictatorship of the proletariat. This is what constitutes the most profound difference between the Marxist and the ordinary petty (as well as big) bourgeois. This is the touchstone on which the real understanding and recognition of Marxism is to be tested.”

Cde. Sendy suggests that the dictatorship of the proletariat cannot exist in a socialist country where the working class is a minority of the population. He refers to Lenin’s statement that the dictatorship was an alliance between the working class and middle class sections and is struck with won-
der at this. What Cde. Sendy appears not to understand is that under the dictatorship of the proletariat, the working class establishes itself as the ruling class for the purpose of:

1. Suppressing the capitalist class which will inevitably and constantly offer resistance, and

2. Leading the great mass of the people, the middle class sections of society, in the building of socialism.

In both tasks the working class has to rely upon the support of the working people generally. Hence the dictatorship is an alliance between the working class and the middle sections. Therefore, the dictatorship of the proletariat is dictatorship as far as the capitalist class (the minority) is concerned, but democracy for the working people (the majority). Why does Cde. Sendy stumble over this concept? Why can’t he see that even if the working class is minority, the dictatorship can be achieved by the simple fact that the working class forms an alliance with the middle sections?

Cde. Sendy plays down the role of the industrial working class. But the 21st National Congress CPA resolution referred to the great significance of this section in social change, and an examination of Australian reality today shows the industrial working class is indeed growing absolutely and is holding its own relative to the whole work force. Apparently Cde. Sendy is one of those who distort the real effects of the technological revolution in order to bolster and push un-Marxist views.

A particularly interesting feature of Cde. Sendy’s article is that it categorically denies the leading role of the Communist Party in the building of socialism. In dealing with a multi-party socialist government, he says “... it would seem ludicrous to call on another party to recognise the leading role of the Communist Party...” Up to now the national leadership has only hinted that it had abandoned the concept of Communist Party leadership under socialism. For example, in the Draft Democratic Rights Charter, although it is not said in so many words, there is a strong suggestion that Communist Party leadership in a multi-party socialist government is wrong while a one party socialist government is outrageous. Pressed on the matter of the leading role of the Party, national leaders have dodged the issue by claiming that they are concerned only with the way the leading role was exercised under socialism. It was suggested that leadership had to be ideological and not administrative as if there was some kind of wall between the two. However, Cde. Sendy has brought this smooth performance to a close with his categorical statement.

Of course, Cde. Sendy has a thrust at the Soviet Union as is the fashion these days, using such “clever” terms as “bureaucratic, hierarchical institutionalism” to describe Soviet society today. He denies that the proletarian dictatorship ever existed under Cde. Stalin but, borrowing from the language of anti-Communism, describes Soviet society then as “totalitarian” and suggests it wasn’t as democratic as capitalist countries.

One wonders at this stage whether Cde. Sendy’s article is more suitable for Readers’ Digest than a publication claiming to promote Communist ideas.

Soviet experience has revealed that the dictatorship of the proletariat was certainly established and the howls of the international bourgeoisie provide cogent evidence of this. Soviet experience has also shown that the dictatorship has achieved the building of socialism and has now developed to a state of the whole people which has the task of building Communism. One must remember that the state of the
whole people is still a state and still uses methods of compulsion, not against the exploiting class which has disappeared, but against individuals who defy the will of the whole people. Under Communism even this state will disappear.

Soviet experience also revealed violation of collective leadership and excesses during the term of Cde. Stalin's leadership. These were serious and damaging to socialism, but the socialist system was strong enough to live through these distortions. Criticism at the 20th Congress of the Soviet Party and since was part of the clearing away of obstacles to the building of Communism.

Further, Soviet experience has shown that in the whole process of building Communism, the leading role of the Communist Party is essential. Cde. Sendy, however, in his article quite clearly objects to Party leadership in Soviet life.

Cde. Sendy's whole article is part of the opportunist line of the CPA leadership, a line which tries to gain popularity by discarding Marxism-Leninism. However, the result is that good workers lose confidence in such a leadership and the middle sections are never won to socialism by those who desert their working class position.

Alan Miller

THE CASE OF SOLZHENITSYN

SOLZHENITSYN, who hasn’t been published in the USSR for years, has now been expelled from the Soviet Writers' Union. Some will justify this. After all he was a political prisoner in the Stalinist camps (and these days writers who praise Stalin don’t have to wait for publication) and with freedom regained he wrote books critical of the system that jailed him and some of these books have been printed and praised in the West. (One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich was published in the USSR but has since been withdrawn, even from libraries, Cancer Ward was set in type and then broken up, The First Circle and other works have been refused publication).

The problem is that Solzhenitsyn won't repay society for restoring his freedom with his silence. Since he believes there are flaws in a system that placed millions in camps, including 600 writers (and without protest, indeed with the support of the Writers' Union of that time) he is accused of "maliciously slandering the Soviet system", of being — would you believe — "anti-Soviet".

Soviet writers are continually asked to write "from life" but the life which sent more communists into prison in the USSR between 1935-40 than in all the capitalist and fascist countries taken together, which led to the physical destruction or imprisonment of a majority of the central committee from the 17th Congress of the CPSU are banned subjects. And only Solzhenitsyn's novel exists to record a small part of the post war terror when entire peoples were exiled and most prisoners of war as well as those who were inmates of fascist camps were condemned for "high treason".

The dilemma of Soviet writers, and indeed of all communists is that if one accepts the ideals of communism one cannot at the same time accept these events as part of communist reality, but the reality of the camps prevents one from realising the communist ideal.

The theory of the dictatorship of the proletariat proclaimed the aim of man's liberation but Soviet practice too often means an actual dictatorship over dissenters. The distortions occurred, and continue to the extent that Stalin-
ism continues to be justified. They cannot be silenced out of history or literature or men’s minds. They have to be examined and understood to ensure their eradication. Administrative measures against Solzhenitsyn solve nothing, they simply postpone solutions.

What is already known of the case is serious indeed: the seizure of his manuscripts, the slander of him as “unbalanced” and “psychologically disturbed” (interestingly he works as a teacher), the refusal to print his letters repudiating foreign publishers did appear in the USSR after it had been printed in L’Unita some weeks before), his plea, so far ignored, for the Soviet Government to join the International Copyright Convention to ensure that Soviet writers are not published abroad without their permission.

Meantime in the name of “communism” or “the motherland” censorship is tightened and as with all bureaucratic authority funny incidents lighten the generally tragic consequences. A play was banned in Leningrad and given permission for production in Moscow, a film shown in Moscow was banned in Gorky and another released for general distribution was banned in the army.

One is reminded of the television advertisement where a woman who is trying to buy a particular brand of vacuum cleaner is shown various models but keeps asking “Yes but is it an Electrolux?” The difference between the socialist society as conceived by Marx and the models on offer provokes the question: But is it socialism?

KOLLANTAI

PAGE FROM A DIARY

IN 1964, I went to Perth for the ABC in connection with the production of the Billy Borker series which was produced in their TV studios there. While in the West, I paid a brief visit to Katharine Susannah Prichard at her home at Greenmount.

When hearing the news of her death I had a vague memory of having written a diary note about the visit. Searching through the diary I found this entry for Monday, October 12, 1964, written that evening at my hotel in Perth:

“This afternoon, I visited KSP at Greenmount.

“She looked frail and her right hand was trembling and withered, the result of a stroke. She wore a pink robe.

“Bert Vickers and his wife were with her when I arrived. We talked about Billy Borker and traditional Australian humor. Bert began to tell yarns. I had not seen him in that mood before. He spoke in a loud voice, at times shouting. I became a little alarmed for KSP.

“I walked down the yard to a room — a shed really — where she had often written these forty odd years. I had a feeling about the great labor that had gone on there and felt ashamed of my own recent lack of creative output.

“And I felt the presence of ghosts from the past, remembering stories I had heard about her life with Throsell, V.C. and their last period of tragedy.

“When I came back to the house, the Vickers had gone.

“KSP began to tell me about a new play written by her son Ric Throssell, called A Cat’s Eye View I think she said, about the first Australian soldier killed in Vietnam.

“‘I wrote to Ric criticising the play’
she told me, ‘He failed to sustain the Cat’s Eye View motif’.  

“She spoke of the play and of the Vietnam war, at times appearing to overlap the play with reality, fantasy with life.

“I wondered if she was rambling.

“She then told me she was going to write to the Tribune to criticise a point made by Jack Beasley in a pamphlet he had written about her work.

‘He said that I should have introduced a new revolutionary hero in the last part of the trilogy.’

“KSP said this would have been a distortion of history. ‘No such hero emerged in life’. She did not want to discourage Jack Beasley but a matter of principle was involved and young writers should not be influenced to think schematically.

“She had spoken in a firmer voice than earlier, something like the younger KSP: defensive about her own work and keen on ideological debate.

“She stoked the fire with a small bellows. After a long silence, she said it was fine to see me reaching a wide new audience through television.

“I regret that TV came too late for me to write for it,’ she said.

“I was working on a novel about the peace movement when I became ill,’ KSP showed me her crippled hand, massaging it with her left. ‘I doubt if I’ll ever finish the novel now, although the doctors say I might recover the use of my hand.’

“She said she had told the doctor: ‘Why did you delay the rehearsal?’ The doctor had replied: ‘I have a duty to save you.’

“‘Your work is receiving a great deal of recognition,’ KSP told me. ‘Of course, I’ve always recognised it ever since Power Without Glory. I liked even the book the Party criticised. (She always was a bit of a rebel against Party narrowness.) The one about horse racing. A valid social novel.’

“She began to speak of the distant past, as old people will, wandering from subject to subject. I noticed that her voice now seemed to take on the mellow sweetness I remembered from our first meeting in Melbourne twenty-five years before, educated but not mannered or affected.

“She told me her child had been born on the table in this living room, where she had done much of her writing, working in the back yard room only when her child was young.

“When I said I had to leave to keep an appointment at the ABC she offered me sherry as if reluctant to let me go.

“She rose unsteadily and poured the drinks, refusing my offer of assistance, her right hand trembling.

“She sat down again and we sipped our drinks in silence.

“At last taking my leave, I walked to the door.

“KSP stood up and made to follow. She stood in the middle of the room.

“The dull light of late afternoon played tricks as I looked back from the doorway: she looked like a slim young girl instead of a frail old woman.

“I went back and kissed her on the cheek.

“‘Blessings,’ she said and it seemed a strange word for her to use.

“At the door, I turned again. She was still standing there, tears in her eyes.

“‘Blessings,’ she repeated.

“I stepped towards her. ‘Blessings to you,’ I replied lamely and kissed her on the lips.

“I hurried away.

“We each knew we would never meet again . . .”

FRANK HARDY
Interview with Marcuse

This interview first appeared in Der Spiegel on July 28, 1969 under the title Revolution out of Disgust. It began with the following editorial note: Herbert Marcuse is the only philosopher of his generation who unconditionally embraces the protest movement of the students; his “concrete philosophy,” influenced by Freud and Heidegger, tries to adapt Marx’s theory of revolution to modern industrial society. Member of the Frankfurt Institute of Social Studies, Marcuse, born in Berlin, the son of a merchant, migrated to the USA in 1934 and now teaches philosophy at San Diego, California. “No anarchist”, as this 71 year old states, but an opponent of orthodox party bureaucracies, he recently had to defend himself against the accusation of being an agent of the CIA. Now 16 representatives of the New Left, among them Rudi Dutschke, Oskar Negt, Erich Fried and Klaus Meschkat, have expressed their solidarity with him against such “revival of Stalinist practices.”

SPIEGEL: Professor Marcuse, you are one of the fathers of the New Left, which in part now revolts against you. What have you to say about that?

MARCUSE: I reject the father or grandfather nonsense. I am neither the father nor the grandfather of the New Left. It is true that a large degree of coincidence has arisen between my ideas and the experiences which students drew independently from their practice and from their thinking. I am very happy about this harmony. I do not know how far it goes. But there is no paternal or patriarchal relationship, as can be seen for instance in the fact that I have not personally known a single French student who played a role in the May and June actions.

S.: But the fact remains that, after a period of temporary harmony between you and the student movement, differences have arisen.

M.: The difference concerns essentially two points, first the relationship of the New Left to traditional bourgeois culture, and secondly the possibility of carrying theory into practice.

S.: Turning to the second point: You have said that philosophy must culminate in action. Has your philosophy already established this link with practice?

M.: I wouldn’t claim that. But I am of the opinion that today the theoretician — and I am speaking of the Marxist theoretician — participates in practice at least to the extent that he takes a clear position on political questions, that he participates in demonstrations and in certain cases in the occupation of buildings, etc.
S.: Then you would not share the reservations which Theodor W. Adorno has in this matter?

