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Massacre of the Innocents

On June 4 the Communist Party of China committed one of the worst atrocities in that country's recent history. Against unarmed civilians, who demanded only that socialism be practised rather than preached, the party launched an all-out armed attack. June 4 1989 will go down as one of the darkest days in Chinese history. It may also signal the beginning of the end for the Chinese Communist Party. No one imagined that the party would respond in this way. Nevertheless, in hindsight, the tell-tale signs were everywhere.

Two hundred thousand battle-ready troops had been shipped in from outlying provinces. According to the official media, they had been called upon to implement martial law: to 'restore order' and 'guarantee property'. They did so at the point of a gun. Five hours before the army went in the official media began broadcasting warnings to students that martial law would be implemented and that Tiananmen Square would be cleared. Only weeks before, the now cowed Chinese media had offered unprecedented support to the demonstrators and exercised a degree of press freedom never before seen in China. The army put an end to all that. On 26 May armed troops were sent in to secure all media outlets and the press and electronic media from that time on faithfully followed the government line. Media bulletins began to broadcast the dire warnings of the aged and reactionary leadership of the Communist Party: they showed pictures of hotel buildings around Beijing festooned with banners calling on the people to 'combat bourgeois democracy', and they reported on Beijing residents who were said to be disgusted with the students' actions. The demonstrations too were covered, but after 26 May a much more critical approach was adopted. Great coverage was given to the counter-demonstrations which took place in the week that followed. The heavily censored television news showed shots of counter-demonstrators bussed in by the government and said to have burnt effigies of leading political dissidents such as Fang Lizhi. Within a few days it was more than effigies that were being set alight.

What had begun as a peaceful mass demonstration was to end in a bloodbath. Students, workers and ordinary citizens were fired upon or crushed under tanks as the entire force of the military was deployed to wipe out the unarmed protests. By day’s end on 4 June, Beijing hospitals were flooded with the dead and injured estimated to be in the tens of thousands. The Chinese media, however, presented a very different picture of events. The national evening news announced only that troops in Beijing, after much provocation, had "seriously punished a very small band of thugs carrying out counter-revolutionary wrecking". This so-called 'punishment' continued on 5 June as the government went out to 'secure' the campuses in north-east Beijing. The senseless killing continued.

After the killings came the secret police. China's head of the People's armed police force, Qiao Shi, was rumoured to have replaced the liberal Party general secretary Zhao Ziyang. Qiao Shi first came to prominence in 1984 when he was promoted from his position as head of the Party's liaison department. The public role of that organisation was to maintain links with friendly overseas parties, but it is widely believed that its primary role is actually espionage. The State president Yang Shangkun, who has also risen in importance as a result of the massacre, is rumoured to likewise have very close links with the secret police. Although Yang built his career through the army, it is said he has great influence in the Public Security ministry, the State Security ministry, the United Front department and the Central Military Commission. All of these units are said to be involved in one way or another in covert police activity. All of this goes to explain the nature of the present campaign against 'counter-revolutionary hoodlums' - a campaign which has all the hallmarks of a Stalinist policing action. Special phone lines have been set up so that people can secretly inform on friends, relatives and lovers, the media wantonly distorts events to suggest that unarmed demonstrators are capable of inflicting heavy losses upon heavily armed troops: all this adds an Orwellian dimension to the slaughter which has already taken place.

The senselessness of the killings only underlines the essential political bankruptcy of the present leadership. They have simply run out of ideas. Swept to power after the fall of the 'gang of four', the present leadership embarked upon an ambitious program of economic reform. This reform program turned on the decentralisation of the economy. This, in turn, resulted in the formation of regional and sectional interest groups. It also resulted in opportunities for corruption on a scale unprecedented since the revolution. On a more positive note, the economic reform program resulted in a much more liberal intellectual climate. Chinese intellectuals were much freer than they had been in the past to study foreign ideas and to examine some of the more critical schools of marxist thought. What they
quickly discovered was that the actual practices of the Chinese Communist Party fell well short of its theoretical ideals. The necessity for some form of political reform was obvious to all but the government. Only through political reform could corruption be checked and competing regional and sectional interests be identified. Only by political reform could the ideals of a socialist democracy be realised. It was with these values and hopes that the students took to the streets.

All this has now changed. After the massacres of June, it is quite likely that the Communist Party in China is a spent force. Its rule comes from the barrel of a gun. In order to hold power the leadership clique of Deng Xiaoping and Li Peng was forced to rely upon the military might of troops loyal to Deng and to the ageing president Yang Shangkun. In order to maintain that power they are now forced to rely on Qiao Shi and the secret police.

The tragedy of the present situation is that it did not have to be this way. The phenomenal growth of the democracy movement in the last few years has been fuelled by the failure of the government to implement the necessary amount of political reform to help resolve some of the many inequities and inconsistencies brought about by the government’s own economic reform program. The demands of the democracy movement were ones that the government would have had to address sooner or later anyway had it wanted to keep the economic reform program on the rails. As the contradictions brought on by the economic reform mounted, the movement calling for political reform grew.

This was a very different political climate from that of the late Seventies, when the democratic movement first began. While that democracy movement too was clearly suppressed by police actions, albeit on a much smaller scale, its decline had more to do with China’s unprecedented economic growth and reform than with Stalinist police tactics. By the end of the Seventies, those who advocated a program of political democratisation found themselves almost without a constituency. People then preferred to enjoy the fruits of economic reform than protest at the lack of democracy.

In the mid-eighties, however, the situation was quite different. In 1984 the hugely unpopular and largely unsuccessful urban reforms were introduced and, with them, the removal of subsidies on most non-essential items. The result was that the prices of non-essential goods rose dramatically. At around the same time, emergency austerity measures were introduced in an attempt to halt the massive depletion of foreign reserves. In the first quarter of 1984 alone, something like a third of China’s foreign reserve holdings were lost. The political backlash was inevitable and many highlighted the massive imbalance of trade between China and Japan in particular as the source of China’s woes. This
was emphasised in 1985 by student demonstrators who used the commemoration of Japan's wartime annexation of the north-east to launch an attack on the party's economic performance and on corruption within its ranks. It was suggested even then that only political democratisation would solve the problem of inner-party corruption and nepotism. And while these demonstrations were quickly suppressed, they were a taste of things to come.

In late 1986 the head of the National People's Congress, Wan Li, suggested that China's economic reform required political reform if it were to succeed. Wan Li's call precipitated a new wave of demonstrations. This time the demonstrations were much larger and the demands for reform much less veiled. China saw large-scale student protests in Beijing and other cities on a scale not seen since the Cultural Revolution. They addressed the issue of corruption among prominent Communist Party figures and suggested that, far from being socialist, China displayed many of the signs of a 'feudal despotism'. These demonstrations were successfully contained but not before the then general secretary of the Communist Party, Hu Yaobang, had been removed from office for being 'too soft' on the demonstrators, and replaced by Premier Zhao Ziyang.

In 1989 the demonstrations were back, bigger than