M.: No. I see the difference between Adorno and the Horkheim group on the one hand and myself on the other that for me today the inner content of the theory itself requires a practical taking of position, or to put it another way, that the content itself is falsified if such a taking of position does not result. The concept of mediations must not be used as an excuse.

S.: If you place so much value on the unity of theory and practice, one would have thought that you would be proud of the proffered father role.

M.: I believe I can tell you why I reject this role. I would very much like to be the father of the New Left, if this father role did not include an authority which is more or less readily accepted by the children. This very authoritarian-paternalistic position is repugnant to me.

S.: In the present situation could this not be taken as a separation from the student movement?

M.: You must not in any way construct out of my rejection of the father or grandfather role a rejection of the student movement as such. There are certainly things in the movement with which I would not like to identify in any way. But the movement as such I consider today in the developed industrial countries as the perhaps most important, if not the only, chance of a future radical transformation . . .

S.: . . . of a revolution?

M.: We are not in a revolutionary, perhaps not even in a pre-revolutionary, situation. Under these conditions, the only oppor-
tunity can be preparatory work, preparatory work however, which is today immensely more difficult and immensely more important than previously. And it is just in relation to this preparatory work that I speak of the opportunities of the New Left.

S.: You have said that the students are “voices”, which express the “needs and desires of the silent masses,” but they are not revolutionaries. Do you think that the student movement provides a real possibility of a change of consciousness?

M.: Yes, a change of consciousness and feeling, which today is the pre-condition for radical social change.

S.: And do you believe that this change is connected with militant and aggressive actions?

M.: We would have to come to an agreement as to what we mean by militant and particularly what we mean by aggressive.

S.: You yourself have said that students — to the extent that they use violence — are on the defensive, that their method of using violence is only a reply to the violence of society.

M.: I would go even further today. I hesitate more and more to use the concept of violence or the word “violence” to describe what the students are doing. If you look at the actions of the two sides at Berkeley for instance, but not only there, it is most questionable whether the throwing of tomatoes and eggs and the breaking down of doors can really be described as violence; I would call it defensive . . .

S.: . . . in comparison with the violence used by the authorities?

M.: Yes, with helicopters, gas grenades, small shot, batons and all that.

S.: Mr. Marcuse, you have said the philosopher today must participate in demonstrations, perhaps even in the occupation of institutions . . .


S.: Did you yourself take part in such occupations of buildings?

M.: Yes.

S.: Could you give us more details?

M.: It was in connection with the founding of a College for Problems of the Oppressed Racial and National Minorities in San Diego — the Lumumba-Zapata College — which was to be directed by Negroes and Mexicans. To win their demands, they occupied,
together with leftist white students, the offices of the University treasurer. During the demonstration in which I took part, a door was broken down. That was the only act of violence which occurred and I immediately declared that I was ready to pay for the replacement of the door. I would not call this participation in any radical practice. But that is what I mean by taking of position which is more than the theoretical taking of position.

S.: . . . but action for the realization of a demand?

M.: In this case everyone knew why the office was occupied. But you have to make this aim comprehensible to groups apart from the demonstrators. If you don't do this, then such a demonstration appears completely irrational and as a provocation.

S.: Do you believe that so-called individual terror also has a role to play in the practice of protest, as happened for instance in the occupation of the house of Mr. Roehl, the editor and publisher of "Konkret"?

M.: What actually happened?

S.: Some furniture was thrown out, the telephone cables were cut and they urinated into his bed.

M.: I find that objectionable. That has nothing to do with either the old or the new Left. Similarly with the burning of books or the use of violence against people who do not themselves use violence.

S.: Do you believe that the opportunities of the protest movement have improved or deteriorated since its beginning in the mid-60's?

M.: The opportunities have improved. As against most people, I believe that the May-June movement in France was no defeat. It has in no way been cancelled out in the course of later developments. It is true that a back-lash occurred, which was to be expected. But I would say without exaggeration, that capitalism no longer is what it was before the May-June movement; because for the first time forms and methods of opposition were taken up again, which had been forgotten and suppressed in the tradition of the left, for instance, spontaneous control, spontaneous organisation, if necessary even against the established trade unions and parties of the left.

S.: Didn't you previously have a different opinion of the connection between the student movement and the workers? Ernst Bloch has in any case specifically welcomed the fact that you no longer "assume the sectarian division between the intelligentsia and the proletariat." Have you had to correct your views?
Man Restraining Himself, Bronze, Height 70 cm. 1962-64.
M.: I don't think so. I have never maintained that the student movement as such is a revolutionary movement. Also I have never claimed that a radical social transformation is possible without a mass basis. The problem is under what conditions the workers can provide such a mass basis.

S.: Nevertheless in a previous Spiegel interview you stated: "Why should the present-day proletariat be the class from which salvation will come?"

M.: I admit that this was a rather impertinent formulation, behind which however is hidden the thought that the Marxian proletariat no longer exists in the developed industrial countries, and that the role which Marx ascribed to the proletariat of that time cannot simply be transferred to the working class of these countries. But here we come to the decisive question: Who are the workers? The working class itself has changed in the conditions of late capitalist society. The technisation of the working class is a very well-known fact: the constant growth in the number of highly qualified employees, engineers, specialists, scientists, and the relative decline of the so-called blue-collar workers.

S.: Does this mean that the working-class is becoming more bourgeois?

M.: That is the crux: Whether it is becoming more bourgeois. In the United States, yes; in Germany — from what I hear — in its majority also; much less in France and even less in Italy. The structural change of the working class however has a dual tendency, a positive one and a negative one. From the point of view of revolution, negative because of what you have just called "becoming more bourgeois", i.e. a stronger integration in bourgeois society. Positive in that new sections of the population, — the technical intelligentsia — can become radical potentials, and that to the extent to which they become aware of the contradiction between the deciding role of the technical intelligentsia in the production process and its lack of power in relation to all vital general social questions.

S.: Couldn't this mean that society is reforming itself from within, rather than a revolutionary process developing?

M.: Yes, but don't forget I'm still a Marxist and therefore believe that there is a point where no reforms work any more and where no reform can remove or even suspend the essential internal contradiction of the capitalist system. I believe that this internal contradiction — its most general form is the ever more obvious conflict between the immense social wealth on the one hand and its atrocious repressive use on the other — that this contradiction is really insoluble within the capitalist system, despite all reforms.
S.: Does this explain the necessity for the "great refusal" of which you have spoken — the refusal to collaborate in the institutions of this society?

M.: First of all, the "great refusal" must not be understood as an abstract rejection of the whole of bourgeois culture, if for no other reason than that such a rejection is impossible. Even the most radical refuser is always still in a definable sense heir to bourgeois culture, even in its negation. Many of his concepts, much of his rationality and sensibility arise from the radical-critical bourgeois tradition. Even when we work against bourgeois culture, we still work within bourgeois culture.

S.: That applies also to Cohn-Bendit, when he makes a film with Godart, appears on bourgeois television or when he sells his book to the Rowohlt-Publishing House.

M.: In any case I would not reproach him for these things as he reproached me for having "spoken in a bourgeois theatre" or for having chosen "a bourgeois communications medium". I am of the opinion that it isn't important from what geographical place you speak, but only what you say. I am in agreement with Cohn-Bendit — I would like to stress this — that it was too expensive. I would have much preferred to speak at another place. But neither the Communist Party nor the trade unions, nor the student movement in Italy invited me.

S.: You have used a bourgeois institution. What do you think of attempts to found counter-institutions? In Berlin the "critical university" was a first step in that direction.

M.: A radical change in the structure of the university is indeed one of main demands of the New Left. In the universities and the schools a decisive section of the future working-class is being trained — the technical intelligentsia which will occupy even more key positions in the production process. The politisation of this intelligentsia is an urgent task.

S.: But this change in the structure of the university doesn't mean its destruction?

M.: No. I have repeatedly rejected the aim of the destruction of the University. It is another instance of where an institution of bourgeois culture may be used to prepare a radical change of thinking and even of practice. As far as I know, it was Noam Chomsky who said that according to the logic of absolute destruction Marx would have burnt down the British Museum instead of working there.

S.: A subversive practice in the existing society then?

M.: In existing society, but not for this society. I would like to
remind you of a Marxian concept, namely the description of the proletariat as a class *in* this society, but not *of* this society.

S.: Do you see organisational forms of the New Left, which are suitable to this task and the further aims?

M.: This question can only be answered in connection with concrete practice. In general one may say: The New Left must find forms of organisation which correspond to and contradict the new forms of neo-capitalist organisation and repression. In any case it has been shown that the traditional forms of a more or less centralised and bureaucratised mass party and trade union have been overtaken by the development of capitalism.

S.: Nevertheless you have pointed out that it is impossible to succeed against a society "which is mobilised and organised with its whole totality against every revolutionary movement" without a tighter form of organisation than has existed hitherto.

M.: That is right, but a tighter form of organisation doesn’t at all mean the old forms of a centralized and bureaucratized mass party. For we have unfortunately learnt that when it really matters such a form of organisation can be rendered harmless within twenty-four hours. We have seen that already in 1933. What I mean by tighter forms of organisation are extremely flexible, changeable methods of co-operation, which articulate the initiative from below and are able to achieve definite political aims. That is, from spontaneity forms of organisation must arise, which then on their part are able to influence spontaneity again and direct it in a decided direction, which leads beyond the particular motive and the particular object in view.

S.: Could you quote an instance of such concrete forms of organisation of the New Left.

M.: I think of Hannover. What happened there looks at first like a very unimportant non-political, very reformist aim and accordingly an unimportant mobilisation. But exactly the opposite is the case. Here the immediate motive stands in a visible connection with the aim to show the whole irrationality, the whole corruption and repression of the capitalist system, concentrated in the ordered increase in tramway fares. At the same time this action led to a solidarity which went beyond the students and school pupils and gripped not only sections of the workers but also the bourgeoisie. I point to the system of red points which suddenly linked car owners with the striking and blockading students, pupils and workers. The "Rote Presse Korrespondenz" gives an excellent analysis of this action.
S.: In which way is that a model for the organisational form of the protest movement?

M.: Insofar as it was shown that spontaneity must be organised in detail, to become politically effective.

S.: Can you see other such examples?

M.: Yes, there is the great strike at the Pirelli Works. According to the reports I have read, an organisational form developed there which is new and really revolutionary, namely the control of production by the workers, the organisation of production by the workers themselves. The amazing thing is not only that the enterprise continued to function, although the workers themselves reduced their piece and time rates, but that it occurred to a large extent with the assistance of young, by no means highly qualified, workers, who had only recently come from the south of Italy to work in the industrial north. This strike showed that the whole complicated hierarchy of the modern factory system is officious, that is that it can be replaced in the shortest time by the self-organisation of the producers.

S.: Paris, Pirelli and Hannover — you claim then that the barriers between the student movement and the workers are coming down?

M.: They can at least be opened for definite groups and in definite spheres; particularly in Italy, to a lesser extent in France, perhaps less in Germany and certainly to the least extent in the United States.

S.: You consider the "long march through the institutions" quoted by Dutschke — a period of some decades — as necessary?

M.: Absolutely necessary. Foreshortenings may always occur but one of the greatest errors would be to underestimate the power, the might of the neo-capitalist system.

S.: Is this power not underestimated particularly by allotting a prominent role to the intellectuals in the transformation of society? You, Professor Marcuse, have been accused of separating the student movement from the workers.

M.: What nonsense — as though I could separate what is linked in social reality! I don't believe at all that stressing the role of the student movement represents an underestimation of the power of the capitalist system. On the contrary, I repeat, this system is not in a revolutionary situation. Under these conditions the task is a preparatory one, namely the stirring of the consciousness about what is done not only to the working class, but to all sections of the population with the exception of the ruling-class.
As for the splitting of the student movement from the workers' movement, first of all a counter-question: Which workers' movement? In the United States a political workers' movement doesn't exist at all. In other countries, not I or any theory has divided the student movement from the workers' movement, but the workers' movement itself developed in a direction which rendered it completely incapable of struggling against the contradictions rending capitalism. The reformist-economist policy of collaboration, as it has been pursued by the trade unions and the Soviet-orientated communist parties played into the hands of the interests of capitalism...

S.: ... what others claim you have done. A certain Mr. Matthias for instance named you as a CIA agent.

M.: I am convinced that this rubbish is spread by bankrupt persons and groups of the old left, who avoid argumentation and therefore try to devalue or to discredit by slander the ideas, certainly very painful to them, which I discuss. The slanders are also not directed at me, but are aimed at discrediting the New Left and particularly the student movement.

S.: You have stated that a new human quality, a "new sensibility" is already visible in the existing protest movement. What do you mean?

M.: I believe that the concept of the new sensibility takes up again a central concept of Marxian theory, namely that the socialist revolution can be brought about only by a class whose needs and interests are no longer those of class society, that is a class which represents a new type of man and a radical revaluation of all values. I believe that beginnings of this revaluation, and this on a very deep basis, exist in the young generation and particularly among the militant students.

S.: Do you mean to say that a revolution arises not out of economic crises, but through a change of consciousness, a kind of cultural revolution? Is not that an un-Marxist thought?

M.: This accusation ignores completely the inner connection between the philosophical concepts of the young Marx and his later economic theory. I believe you can't understand at all his conception of socialism if you don't see that by the revolution man is to be liberated to his innermost sensual-physiological constitution. If the necessary change in production relations and the method of production, which remains a basic condition, is not carried out by such a new man, then the very thing will occur which
Marx once described with the expression: Then the old shit will start again.

The working class is a revolutionary class to the extent to which it is not caught in this system of needs of capitalist society. The more the working class is caught in this system, the more the statement applies once more that "class consciousness (can) be brought to the working class only from the outside". (Lenin). This possibility of the development of consciousness lies today in the non-integrated sections of the population, particularly among the young workers and the militant students. Only a working class free of the capitalist system can take over the revolutionary initiative. Such freedom exists in the countries which are victims of imperialism. There naked exploitation and naked oppression are the motor of revolution.

S.: Do you see beginnings of these new people and these new needs in the protest movement?

M.: Yes, I see beginnings there. I have tried to describe these in my book Essay on Liberation. But I would like to point to something which speaks for the arising of new values in the protest movement. And I am well aware that I shall be accused enthusiastically of being ridiculous. It seems to me to be no coincidence that in the case of two representative demonstrations of the student movement in the United States which were met by the most violent reaction, the issue was a park, namely last year in Columbia University and in May this year in Berkeley. We should at least get used to the idea that we have to confront the conception, which is almost inconceivable to the old left, that revolution, if at all, will most probably not arise in the technically most developed capitalist countries from misery and poverty, but, this is at present hard to formulate, from what?

S.: From the affluent society?

M.: . . . From an unbearable disgust with the way and means in which the so-called consumer society misuses and wastes social wealth, while it intensively continues to foster poverty and oppression outside the metropolitan countries. Such a disgust is no psychological factor, but a radical political reaction, which tends according to its own strength towards denial and then to rebellion.

S.: Professor Marcuse, we thank you for this interview.

Translated from the German by Henry Zimmermann
Two activists of the student movement review past errors and experiences in the '60's, and look at possibilities for the '70's.

WARREN OSMOND

IF WE ARE TALKING about the existence of a "radical student movement" in Australia, the term needs to be qualified in two ways. The first qualification concerns its social composition; the second, its political composition.

First, the "student" movement was always, and is now more than ever, dependent upon a small handful of academic staff either as ideologists and front-runners or as organisers and tacticians. The movement has also relied upon post-graduate students who had the time to put into constant political activity. Many, in fact, were de-facto drop-outs. Now, however, the movement which once had a basically undergraduate social base, is diversifying in important ways. At the old base level, radical high school students are replenishing the radical organisations. Many radical students are beginning academic careers within the universities, either as junior staff or as post-graduate students. And, beyond the universities themselves, many students who were active in radical politics in their student years are becoming (usually reluctant) school teachers, journalists, etc. And another group is assuming importance: those who, after the unstructured and highly political life of a student, cannot meet the demands of a 9-5 job, drop-out and live on occasional casual jobs for a livelihood, and gravitate back to the university-based radical community. Often they can obtain jobs in university libraries and bookshops. All these groups, it is important to note, are elements of what we still refer to as "the student radical movement".

Secondly, the phenomenon we are dealing with is hardly a vibrant and cohesive "movement", although it certainly has the capacity to quickly become one. There is little common identification with a national "movement" for radical change; loyalties are primarily local—to the particular organisations or ideology. There is a wide split between two activist poles, the "SDS" (Students for a Democratic Society) type of group, and the "revolutionary socialist" pole. Both, for instance, hold separate
national conferences. Then there are groups on each campus, more informal though, who will not identify themselves with any organisation committed to action, and who consider that we (or they) don’t have the necessary theoretical background to take positive action. Within the “revolutionaries” there are bitter divisions, mostly “theoretical”: “trotskyites” oppose “Maoists”, who in turn despise “New Leftists”. The differences surface most regularly at national conferences: it is perhaps significant that they don’t arise so often at the local level, where joint activity is often possible. And, more subtly, the rigid “splits” serve important psychological functions, giving the members of each group, once they are “identified” with it, a sense of group-importance, that they are the bearers of responsibility, or “correctness” or whatever, besieged and misunderstood (as all martyrs are).

These rivalries have a definite air of unreality. Not only does one’s ideological attachment vary with the capital city you come from (Sydney-Trotskyite, Melbourne-Maoist, Adelaide and Brisbane-New Left), but it is also true that when it comes down to action, hard organising, each group, on either activist pole, has had to resort to the same issues, language, political methods, etc., to gain support and to “politicise” their campuses. That is, there is a common political approach amongst most groups, along the following lines.

1. ISSUES
   (a) Internal University: student representation, composition of governing bodies, discipline, political, sexual, etc., freedom on campus, the university’s complicity with the military establishment.
   (b) Non-University: Vietnam War, Conscription, police brutality at demonstrations, civil liberties cases arising from them, New Guinea and aborigines land rights, etc.

2. STRATEGIC PERSPECTIVES:
   Some form of “Student-Staff power” in Universities, and the building of a “worker-student alliance” outside the universities.

3. LANGUAGE:
   agitation has had to be justified almost universally in American New Left language, referring to key decisions, and the lack of control/influence that people affected by them might have — both in universities and society in general.

4. ORGANISATION & TACTICS:
   small hard-core of activists, often led by a single “leader” (orator-ideologue),
   off-campus headquarters for holding meetings, producing broadsheets, etc.
   “confrontation*” as the major tactic: sit-ins, demonstrations, civil disobedience, “go-ins”, and open, general, student meetings of a regular kind. (*See note at bottom of next page.)

49
The widespread “splits”, then, are basically ideological, or “theoretical”, and recur in each capital city. This clearly calls for explanation. There is a clear difference between students on the SDS-pole and those on the revolutionary socialist pole, and this concerns the nature and role of theory and its relevance to practice. But differences between the revolutionaries in each state need explaining further, since they are so accidental. Without a detailed argument, I am arguing that mostly these differences are ideological, in the marxist sense— they mask true differences, and serve purely psychological functions, reinforcing the group and its sense of self-importance vis-a-vis other groups.

It is also true that another strain exists at most universities, of students who consider themselves radicals, but who argue that theoretically the movement is not yet capable of much positive action, until more intellectual work, research, etc., has been carried out. By definition, this group cannot be said to be “ideological” in the sense of the revolutionaries’ position just mentioned. As the potential for action within the confrontation approach dries up, this group can be expected to play a more obvious leadership role.

How was this “movement” brought about, and what has it achieved? To answer these questions is beyond the scope of this article. But certain points need to be made. If we ask the radicals themselves, they will invariably say that they have “radicalised” or “politicised” their respective campuses. They have, that is, changed “consciousness” through confrontation methods. If we asked less committed observers, however, we might be told that things had changed, but they have also remained the same; that there had been a polarisation of opinion, and it has been against the radicals, and that there was no longer any communication between the two groupings. Minds were closed. The mass of the students still despised “politics”, whether it is “bourgeois” politics, or “revolutionary” (or “participatory democracy”) politics.

This type of observation can easily be placed into a radical or revolutionary framework, properly conceived. That is, what the radical movement has been doing, it can be argued, is to force adjustments by capitalism (the “radicalisation” of each

* This approach, which can be called the “confrontation” approach, since this method or tactic is what has held most groups together until recently. See my article in Arena No. 19, “Student Revolutionary Left”, for a criticism of the confrontation approach. A different type of criticism is that of J. Spigelman, “The Politics of Confrontation”, Honi Soit (Sydney University), March 4, 1968. A more radical criticism is also in Honi Soit, by Chris O’Connell, “Orgasm Politics”, October 17, 1969.
campus, growing participation in "politics", changes in student representation), but that its underlying logic and power has not been challenged. Capitalism, in fact, has been provoked, but provoked into widening the social base of its support. In these terms, the radicals have confirmed Marcuse's argument about "repressive tolerance" and the great absorptive power of capitalism.

If this is accepted, we are back at first base. That is, we have to ask, what is consciousness, and how is it changed? These two questions must be answered, if a rational form of radicalism is to be possible. At the moment, it is hard to see that such a radicalism is possible within the confrontation framework. This is for one major reason: the confrontation approach cuts the radicals off from the mass of the students. Not only do they become unpopular, they become so unpopular that the majority of students will never converse, literally, with the radical group. And all this, in the name of actions designed to "radicalise" the masses! It is not surprising that most students have their prejudices about socialism, communism, radicalism, etc., reinforced by the radicals themselves; radical politics is seen as an attempt to force the masses into accepting something they don't want. And that is, by and large, a correct assessment from their position.

And if we are to answer the questions posed above (what is consciousness and how does it change) then they cannot be finally answered in the present framework. All that can be answered is this: that a movement, no matter what its weaknesses, has developed, a certain number of people have been radicalised by something. This is the raw data from which an answer could come. What is required is that each individual must, by a process of retrospection and introspection, and in discussion with others, question the roots of his or her own political commitment, and discover what roots he or she shares with other students. Hence ... what degree of radicalisation is possible. Without a theory of the present radicalism, no future rational politics is possible. What is needed, then, is basically self-awareness.

What is required, then, is a frank re-appraisal of the approaches and "achievements" of the movement so far, and the development of an alternative which embodies something of the old approach, as well as overcoming, in theory and practice, its limitations. An alternative, ready-made, does not exist. It will have to be developed over a long period. The alternative that is needed, in terms of the criticisms of confrontation that have been put, might be called a "mass line" strategy, as distinct from a "vanguard" or confrontation strategy, involving high risks, small, well-organised "armies" of students, attempting to impose change.
on the mass of students. To put my aims another way, to answer the key questions of the nature of consciousness, and the ways in which it changes, we need a new approach to organising which does not isolate the radicals (or the organised ones) politically and psychologically from the rest of the students. The old approach maximises the possibility of misunderstanding because it is based on a world-view (including a theory of radicalisation) that is socially reinforced. What is needed is an approach which minimises mistakes and ideology, by integrating the radicals with the “mass”.

Politically, the weaknesses of confrontation manifest themselves in a vicious circle along the following lines: the radicals develop a campaign at an advanced level; opposition sets in, eventually finding its leaders; a decision-point is reached and the radicals are “defeated”, followed either by repression (university administration), and (bourgeois) civil liberties trials afterwards. This vicious circle must be broken through. There is little evidence that radicals both here and overseas recognise the problem, however.

A new approach must shift attention from an aim of radicalising others, to developing and understanding what exists (the movement) already. The appeal to students en masse, or to all Australians, as a “public”, is clearly relying upon a non-entity, or, a “group” to which people feel no loyalty of their own choosing. People must be appealed to in their own communities, to which they have intimate and personal, and more voluntary, loyalties and ties. In the university context, this means a shift to what might be called “classroom organising”.

And the new approach, most importantly, must overcome a very decisive (in terms of the radicals’ own claims) weakness of the former approach, which was that it treated the mass of students as objects to be radicalised, with “consciousness” to be changed. In this sense, other students were means to an end, and it was inevitable that they would respond to this alienation by rejecting it. So, inner communication, development and radicalisation must be the aim, rather than that of radicalisation of those who don’t see any need for radicalisation in the terms given to them.

This has an important consequence—that organising must be based on felt needs, insofar as they embody some rejection of things as they exist now. In the university context, this might take the form of a program for non-collegiate housing, for example, or a definite student voice in deciding the means of assessment, such as tests, examinations, etc. Demands could be raised around
libraries, students' fees, etc. All these, far from being a capitulation to some form of reformism, have the advantage that they appeal to students according to felt needs, rather than attempting to force changes in the students' whole structure of needs, implying a massive jump from being a "bourgeois" student to a "revolutionary" student. And this, in turn, means a new recognition, that the large gap which is said to have existed between radicals and non-radicals has been artificially created and preserved.

Also, methods of communication and distribution of views are extremely important. The radical group must act in such a way that it can know, with concrete evidence, how it is being responded to. This means that campaigns which rely largely or even to a small extent upon the mass media for communicating ideas, facts, etc., are no longer desirable. Media of communication must be restricted, as far as possible, to personally-known and identified (to other students) individuals. Hence, word-of-mouth and hand-to-hand methods are vital links to the consciousness of students. They minimise, in terms of this argument, the possibility of misunderstanding others. They might mean that no occupations will take place, un-announced and unsupported, but this is a healthy thing, unless, of course, one is intent on seeing an overseas model of "radicalisation" followed through to its conclusions in occupations, siege, destruction, police violence, student counter-violence, and (possibly) the complete destruction or demoralising of the radical community itself.

So the outlines (and they are nothing more) of a new, "mass line" strategy, will be the following —

1. Organising must be based upon individuals, operating in areas where they are known and can be communicated with "as friends" by other students.

2. The area of struggle must be, in some sense, a self-chosen (by other students) community of interest, with which the student identifies positively, and on which he is unsatisfied.

3. A program must be largely based on the felt needs of students.

4. Student organisations must be developed which have large membership, and in which the students, through their own desires and for their own reasons, personally come into confrontation with the power structure, rather than having the radicals' experience of the power structure pointed out to them as decisive proof.
5. Mass media communication must be replaced with personal methods of contact, to prevent isolation of radicals from other students.

6. In short, it must be recognised that the differences between radicals and non-radicals have been exaggerated, and thus must be abolished; in a sense, the radical must drop his "mass media identity" or his identity as part of an international phenomenon, disseminated primarily via the mass media, and become an ordinary student, relating to others in a direct, personal way, basically in what can be called "work-situations".

ROWAN CAHILL

BETWEEN THE YEARS 1945 and 1948 there was a large increase in the total enrolments at Australian Universities. This was largely due to the Commonwealth Reconstruction Training Scheme for ex-service personnel. These people were older and more mature than the usual university student; they had been through a war; some were people who had missed out on a university education because of the depression in the thirties. Barcan notes that the post-war students who came into the universities straight from high school were also more mature, for:

In the Australian society in which they had grown up they were afforded sights and issues and problems which accelerated their achievement of intellectual and personal maturity, and which thrust them right into problems involving standards and outlooks and theories.¹

One effect of this increased enrolment was to be seen in student activity; the National Union of Australian University Students increased its influence, the left political clubs developed, and student activity was aroused over issues of foreign policy.

Then came the fifties and the student energy of the post war years declined. The left political clubs waned, and the religious clubs underwent a revival. Two points can be made to account for this. First, the generation of the fifties had no experience of war, so the concerns of the post war generation were no longer theirs. Secondly, there was the cold war. As one commentator put it:

That, I think, is why undergraduate life has lost its vigour and its self-confidence. The Cold War has imperceptibly intruded its ambiguity into every remote corner of our landscape. We are afraid of everything except

our local and personal intimacies — and who can be sure that they will sustain us?2

The sixties however saw the revitalisation of student life. The left political clubs were reactivated, new groups formed; there were mass student demonstrations and subsequent arrests; there were sit-ins, free universities; the issues motivating the students ranged from internal issues like the condition and treatment of aborigines, to issues of foreign policy.

Some obvious reasons account for this revitalisation. First there was the slackening off of cold war hysteria which had crippled student life in the fifties. Secondly there was the influence of overseas events—such things as CND, the rise of the civil rights, protest and revolutionary movements in America and Europe. Thirdly there was the Vietnam war and the commitment of Australian troops to it, a supply fueled by youth conscripted under the National Service Act. Fourthly there is the point relating to all university students; being students they usually have no families to support, they are not committed to a 9 to 5 routine, they do not have to fear losing a job because they voice what some regard as unpopular social ideas. To these must be added the fact that the nature of universities makes “it relatively easy to mobilise students who are disposed to act politically.”3 Thus students have the ideal conditions facilitating political activity.

This and the previous point are significant when it is realised that in the sixties the universities increasingly became the repositories of youth between the ages of 17 and 22. In 1969, 8.3% of the Australian youth population in this age bracket was enrolled in the universities. Thus a large proportion of those most affected by something like the National Service Act were located in institutions which, by their nature, facilitated political activity.

The final point relates to the historic tradition of students as rebels and dissenters; they are expected to hold vital minority opinions and ideas, and be a thorn in the side of convention. A Daily Telegraph editorial (Nov. 16, 1946) for example expressed this when it stated that: “If (universities) don’t maintain a steady output of young revolutionaries they are not worth their salt.”

Together with this tradition is the universal point regarding educated young people, that they “tend disproportionately to

2 Murray Groves, quoted in Barcan, A., loc. cit., p 73.
support idealistic movements which take the ideologies of the adult world more seriously than does the adult world itself."\(^4\) This is relevant to what happened here in the sixties. For example when students began to look at the aborigines, instead of finding equality they found inequality in housing, education, and civil rights. The Student Action for Aborigines bus ride of February 1965 into Northern NSW revealed some of the tensions, the racial discrimination and segregation, that exist under the egalitarian facade of Australian society. This inequality in a society that proclaims equality motivated students in support of campaigns around aboriginal land rights, education, working conditions and social services, during the sixties.

Underlying these points is a more basic factor and this relates to the changes that have taken place in the universities themselves during the sixties. It is simply that the activity of students during this period, be it for increased participation in the decision making processes of the university, or against the National Service Act, "is founded on a substratum of frustrations and accumulated discontents related to the present character of the university,"\(^5\) The student activists of the sixties have been alienated by the university institutions.

These days the Australian universities are costing the taxpayer over $140 million. In the 1940's the cost was nowhere near this. Universities were not intended to churn out 10,000 or so graduates a year but to replace and supplement a highly trained and specialised elite of technicians and professionals. Since the time of Menzies the demand has changed. It was during his term of office that

private businesses and State and Commonwealth public services put increasing pressure on the Government to expand tertiary education so that the Australian economy's growing need for University trained specialists, technicians and economists, etc., could be met. The Government complied with these demands and started a rapid expansion of University facilities.\(^6\)

However whilst there was a student population explosion there was no accompanying change in teaching attitudes; the relationship between student and teacher remained the same (that is there was a tremendous impersonal gap maintained between them), the ratio between staff and students fell, facilities were too inadequate to cater for the new demands. In fact the first "stay-in" by university students in Australia occurred over the

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issue of inadequate university library facilities.\(^7\) The issue of student power was first raised over the matter of fines at Sydney University's Fisher Library in 1967.

The increase in university size and enrolments brought about an increase in university bureaucratisation; students became computer numbers, they were photographed for identification purposes. University administration became a field in itself giving rise to professional administrators intent on "keeping in good" with business interests, and the State and Commonwealth Governments which finance their institutions. In turn the purse strings determined the type of education offered by the institution. The 1969 Australian Universities Commission grants to Sydney University, for example, favoured those faculties which produce graduates of value to business and the professions (engineering, medicine, dentistry, architecture, biochemistry) rather than those which enable students to gain a liberal education (Arts), and an application by the university to establish a chair in Sociology was knocked on the head.

However whilst the business and government interests favoured the professions and faculties providing graduates for industry, students themselves during the sixties wanted to study in the non-science faculties. In 1967 62.4% of new enrolments in Australian universities were in such faculties (e.g. Arts, Economics, etc.). The effect of this was twofold; first there was an overproduction of graduates for which the capitalist system had no use; second, there was a great proportion of students being trained to analyse and criticise the assumptions and values of modern society as they studied history, economics, political science, philosophy, psychology.

These then, as I see it, are some of the tensions, frustrations, and discontents beneath university life in the sixties, which provided the substratum for student revolt during the decade. And because this substratum exists in the universities they will remain as alienating institutions, and in the seventies they will have amongst their intakes students who first experienced radical politics in the high schools. The trends of the sixties will, I believe, continue. Universities will become more and more dependent upon government and industry, and subsequently more attuned to their dictates (wants). University autonomy will be threatened by the professional administrators and those faculties consciously geared to producing graduates for the capitalist system. The sixties were only a prelude.

\(^7\) See "Behind the stay-in strike", *Bulletin*, LXXXVI, pp. 15-16, May 9, 1964.
Mitsuhiro Kaneko

FOR INDEPENDENCE AND PEACE

The author of this article is head of the United Front Department of the Communist Party of Japan. The article was written in response to a request by the editors of ALR for material on the policy of the Communist Party of Japan in the struggle for the return of Okinawa and against the US-Japan Security Treaty. Written prior to the Sato-Nixon negotiations, the article correctly predicted the outcome.

THE PROGRAM of the Communist Party of Japan defines the present situation in Japan as follows:
Those who basically rule Japan today are US imperialism and its subordinate ally, Japanese monopoly capital. Though a highly developed capitalist country, Japan is now a virtually dependent country, semi-occupied by US imperialism.

In accordance with its strategy of containment of the Soviet Union, the United States built a network of military bases all over the world and sought to subordinate the countries they were situated in to its rule. As the Chinese and Korean Revolutions developed, the United States began to view Japan as the main stronghold for its aggression in Asia. They began to take measures contrary to the Potsdam Proclamation which declared
The occupying forces of the Allies shall be withdrawn from Japan as soon as these objectives have been accomplished and there has been established in accordance with the freely expressed will of the Japanese people a peaceably inclined and responsible government.

The US sought to consolidate Japan as its major stronghold in Asia by means of the San Francisco “Peace” Treaty and the US-Japan Security Treaty in 1951. At first glance, the “Peace” Treaty appeared to put an end to the United States’ occupation of Japan. In reality, however, the United States maintained direct military occupation of Okinawa which is Japan’s territory and one of Japan’s prefectures. Even today 970,000 people of Okinawa Prefecture lead a humiliating life under the occupation rule of US armed forces. The Treaty also paved the way for Japan to rearm and to join a military alliance and enabled the US to station armed forces in Japan proper. The US-Japan Security Treaty which was concluded simultaneously with the “Peace” Treaty stipulated that Japan has an obligation to offer the United States unlimited military bases and thus the United States kept in its
hands almost all the military privileges it had at the time of its full occupation of Japan. Not only can the United States set up bases in Japan wherever it wishes, but there is no restriction on the use to which the bases can be put. Such a treaty is quite unparalleled in the world.

Simultaneously with opening its aggressive war in Korea, the United States started reconstruction of the Japanese armed forces and later organised full scale land, sea and air forces — the Self-Defence Forces — under the command and direction of the US armed forces stationed in Japan. By the "US-Japan Mutual Defence Aid Agreement" concluded in 1954, this became Japan's "obligation".

In 1960 the US-Japanese ruling circles revised this US-Japan Security Treaty. The provisions concerning military bases remained intact, but in addition the Treaty imposed on Japan an obligation to reinforce her rebuilt armed forces and to carry out joint operations with US armed forces. This was in accord with a new stage of revival and strengthening of Japanese militarism. It also stipulated US-Japan economic co-operation.

The extent of US military bases in Japan as at March 1969 is as follows: Japan Proper, 148 (Air Force 47, Navy 47 including 2 for Marine Corps, Army 53); Okinawa Prefecture, 120 (Air Force 22, Navy 13, Marine Corps 17, Army 68).

The US armed forces in these bases (as of January 1968) are as follows: In Japan: Officers and men of Air Force 18,300, Ground Forces 8,000, Navy 8,000, Marine Corps 2,900 and military civilians 2,650 — Total 39,850, plus families 47,000. In Okinawa: Air Force 12,000, Ground Forces 14,000, Navy 2,000, Marine Corps 20,000 — Total 48,000.

Although Japan is a highly developed monopoly country, she does not possess colonies, nor have military bases in any other country but on the contrary she is subjected to repression by another nation. It is also a fact that Japanese monopoly capital is following the road of imperialist and militarist revival. This imposes on the Japanese people the task of fighting against the two enemies, US imperialism and traitorous and reactionary Japanese monopoly capital, to build a new Japan — independent, democratic, peaceful and prosperous.

The Japanese Communist Party assesses the position as follows: The road to socialism as the historic mission of the working class can be opened with certainty only through a revolution that overthrows the anti-national, anti-popular rule of the forces centered on US imperialism and Japanese monopoly capital who bar this road and that attains genuine independence and a far-reaching democratic transformation of politics, economy and society.
For a half-century Japanese imperialism inflicted immeasurable damage upon the Japanese and Asian peoples by its ferocious aggressive wars, such as wars of aggression in China and its escalation of the Pacific War in 1941. The Communist Party of Japan fought against the military and police rule of the absolutist Tenno system and took the lead in the struggle against the war of aggression to win a democratic transformation. Although the Party was banned, and Party members and supporters were liable to severe punishment including the death sentence, the Party together with progressive workers, peasants, and intellectuals fought on. A large number of Communist Party leaders were put in jail and not a few Communists lost their lives in the struggle. On the other hand, many social democrats avoided the struggle, supported the aggressive wars and capitulated to the rulers.

After the war, the Communist Party of Japan was, for the first time, able to operate openly and it took the lead in the movement for building this new Japan. It rebuilt trade unions, peasant organisations, youth, women and student organisations, and rapidly developed the Japanese people's huge and organised democratic movement. The Industrial Trade Union Congress (IJCIO), largest in Japan, came into being under the leadership of the CPJ and with it as a mainstay the Japan National Trade Union Liaison Council which was affiliated to the World Federation of Trade Unions, was formed (membership 5,837,000). The Communist Party gained 3 million votes and 35 seats in the 1949 general elections to the House of Representatives. These advances by the Communist Party of Japan and the Japanese people were encouraged by the founding of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (1948), the establishment of the People's Republic of China (1949) and the huge advance of the Asian nations' struggles for national independence.

Faced with the historical advance of the anti-imperialist forces in Japan as well as in Asia, US imperialism launched the war of aggression in Korea and hastened to conclude the San Francisco "Peace" Treaty and the US-Japan Security Treaty, with the reactionary forces of Japanese monopoly.

They saw the Communist Party and the Japanese peoples' democratic movement as their main opponents and, in June 1954, just before the war of aggression in Korea the Occupation Authorities banned all activity by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Japan, removed Communist Diet members from their public offices, and suspended publication of the Party's central organ Akahata. Zenroren was dissolved and over 10,000 Party members and supporters were sacked from industry. Many activists were arrested and imprisoned and the Party was forced to carry
out underground activity. Faced with this serious oppression, vacillation again took place among social-democrats and some of them accepted the unlawful oppression of the trade union movement, supported the war of aggression in Korea and destroyed the unity of the labor front by forming the Japan General Council of Trade Unions (SOHYO).

In spite of numerous difficulties and obstacles, the Japanese people's struggle for independence and peace made progress. Many trade unions played a positive role in this struggle, and SOHYO revised its original line of open support for the aggressive war and anti-Communism. The struggle for removal of the US military bases in Japan and against rearmament, the movement for the complete ban on nuclear weapons, etc., united people irrespective of differences in their ideology, creed and political position.

Taking advantage of the San Francisco Peace Treaty which extended the sovereignty of the Japanese Government, the Communist Party of Japan increased its open activity, reissued its organ *Akahata* making it a daily paper, and in 1955 Party leaders again appeared before the Japanese people.

Thus, in 1960 when the US-Japanese ruling circles tried to revise the US-Japan Security Treaty, they encountered an unprecedented opposition movement by the Japanese people. The struggle against the Security Treaty developed continuously for 18 months from 1959 to the summer of 1960, assuming diverse forms such as strikes, demonstrations, meetings, signature campaigns and petitions. This wide range of activities was possible because for the first time in Japan's history the Communist Party, the Socialist Party, the trade unions, peace and democratic organisations formed a united front to develop their struggle. In Tokyo, in prefectures all over the country, and in cities, towns and villages, joint bodies of action of both the Communist and Socialist Parties, trade unions and peace and democratic organisations were established. Thus wide strata of the Japanese people were united in opposition to the Security Treaty irrespective of differences in their ideology, creed and political position. The development of the people's united action unheard of in Japanese history led to the resignation of the Kishi Cabinet which had forced through the Diet the ratification of the revised Security Treaty in defiance of the people's wish.

President Dwight D. Eisenhower was compelled to abandon his visit planned to encourage the Japanese Government. This was one of the great failures in US diplomatic history.

The 1960 struggle against the Security Treaty delivered a big blow to the US-Japan military alliance and strengthened the pos-
sibility of abrogating the Treaty. But the US-Japanese ruling circles worked out a new policy, aimed at destroying the united front. They worked on leaders of the people’s forces (except the Communist Party), particularly of the Japanese Socialist Party and SOHYO to win them away from the united front. Edwin Reischauer, US Ambassador to Japan, became a promoter of this new policy. He called the Communist Party of Japan “classical Marxists”, regarding it as the “real enemy”.

Anti-communism is deep-rooted among leaders of the Japanese Socialist Party and SOHYO and this was extensively utilised. This new policy had some effect and led to a falling-off in joint struggles against the Security Treaty. However the Communist Party of Japan and progressive workers firmly relied upon the Japanese people’s earnest demand for independence, peace and democracy, and on the experience of their struggle to oppose the “port-call” in Japan of US nuclear-powered submarines, introduction into Japan of nuclear weapons, conversion of Japan into a nuclear base, nuclearisation of Japan, the Japan-“ROK” Treaty, the United States’ aggression in Vietnam, and the Japanese Government’s co-operation in and support for it.

In particular, since Japan has become a stronghold for the United States’ aggression in Vietnam and since the US military bases in Japan, especially in Okinawa have become lift-off bases for the US air force, the struggle of the Japanese democratic forces against the aggression in Vietnam is an internationalist duty of the Japanese people. On the initiative of the CPJ a campaign was started to raise funds to support and assist the Vietnamese people by donating one day’s wages and in about five months over 140 million yen ($US886,000) were collected which enabled us to ship aid goods to Hanoi in 1968. Advanced trade unions frequently fight, by means of boycott and strike, against transportation of munitions to US forces for their aggression in Vietnam.

Women’s and peace organisations often appeal to US soldiers in English “Don’t point guns at the Vietnamese people”, “Stop the unjust war of aggression in Vietnam”. Christians also take part in this appeal campaign. Intellectuals held the Tokyo trial to pass judgement on the United States’ aggression and crimes in Vietnam and extensively expose those concrete facts at home and abroad. The struggle against the aggression in Vietnam and against the use of Japan for this purpose — such as the disposition of B52 bombers in Okinawa, and the establishment of a US forces field hospital in Tokyo — spread all over Japan. Thanks to such a background, SOHYO and other influential trade unions in Japan were able to carry out a simultaneous strike against the aggression in Vietnam.
In 1967, a municipal election was held in Tokyo (population, 11 million) where one tenth of the total population of Japan lives. The Communist Party of Japan together with the Socialist Party put forward a joint candidate in opposition to the candidate jointly recommended by the Government party (the Liberal Democratic Party) and the right wing social democratic party (the Democratic Socialist Party) and the united struggle resulting from agreement on policy and organisation led to victory. Subsequently, in 1968, three elections were held in Okinawa under the US occupation — the election of Chief Executive of the RYUKYU Government, the election of the Legislature and the election of mayor of Nawa City, the seat of the Government.

Having learned from the municipal election in Tokyo, the democratic forces for return to the fatherland again waged a joint struggle and defeated the Liberal Democratic Party which was supported by both the US and Japanese Governments. The elections in Tokyo and Okinawa demonstrated that unity is indeed strength and that the US and Japanese reactionary forces cannot resist this strength of unity.

**STRUGGLES FOR 1970**

In June 1970, the “fixed term” of the US-Japan Security Treaty will be over, as indicated in Article 10:

... after the Treaty has been in force for ten years, either party may give notice to the other party of its intention to terminate the Treaty, in which case the Treaty shall terminate one year after such notice has been given.

This means that from June 1970 on, Japan’s present offer of military bases to the United States, the joint operations system of both the US and Japanese armed forces and the US-Japan military alliance are not assured of their continued existence. If a political crisis is brought about a collapse of the whole system may take place.

Continuation or abolition of the US-Japan Security Treaty, which is the root source of the Japanese people’s sufferings, constantly influences the character and policy of the Japanese Government directly. If the Japanese people reproduce the great united front which they demonstrated in the 1960 struggle against the Security Treaty, and in the elections in Tokyo and Okinawa, to overthrow the Liberal Democratic Government and to establish a democratic government, then a realistic and very concrete prospect will be opened to pave a way to abrogate the US-Japan Security Treaty and to turn Japan’s course in a new direction.

The US-Japanese ruling circles are already taking steps to avoid this situation. Fearing to revise the US-Japan Security Treaty
again and to extend the "fixed term" of the Treaty, they have
decided to automatically extend the Treaty as it is. And taking
advantage of the Japanese people's demand for the return of
Okinawa they are trying to conclude, through secret negotiations
the "guarantee for free lift-off of US armed forces from Japan
including Okinawa after its reversion." That is, behind the words
of the "reversion of the administrative rights in Okinawa" they
are devising a cunning scheme to virtually revise the US-Japan
Security Treaty by guaranteeing the US armed forces in Japan
proper the same freedom of action which the US armed forces
in Okinawa have exercised under the US administrative right.

Needless to say this is closely related to open introduction of
nuclear weapons into Japan, and conversion of Japan into a
nuclear and aggressive base. In other words it is intended to
virtually Okinawanise the whole of Japan in return for reversion
of Okinawa.

At the same time the Japanese Government is going to carry out
the fourth large-scale reinforcement of the Japanese armed forces
with 5,000 billion yen (1,350 million dollars) expenditure in five
years. Taking into account the development of Japan's productive
power which now ranks third in the world, following the United
States and the Soviet Union, President Nixon's new Asia policy
aims at making Japan the centre of the anti-communist military
alliance in Asia. In supporting this policy, Japanese monopoly
capital will drive Japan's militarist and imperialist revival to a
more dangerous new stage in subordination to the United States.

Thus there are clearly two courses open to the Japanese people.
One is the course currently pursued by the Liberal Democratic
Party of continuing the US-Japan Security Treaty together with
deceptive reversion of Okinawa — the course of the militarist and
imperialist revival under the consolidated US-Japan military al-
liance and in subordination to the United States.

The other is the course which the Communist Party and a large
number of the Japanese people intend to take. It is the course
of abrogation of the US-Japan Security Treaty and immediate,
unconditional and complete reversion of Okinawa — the course of
independence, democracy and peace.

The Democratic Socialist Party and KOMEI (Clean Government)
Party argue as if there is a third intermediate course between
those two. The Democratic Socialist Party advocates revising the
US-Japan Security Treaty to accept an "emergency stationing" of
US armed forces, and the KOMEI Party accepts virtual extension
of the Security Treaty under the name of "gradual dissolution".
Such a third course is nothing but a supplement to the first
course since it is designed to keep under anti-communist influence people who are increasingly discontented with the Liberal Democratic Party. They hope to save the Liberal Democratic Party from political crisis when it becomes a minority party in the Diet, by their participation as middle-of-road parties in a coalition government under the leadership of the Liberal Democratic Party.

Thus the test of a democratic party in Japan is whether to allow the Liberal Democratic Government to continue or to fight in unity to establish a democratic government which will realise the abrogation of the Treaty.

For this, formation and consolidation of the united front of the democratic forces in our country, including the Communist Party and Socialist Party, are an indispensable task. The Communist Party of Japan has consistently called for the formation of the united front of the whole democratic forces with abrogation of the US-Japan Security Treaty and complete reversion of Okinawa as its central task. In order to unite the whole democratic forces, the four standards which emerged from experiences of the struggles in the 1960's should be observed.

The first standard is that while democratically discussing differences of opinion arising from differences in ideology, creed and political position, the whole democratic forces unite themselves and their actions, for the present, for the tasks that are agreed upon as urgent in the fight against the US-Japanese ruling circles.

The second standard is that parties and organisations which take part in the joint struggle should mutually acknowledge positions of equality. Unless member organisations taking part in the joint struggle have equal rights democratic development of the joint struggle and democratic unity between member organisations cannot be secured.

The third standard is that in order to defend the independence of the democratic movement in Japan the whole democratic forces in Japan should be in accord. There is the bitter experience of the 1960's when a split took place in several fields of the democratic movement. An important factor in the split was that a particular socialist great power made unlawful intervention in order to foist its own opinion on the movement.

The fourth standard is to exclude those elements who oppose the united front. One of the important obstacles to the advance of the Japanese people's struggle in the 1960's was that the ultra-left groups — Trotskyites, anarchists and others — constantly interfered in and manoeuvred against the democratic movement, and those ele-
ments which came into being as a result of great-power chauvinist interference, have joined with them.

The ultra-leftists call the united front of the whole democratic forces a "Communist-Socialist reactionary bloc" and openly call for the "overthrow" of the "established leadership" of the Communist and Socialist Parties. And those elements who blindly follow the Mao Tse-tung faction declare that the Communist Party of Japan is one of the "four enemies" together with US imperialism, "Soviet social imperialism" and Japanese monopoly capital. The small group of anti-Party revisionists which blindly followed N. S. Khrushchov also form an anti-communist common front with the ultra-leftists.

Although the united front is urgently needed, it has not been realised because the leaders of the Japan Socialist Party which makes almost the same demands as the Communist Party of Japan on the policy of abrogation of the US-Japan Security Treaty and complete reversion of Okinawa, turn their back on the united front and stubbornly reject the call of the Communist Party of Japan. As a result of their anti-communism, the Socialist Party leaders use the groundless argument that the situation in Japan is not sufficiently matured to form the united front; they also use the pretext of consolidation of "independence" before uniting, without making any serious effort for the joint action of the whole democratic forces. In addition, they accept the ultra-left groups as if they were a part of the "progressive" forces and thus virtually condone their ultra-left blind acts.

On April 28th, 1969 — the "Okinawa Day" — the Japan Socialist Party felt compelled to approve of the agreement for carrying out the united action of the whole democratic forces jointly with the Communist Party of Japan without allowing the intervention of these elements. Criticism against the Japan Socialist Party which turns its back on the united front is becoming stronger. In the latest elections to the Tokyo Metropolitan Assembly the Socialist Party got only 24 seats, having lost 23 seats from the pre-election 45 seats, while the Communist Party of Japan gained 18 seats against a pre-election 9 seats. This is an expression of popular criticism of the Socialist Party. Our Party only desires that the Socialist Party should learn from the experience of the Japanese people, and listen to their demands to stand on the side of the unity of the Japanese people — the united front.

In 1961, the Communist Party of Japan at its Eighth Party Congress, adopted the Party Program, which set out the prospect for the Japanese revolution. This Program has become a weapon
to advance the cohesion of the entire membership and the progressive forces of Japan. In the 1960's our Party has drawn vanguard elements of the Japanese working class and the working people to rapidly consolidate its ranks. At present, its membership is 300,000, and the circulation of its central organ Akahata exceeds 1,800,000.

In the 1960's, proceeding from the adoption of the Party Program which scientifically explains the prospect of the Japanese revolution and the Party's tasks, our Party has clarified radical and concrete policies regarding important tasks demanded by the Japanese people and situation, such as the question of Japan's security and the reversion of Okinawa, questions of prices and livelihood, the universities and education, the urban question, etc.

The CPJ has rapidly expanded its influence among the people and support for the Party has spread in the whole of the trade union movement, in peace and democratic movements. But the Party's organisational expansion and an increase in the circulation of the Party organ have not been brought about spontaneously even though the Japanese people's struggle has made advances. Expansion of the Party will not take place unless the Party itself tackles it. The CPJ regards the expansion of the Party as its own independent important task and has reached its Party strength of today by surmounting all sorts of difficulties and making every effort.

It is an indispensable condition for forming the united front of the whole democratic forces to raise the Party's political, ideological and organisational strength so as to increase its influence in every field of the people's movement.

It is the Party which indicates concrete and radical policies to the masses on the basis of the clear-cut prospect of the Japanese revolution (the Program), it is the Party which convinces the masses and raises their political awareness, which constantly gives ideological and scientific explanations, which removes obstacles to the united front and conducts mass discussion and examination. Without the Party there would have been no advance of the Japanese people's cohesion and advance of the united action and united front of the whole democratic forces.

As June 22nd, 1970, approaches, the day when the fixed term of the US-Japan Security Treaty terminates, the political confrontation between the US-Japanese ruling circle and the Japanese people is developing, shaking the political situation in Japan to its foundations.
ART AND REVOLUTION: Ernst Neizvestny and the Role of the Artist in the USSR, by John Berger. Penguin, 191pp., $2.10, illustrated.

Even in his surname there is an irony of particular aptness for such a man as Ernst Neizvestny: its literal meaning is "unknown".

Today, this sculptor who might in all modesty claim a front-line place in the ranks of Soviet art is virtually "unknown" in his own country. One of the few artists to have stood up defiantly to a Soviet Premier to his face and got away with it, he has been reduced almost to anonymity through his suspension from the Artists' Union. Membership of that Union is essential for any professional artist in the USSR, perhaps more so for a sculptor than a painter. Through the Union he obtains a studio, official commissions and, most importantly, materials. A painter can buy most of his requirements in a shop, but if a sculptor cannot get his stone or bronze through official channels, then he will have to obtain it illicitly — even on the black market — as Neizvestny has been forced to do. In addition, the Union is the only avenue through which exhibitions can be arranged. Without membership of the Union, then, an artist is virtually unable to communicate with a mass public.

Lacking the facilities and privileges endowed upon members of the Artists' Union, Neizvestny uses as a studio a tiny disused shop in a back street off Marx Avenue in the centre of Moscow. I visited him there with a Russian friend when I was in Moscow some years ago, shortly after his dispute with the Artists' Union. The place was cluttered with carvings, plaster casts and models; at the back was a small furnace in which he made his bronze castings, the bigger ones in many parts.

There is a second and even more poignant irony about Neizvestny's name. In 1942, at the age of 16, he volunteered for the army and became lieutenant of a commando platoon which was dropped behind German lines. He was gravely wounded by a bullet which exploded in his back and was left on the battlefield for dead. Twenty years later he was awarded the order of the Red Star for his part in the battle. As John Berger says, in this first account and analysis of Neizvestny and his work for the English-speaking public, "In the intervening years no one had made the connexion between Lieutenant Neizvestny — missing patriot, presumed dead — and a notorious, officially condemned, decadent and 'unpatriotic' sculptor of the same name." Andrei Vosnesensky, a close friend of Neizvestny, seized upon the significance of the incident in his poem The Unknown Soldier a couple of years ago.

Many stories embellish the circumstances of Neizvestny's confrontation with Khrushchev over the famous "abstract" art exhibition at the end of 1962. Berger gives a full and authentic account of this extraordinary episode, which could have happened only in the Soviet Union. A group of young experimental artists had arranged an exhibition of their work, containing by Western standards nothing particularly daring, under the auspices of the Moscow City Soviet. After a few days the exhibition was closed by the Artists' Union and moved to a small annex in the huge Manege building near Red Square, where a vast and comprehensive retrospective display of the work of Moscow artists over the previous 30 years was on show.
Khrushchev and other government and party leaders came to "inspect" the "abstract" exhibition at the invitation of conservatives in the Artists' Union, who led the Soviet leader and his entourage around the hall, pointing out what they considered to be the most offensive items. The artists were lined up beside their works and Khrushchev abused them in the most insulting personal terms, most of them cringing before the lash of his tongue. When he got to Neizvestny, who was branded as the ringleader of the project, the sculptor stood his ground, telling the burly statesman: "You may be Premier and Chairman but not here in front of my works. Here I am Premier and we shall discuss as equals". A minister with Khrushchev threatened to send Neizvestny "to the uranium mines" and two security men seized his arms. The sculptor then announced: "You are talking to a man who is perfectly capable of killing himself." As Berger says, "the formality of the statement made it entirely convincing": Neizvestny was released and he and the Soviet Premier engaged in a reasonably dispassionate and rational discussion.

Why has Soviet art officialdom adopted such a hostile attitude to Neizvestny? According to Berger, it is not because he counterposes "private" and "public" art. In fact, he does not: he believes profoundly in sculpture as "monumental" art, being intended for wide, open spaces and constant public perusal. Rather, says Berger, they see a threat to themselves in both the nature of his work and the way in which he goes about it. It is his general refusal (there are exceptions) to adopt a conventionally declamatory and rhetorical style and his pursuit of his own individual themes — as well as his indifference to the bureaucratic system of the official art world — which irritate the powers-that-be.

Berger traces the roots of this official attitude through the development of Russian and Soviet art, culminating in the emergence in the late 20's and early 30's of an artistic orthodoxy which destroyed completely the revolutionary dynamism and experimentalism which put early Soviet art in the forefront of world art. The establishment of the Soviet Academy of Fine Arts — an elite body of some 30 members — and later of the Artists' Union itself in the early 30's enshrined this orthodoxy in the mystique of "Socialist Realism" — which Berger regards as little more than an extension of the traditional Russian naturalism of the 19th Century.

In effect, what Berger is challenging is the whole system of patronage of the arts and literature in the Soviet Union and other socialist countries. This system has indeed brought the arts down from their ivory tower, has made culture the property of the people and has created a vast new literate and, in varying degrees, educated public brought up to regard art and the artist with hitherto unknown respect and even veneration.

The material security which socialism has provided for practitioners in the arts has not yet solved the question of artistic freedom; in many respects it has obscured and complicated it. And until socialism can guarantee the writer or artist not only the freedom to write or paint what he likes but also the opportunity to publish or display his product, the tensions and conflicts which have plagued the arts under socialism for the last 30 years will remain and we can only unhappily expect more examples of the tragic Pasternak, Kuznetsov and Neizvestny kind.

The most interesting and certainly the most controversial sections of Berger's book are those in which he assesses Neizvestny's work and its significance. By contemporary western standards, he writes, and even by those of Soviet sculpture in the 1920's, there
is nothing innovatory or way-out in Neizvestny’s style (this in itself makes the hostility of the Soviet art establishment to him even more incomprehensible). Rodin is obviously one of his major influences, and the nearest western parallel Berger can draw is with Henry Moore. In fact, he considers that, historically, Neizvestny’s style could be placed in the period of 1915-25. He thinks, too, that there is a considerable unevenness in the sculptor’s work and that often it is unsuccessful and unsatisfactory. But Neizvestny’s peculiar significance he sees as lying in his attitude to death. Berger contends that his hair’s-breadth escape from its clutches made Neizvestny see death as not an end but a “starting-point” — in other words, that life is to be measured not by its proximity to death, but its distance from it. In the bulk of his work, exemplified by the torments and conflicts wracking the bodies of his figures, Neizvestny is basically concerned with the struggle to stay alive, to survive: his theme “is the theme of endurance”, says Berger, and again: “Today the hero is the man who resists being killed”.

Berger concludes from this that Neizvestny’s sculpture represents “a phase in the struggle against imperialism”. Though he covers himself by allowing that Neizvestny’s art also “reflects both his own personal experience and a general situation in the U.S.S.R.”, and does not attempt to maintain that Neizvestny himself is consciously aware of the relationship of his art to the struggle of the third world, nevertheless the statement is too sweeping. Rather it could be said that what Neizvestny has succeeded in portraying are the dilemmas, conflicts and suffering of people everywhere, whether caused by the pressures of frenetic capitalism, the naked plunderings of imperialism, or the bureaucratic aberrations of the contemporary socialist states. It is this universal agony it seems, and the endurance and determination necessary to overcome it, that Ernst Neizvestny, unknown and unsung, records and celebrates.

ROGER MILLISS

NEO-CAPITALISM IN AUSTRALIA, by John Playford. Area Publications, 55 pp., 85c.

THIS EXCELLENT empirical survey reads as if it were written with two wellknown injunctions of Lenin in mind: “politics is the concentrated expression of economics... politics cannot but have precedence over economics” (“Once again on the Trade Unions,” S.W. New York Vol. 9, p. 54), and “few questions have been so confused deliberately and undeliberately, by representatives of bourgeois science, philosophy, jurisprudence, political economy and journalism as the question of the State” (A Lecture on the State). Indeed after reading Playford one is tempted to conclude that members of Australia’s power elite work on the principle enunciated by Mao Tse-tung that “political work is the lifeblood of economic work, this is particularly true at a time when the social and economic system is undergoing fundamental change.” (Quotations p. 35).

What are Playford’s own views on these questions? In the first place, he is convinced that Australian capitalism has definitely entered a new phase: a corporate system interlocked with the state machine which if unchecked will see the creation of a consensus which includes only the powerful and the ruthless. True, the new phase — “neo-capitalism” — is relatively underdeveloped by comparison with France, but it has a strong ideological backing — from both Gorton and Whitlam, with their obsession with “modernisation” and centralisation. Moreover, neocapitalism is flourishing in the fertile seedbeds of a non-revolutionary tradi-
tion, early embourgeoisification of the majority of the working class, and the complexity of modern public administration and economic planning.

In the second place, Playford is particularly scornful of the "social-democratic" theory of its State. As he says, "the achilles heel of the social democratic theory of the state is that it separates politics from economics. Labor leaders present a false picture of two contending social forces — economic power concentrated in the hands of a small group of people not responsible to public control, and democratic political power to be found in Parliament, Cabinet and the Public Service." Playford does two things to this theory. He demonstrates that when Whitlam talks about the Labor Party "getting into power" he is really talking only about "getting into office." Power lies not with parliament, but with the various sectors of the economic power elite which run neo-capitalism. Second, he shows that economic power dominates political power. Here, however, he does not relapse into a crude view of the state as simply the "Executive committee of the ruling class." Rather, as Marx and Engels both pointed out, there are periods in which the State bureaucracy exercises a fair degree of autonomous power, and that in certain situations the public service can obtain support from trade unions to implement policies which may meet the disapproval of corporate capital. One quotation from Karl Marx would have been very useful to guide Playford's analysis at this point:

"Bureaucracy is a circle no-one can leave. Its hierarchy is a hierarchy of information. The top entrusts the lower circles with an insight into details, while the lower circles entrust the top with an insight into what is universal, and thus they mutually deceive each other . . . the universal spirit of bureaucracy is the secret, the mystery sustained within bureaucracy itself by hierarchy and maintained on the outside as a closed corporation." (K. Marx, "Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of the State" (1843) in L. D. Easton and K. H. Guddat, Writings of the Young Marx on Philosophy, and Society, p. 185).

What Playford's work shows is that a theory of the state today, while in its essence complying with Lenin's view that politics is the concentrated expression of economics, needs to cover situations of fluidity in relations between the corporate bureaucracy and the state machine. This involves a judicious mixture of the best insights of Marx, Lenin, C. Wright Mills (on the Power Elite) and J. K. Galbraith (with reservations, on the New Industrial State). What this means in practice is that despite Playford's impressive empirical contribution as set out in this monograph we still lack a sophisticated study of Australian bureaucracy in sociological terms. Whoever embarks on this project will have the benefit of Playford's monograph as well as Caiden's Commonwealth Bureaucracy. The missing link, so far as the internal economic system is concerned, is the analysis of the detailed account of the working of individual organs of the state bureaucracy in their relationships with corporate and trade union bureaucrats, as well as the many quasi — legal "islands" such as tariff board, various boards and commissions, etc.

This is not to deny that Playford has got a fair way along the road to a full analysis. In parts 4 to 7, he sketches the growth of "co-ordinating" and "advisory" committees with membership drawn from the main echelons of monopoly-capital, encouraged by Commonwealth aggrandisement and pre-emption.

This is a piece of research on which the author is to be warmly congratulated. But the volume as a whole still stops short of being a full Marxist or neo-Marxist analysis of "neo-capitalism" in
its analytical aspect. What importance for example, are we to attach to the notion of a "rising surplus" in the corporate sector? How is the level of surplus determined and how is it distributed among industries? Since Playford does not like Galbraith's notion of a leading role of the "technostructure", with what would he replace it under Australian conditions?

Playford has been criticised by Ted Wheelwright (Outlook, October 1969) for giving insufficient attention to the penetration of the Australian economy by foreign capital and the consequent exertion of pressure on government from foreign capitalists. Certainly such pressures exist, as Jack Kelly's Struggle for the North demonstrates in the case of the Vestey meat empire. It is also true that in the future, a great deal of state action will be directed towards guaranteeing monopoly surplus profits for foreign corporations. However, considering that Playford has been concerned mainly with bringing the story of neo-capitalism up to the present time, this is not an important criticism, since the new system is as yet undeveloped. Australia still has many aspects of the traditional system of vested interest group organisations operating on a number of central economic command posts and on ad hoc agencies of regulations. These are still the hub of the system. True, the development mentioned by Wheelwright is now growing up, side by side with this system. But the older system still persists and Playford was right, as a political scientist, to concentrate on it.

Playford has returned to the high tradition of Smith, Ricardo and Marx in joining economic and political concerns into political economy. Students of economics who are tired of fashionable economic toys ("multipliers," accelerators etc.) will learn more about the Australian economy from this monograph than from more fashionable and esoteric studies in quantitative methods.

In the coming months there is likely to be considerable discussion in this journal and elsewhere of a new program of the Communist Party. One section of this analysis considers modern capitalism and another discusses the state and political power. From this angle, Playford's Neo-Capitalism in Australia is absolutely essential background reading — and not only on the "empirical" front.

ROBERT KIRK


IN THE GENERAL VIEW, Karl Marx is the founder of the present social systems of the communist world. Most of those calling themselves "Marxists" know only the vulgarisation of marxism constituting the official communist ideology of "Marxism-Leninism" or Dialectical Materialism. If Marx is read, it is often against this background.

The writings of the "young" Marx, which have only recently become widely known, show Marx as the true heir to Hegelian thought. Marx's concern here is with a philosophy whose realisation demands its abolition, with a class of alienated men whose own emancipation means the emancipation of all. The dogmatic marxist idealists claim that Marx was not then yet a marxist, and that it was only with the Communist Manifesto that Marx attained maturity. In this way the "young" Marx can be neatly tacked on to the "mature" Marx some of whose writings, together with annotated selections from Engels and Lenin, form Marxism-Leninism.
In the book under review, Dr. Shlomo Avineri, a well-known Hegel and Marx scholar, at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, conclusively shows to be false the bifurcation of Marx into a young, humanist liberal and a revolutionary devoted solely to the study of political economy. Avineri demonstrates that Marx's change in emphasis from philosophy to critique of political economy indicated the fulfilment of a plan sketched out in his early writings. In 1843, Marx wrote his *Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right* in which the distinctive patterns of his later work were evident. (Avineri provides the first major discussion of this *Critique* to be published in English.) According to Avineri, Marx, in this work, made much use of Feuerbach's "transformative method" which substituted "man" for "God", immanence for Hegel's transcendence, thereby turning Hegel on his head.

However Avineri overrates the importance of Feuerbach in the development of Marx's views since Marx had used "Feuerbach's transformative method" two years before he became acquainted with Feuerbach's work. In Marx's *Letter to his Father* (1837) Marx wrote — and this passage is actually quoted by Avineri — "If the Gods have dwelt till now above the earth, they have now become its centre." (p. 8)

The aim of the *Critique* is, according to Avineri, "to prove that Hegel's inverted point of departure made it impossible to reduce theory to practice" (p.14) Marx finds that "the need to look into the contradictions of social life is a direct outcome of the inner contradictions of Hegelian philosophy as they come to light through transformative criticism." (p.16).

The primary criticism of contemporary society for Marx is that man's relations are reified — a man is first a "capitalist", "labourer", "scientist", etc., who incidentally is also a human being. Marx writes, "Man is not a subject (in modern society), but is being identified with his predicate class." Avineri adds, "Marx has thus arrived at the discussion of social class purely through a Feuerbachian critique of philosophy." (p.27)

Where Hegel rationalises the modern state through the agency of a "universal class" of bureaucrats, as embodying the interests of everyone, Marx finds in the bureaucracy a licence for particular interests. The section of contemporary society which does embody man's universal interests is the "class of concrete labor" — the proletariat. For Marx, says Avineri, "the proletariat was never a particular class but the repository of the Hegelian universal class". (p.62) In his later writings this view remains. For Marx, "What was at the outset a philosophical hypothesis is verified by experience and observation. The universalistic nature of the proletariat is a corollary of the conditions of production in a capitalist society which must strive for universality on a geographical level as well." (p. 61).

Labor, in Marx's view, is man's specific attribute. Future society will not abolish labor, but alienated labor, which is the subsumption of man under the conditions of work. Avineri points out that "even if the division of labor will after all be necessary, one man can find joy and satisfaction in another's occupation, provided the social structure is oriented to such possibilities." (p.232) Man is a social animal. The relationship of lovers in which the satisfaction of the one is dependent on that of the other, may represent in microcosm the eroticisation which will be man in communism.
Avineri's discussion on Marx's attitudes to revolution is most instructive. Marx opposes terror, which is, to quote Avineri, "less a means towards the realisation of a revolutionary aim than a mark of failure." (p.188) The communist revolution will abolish civil society by realising that universality which civil society itself cannot realise. Jacobinism, however, only negates civil society since it does not totalise its achievements. Marx viewed the substitution of one elite no matter whether it called itself "socialist" or not, for another, as no advance towards communism since man and society are still juxtaposed to one another.

Marx opposed the Paris Commune which he considered "in no way socialist, nor could it be," although he called it an epoch-making breakthrough in organisation. Unlike Engels, Marx never called it a "dictatorship of the proletariat." Avineri's description of the stand Marx, as a leader of the International, took on practical issues shows Marx to be a far more cautious revolutionary than his present "disciples" might believe. In fact the relation between marxian theory and its practical implications is seen by Avineri to point to a basic weakness. The theory which called for a proletarian movement could not guide it without vulgarisation of the theory. The political movements "had to emancipate themselves from many of the most outstanding and brilliant of Marx's intellectual achievements and replace them by simplified vulgarisations and a wholly uncritical reverence towards the father of the movement." (p.251) But Avineri is right here only if Marx is wrong about man. Authoritarian political structures cannot bring socialism, but are these the only possible structures for revolutionaries whose associations with one another should represent those of the state of affairs for which they strive?

Despite its price this book should be read by all considering themselves "marxists." Avineri looks afresh at what Marx actually wrote, without confusing his work with that of his disciples such as Engels. Avineri through a fascinating and thorough examination of Marx's work (including the Grundrisse as yet untranslated into English), has found in it an essential unity.

DOUGLAS KIRSNER.

FROM ODESSA TO ODESSA, by Judah Waten. Cheshire, 198 pp., $4.75.

JUDAH WATEN was born in Odessa, in what was then Imperial Russia, in 1911. When he was a fortnight old his parents migrated to Palestine and then, three years later, to Australia. The family settled in Perth and Judah Waten has been an Australian ever since. For some time in the 1930's he lived in London and in 1958 he visited the land of his birth for the first time, as a member of an Australian writers' delegation. Professor Manning Clark, one of the other members of that delegation published his impressions some years ago in a book called Meeting Soviet Man, and now Mr. Waten, who has since 1958 revisited the USSR several times, has published a sort of composite account of his Russian experiences.

From Odessa to Odessa describes the Waten's journey to the USSR, the long train journey from Berlin through country-side that still shows the scars of the German advance and retreat in the last war, their experiences in Moscow: the meetings with Yevtushenko and Ehrenburg, the visits to the theatre and the lunches at the Writers' Union. The rest of their trip to Odessa is recounted via Leningrad and Kiev, and again they meet and talk with writers and prominent Jewish intellectuals. Obviously the visiting Australian writ-
er was something of a celebrity in the USSR, and this sentence, describing the Watens’ arrival in Kiev, is a good indication of the sort of people they met: “Quite a delegation was waiting for us, including Mr. Kazimirov from the foreign department of the Ukrainian Writer’s Union and Yechiel Falikman the Yiddish novelist.” A few pages later a conversation between Waten, a Ukrainian journalist and Kazimirov is recounted:

“The poet-journalist said rather angrily: ‘Yevtushenko’s Babi Yar is a memorial, a finer more living memorial than a monument. Everybody can see it, in all lands. Where in the West has a famous poet mourned the loss of five million Jews? If I am not wrong the much celebrated English poet T. S. Eliot wrote an anti-semitic poem before the war. Didn’t he write: The rats are underneath the piles The jew is underneath the lot.

Kazimirov said:
‘There is a new book written about Babi Yar by Anatoly Kuznetsov.’

I had not heard of Kuznetsov. He was very talented the poet-journalist said. We must look out for his book.”

In view of what has happened to Kuznetsov presumably since this book went to press, this is a quite remarkable passage. The defection to the West, the widely publicised and bitter denunciation of conditions under which Soviet writers must work, these events are not foreseen by such a passage; nor, in fact, by the book as a whole.

There is a discussion of a young poet, Joseph Brodsky, “who had first been sentenced to five years forced labor and exile and later released after serving less than eighteenth months”, and Mr. Waten speaks strongly of the sort of anti-Communist effect such actions produce in the West, even among leftist elements. Unfortunately we are not told why Brodsky was sent to prison or to what extent the charges against him can still be regarded as viable; simply that “it isn’t good policy to jail promising poets who happen to be unorthodox.”

There is no mention of Sinyavsky and Daniel, the two most widely publicised jailed writers, at all. Perhaps their case wasn’t “good policy” either, but they are still in prison.

As Mr. Waten says at the end of his book: “I did not think that the Soviet Union had solved the problem of the relationship that should exist between a Socialist society and its creative artists.”

LEON CANTRELL


SEVERAL YEARS AGO a young American radical scholar Gabriel Kolko briefly held a lectureship in economic history at the University of Melbourne. Rather strange developments were then taking place in the department and he soon resigned to return to the United States where he has since emerged as one of the New Left’s most brilliant historians. His Wealth and Power in America, (1962) effectively challenged and demolished the “income revolution” myth celebrated by such well-known bourgeois economists as J. K. Galbraith and Simon Kuznets.

Unfortunately, it was in a few places marred by the pathological anti-Communism of the American social-democratic group around Dissent with which he was associated at the time. The extensive bibliography did not refer to the work of any Marxist or Left social scientists who had previously covered the same ground, e.g. Victor Perlo’s The Income ‘Revolution’ (1954) and C. Wright Mills’ The Power Elite (1956).
His *The Triumph of Conservatism* (1963) demonstrated that big business was one of the main driving forces of the statist dynamic in twentieth-century America. More recently, in *The Politics of War* (1968), Professor Kolko presented a brilliant critique of the liberal accounts of the origins of the postwar Cold War put forward in the past by D. F. Fleming, Frederick L. Schuman et al.

In *The Roots of American Foreign Policy* Kolko has demonstrated that American barbarism in Vietnam can only be comprehended in the larger context of the relations of the United States to the Third World. Superfluous notions of capriciousness and chance as the causal elements in American foreign and military policy must be eliminated from the analytic framework of the scholar. The logical and deliberative aspects of American power at home and its interest abroad show the irrelevance of the notions of accident and innocence in explaining the applications of American power throughout the Third World.

To understand policy one must know the policy-makers and define their ideological view and their background. This Kolko does superbly in Chapter One where political power in American society is shown to be an aspect of economic power. Bourgeois pluralist theory, stressing the diversity and conflict within the ranks of business and politicians, simply leads to amoebic descriptions of the phenomenon of inter-business rivalry in a manner that obscures the much more significant dimensions of common functions and objectives. The American ruling class controls the major policy options and the manner in which the state applies its power. That disagreements on the options occur within the ruling class is less consequential than that they circumscribe the political universe. This dominant class determines the nature and objectives of power in America. It is the final arbiter and beneficiary of the existing structure of American society and politics at home and of United States power in the world.

In Chapter Two it is shown how the economic ruling class have utilised the Military Establishment as a tool for advancing their own interests. Businessmen and their political cohorts have defined the limits within which the military formulates strategy, extending their values and definitions of reality over docile generals. The sources of American foreign and military policy are not a mythical “military-industrial complex” but civilian authority and civilian-defined goals. C. Wright Mills and other radicals who popularised the notion of the “military-industrial complex” were seriously at fault in not realising that the military conforms to the needs of economic interests. Of course, other Left critics of Mills, such as Paul Sweezy, have previously shown that the military serves the purposes of capitalists and politicians but Kolko’s critique is more fully worked out and richly documented.

A discussion of the United States and world economic power follows in Chapter Three. It is shown that American objectives and interests lead to global interventionism. This gives some rational basis for understanding the objectives of the United States in Vietnam which is dealt with in Chapter Four. Vietnam grotesquely highlights the interests and objectives of the men of power who direct America’s foreign policy. It is, to quote the author, “a futile effort to contain the irrepressible belief that men can control their own fates and transform their own societies, a notion that is utterly incompatible with an integrated world system ordered to benefit the United States’ material welfare.”

This work is polemical scholarship at its best.

*John Playford*
# INDEX

**Author**

Aarons, Brian  
Aarons, Eric  
Burgoyne, Susan  
Kaneko, Mitsuhiro  
Salmon, Malcolm  
Salmon, Malcolm  
Sendy, John  
Catley, Robert  
Gollan, Bill  
Playford, John  
Aarons, Eric  
Coates, Roger  
Coates, Roger  
Eldar, Paul  
Hearn, Ron  
Milliss, Roger  
O'Neill, Dan  
H., E  
Kapitsa, Peter  
Marek, Franz  
Marcuse, Herbert  
O'Neill, Dan  
Osmond, Warren and Cahill, Rowan  
Osmond, Warren  
Richa, Radovan  
Richa, Radovan  
Sendy, John  
Thomson, Dick  
Baker, John  
Bollins, Frank  
Craig, Jim  
Freney, Denis  
Mowbray, Brian  
Phelan, Gerry  
Symon, Peter  
Hutson, Jack  
McFarlane, Bruce

**Subject**

**Volume** | **Pages**
--- | ---

**INTERNATIONAL**

| Latin American Revolution | 4 1969 | 67-73 |
| Chinese Revolution | 5 1969 | 10-29 |
| World Youth Festival | 1 1969 | 45-49 |
| For Independence and Peace | 6 1969 | 58-67 |
| France a Year Later | 3 1969 | 14-21 |
| The Poor of Asia | 5 1969 | 49-53 |
| The Sino-Soviet Conflict | 5 1969 | 39-48 |

**AUSTRALIA**

| The Australian-American Alliance | 3 1969 | 41-50 |
| Foreign Policy Issues | 3 1969 | 51-60 |
| C.B.W. Research in Australia | 3 1969 | 61-70 |

**SOCIAL AND POLITICAL**

| Aspects of Socialist Strategy | 4 1969 | 39-47 |
| E. H. Carr, Stalin & Trotsky (1) | 4 1969 | 60-66 |
| Carr, Stalin & Trotsky (2) | 5 1969 | 65-71 |
| No Time to Mince Words | 1 1969 | 58-64 |
| Symposium on Gramsci & His Views | 2 1969 | 60-67 |
| A Democratic Right | 1 1969 | 65-69 |
| Speech at Presidium of the Academy of Sciences USSR | 4 1969 | 48-51 |
| Structure of the Stalin-Mythos | 3 1969 | 30-40 |
| Interview | 6 1969 | 36-47 |
| Student Movement Strategy | 2 1969 | 50-59 |
| Beginning or End? | 6 1969 | 48-57 |
| Workers' Control—Student Power | 5 1969 | 54-58 |
| Models of Socialism | 1 1969 | 33-44 |
| Education & the Scientific & Technological Revolution | 2 1969 | 26-49 |
| Dictatorship of the Proletariat? | 4 1969 | 10-23 |
| On Understanding McLuhan | 4 1969 | 52-59 |

**TRADE UNION AND INDUSTRIAL**

| Symposium on Workers' Control | 2 1969 | 7-21 |
| Workers' Control | 1 1969 | 8-12 |
| Theories and Practices of Workers' Control | 6 1969 | 9-19 |

77
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Volume</th>
<th>Pages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nord, Stella</td>
<td>NEW CONDITIONS NEW DEMANDS</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>59-64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palmada, Joe</td>
<td>INDUSTRIAL PERSPECTIVES</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5-13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Playford, John</td>
<td>TRADE UNIONS AND THE STATE</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>13-17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sorrell, Geoff</td>
<td>TRADE UNIONS AND THEIR FUTURE</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1-9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taft, Bernie</td>
<td>COMMUNISTS AND WORKERS' CONTROL</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>20-26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salmon, Malcolm</td>
<td>GERALD GRIFFIN</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>50-57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sendy, John</td>
<td>IN MEMORY OF PAUSTOVSKY</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>68-72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ILLUSTRATIONS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>GERALD GRIFFIN</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PLATES FROM CHILDREN OF THE DESERT</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>40-41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>REMBRANDT</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>39-41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>THE ART OF NEIZVESTNY</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>40-41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DISCUSSION</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aarons, Eric</td>
<td>ANALYSING ANALYST</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austin, H.</td>
<td>WORKERS' CONTROL &amp; THE COMMUNIST PARTY</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austin, H.</td>
<td>IN DEFENCE OF WORKERS' CONTROL</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>40-41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burns, G.</td>
<td>CZECHOSLOVAKIA—NEED FOR OBJECTIVITY</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burns, G.</td>
<td>SINO-SOVIET DISPUTE</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cahill, R. J.</td>
<td>DISSOLUTION OF S.D.A.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carey, Brian T.</td>
<td>WORKERS' CONTROL TODAY AND TOMORROW</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C., S.</td>
<td>LENIN'S INTERNATIONAL—AND STALIN'S</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooper, S.</td>
<td>MARX &amp; CENSORSHIP</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cullen, Lyle T.</td>
<td>SEX DISCRIMINATION</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curthoys, Ann</td>
<td>AARONS' VIEWS CONTESTED</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crawford, J. G.</td>
<td>LETTER TO THE EDITOR</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freney, Denis</td>
<td>HUTSON'S VIEWS CONTESTED</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freney, Denis</td>
<td>A REPLY TO CRITICS</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gillies, D.</td>
<td>SELF DETERMINATION A BOURGEOIS PRINCIPLE</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gould, L. H.</td>
<td>ON WRITING HISTORY</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gould, L. H.</td>
<td>STALIN'S HEIRS</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gow, Neil</td>
<td>DEMOCRACY—ESSENCE OF SOCIALISM</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hardy, Frank</td>
<td>PAGE FROM A DIARY</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Henderson, J. B.</td>
<td>VIEWS RE-ASSERTED</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hutson, Jack</td>
<td>FRENEY CONTESTED</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kollontai</td>
<td>THE CASE OF SOLZHENITSYN</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McFarlane, B. J.</td>
<td>ONCE AGAIN ON CIVILIAN MILITARISTS</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McPhillips, L. J.</td>
<td>BREAD PRICE SWINDLE</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

78
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Volume</th>
<th>Pages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Millar, T. B.</td>
<td>MORE PROTESTS ON 'CIVILIAN MILITARISTS'</td>
<td>4 1969</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Millar, T. B.</td>
<td>IN DEFENCE OF THE DICTATORSHIP</td>
<td>6 1969</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mortier, N.</td>
<td>WORLD YOUTH FESTIVAL—ANOTHER VIEW</td>
<td>4 1969</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perdriel, Michael</td>
<td>VIETNAM &amp; AFTER</td>
<td>1 1969</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peters, June</td>
<td>ANOTHER OPINION</td>
<td>2 1969</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Playford, John</td>
<td>A REJOINER</td>
<td>4 1969</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rudkin, Arthur W.</td>
<td>WORKERS, INTELLECTUALS &amp; MARXISM</td>
<td>3 1969</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sanderson, G.</td>
<td>MORE ON SELF DETERMINATION</td>
<td>1 1969</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sanderson, G.</td>
<td>HENDERSON ANSWERED</td>
<td>3 1969</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stevens, Jim</td>
<td>ANOTHER REPLY</td>
<td>5 1969</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supple, Tom</td>
<td>FESTIVAL DEFENDED</td>
<td>2 1969</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supple, Tom</td>
<td>POLITICAL MYTH—OR MIRTH?</td>
<td>5 1969</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Webb, Harry</td>
<td>SHOP COMMITTEES &amp; WORKERS' CONTROL</td>
<td>4 1969</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wilson, E. B. (Mrs.)</td>
<td>WHERE HAVE ALL THE WOMEN GONE?</td>
<td>5 1969</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Book Review</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Volume</th>
<th>Pages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Avineri, Shlomo</td>
<td>THE SOCIAL AND POLITICAL THOUGHT OF KARL MARX</td>
<td>6 1969</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avnery, Uri</td>
<td>ISRAEL WITHOUT ZIONISTS</td>
<td>3 1969</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ayer, A. J. (Ed.)</td>
<td>THE HUMANIST OUTLOOK</td>
<td>3 1969</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Berg, Leila</td>
<td>RISINGHILL, DEATH OF A COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL</td>
<td>4 1969</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Berger, John</td>
<td>ART AND REVOLUTION</td>
<td>6 1969</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carr, E. H.</td>
<td>BLACK POWER</td>
<td>1 1969</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coates, Ken</td>
<td>WHAT IS HISTORY</td>
<td>1 1969</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coates, Ken &amp;</td>
<td>CAN THE WORKERS RUN INDUSTRY?</td>
<td>1 1969</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topham, Anthony</td>
<td>INDUSTRIAL DEMOCRACY IN GREAT BRITAIN</td>
<td>1 1969</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coates, Ken &amp;</td>
<td>THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF MALCOLM X</td>
<td>1 1969</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topham, Anthony</td>
<td>ON ESCALATION: METAPHORS &amp; SCENARIOS</td>
<td>3 1969</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kiley, Alex</td>
<td>THREE CHEERS FOR THE PARACLETE</td>
<td>2 1969</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kahn, Herman</td>
<td>KIKI</td>
<td>1 1969</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

79
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Volume</th>
<th>Pages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kolko, Gabriel</td>
<td>THE ROOTS OF AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ABORIGINAL HABITAT &amp; ECONOMY</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lawrence, Roger</td>
<td>THE SOCIOLOGY OF MARX</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jean Bailey</td>
<td>ECONOMIC POLICY IN AUSTRALIA, THE CASE FOR REFORM</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lefebvre, Henri</td>
<td>SUMMERHILL</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S. D' alteration</td>
<td>NEO-CAPITALISM IN AUSTRALIA</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McFarlane, Bruce</td>
<td>HENRY LAWSON, COLLECTED VERSE</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bernie Taft</td>
<td>THE FIRST CIRCLE</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neill, A. S.</td>
<td>THE MAKING OF THE ENGLISH WORKING CLASSES</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grant McGregor</td>
<td>CHILDREN OF THE DESERT</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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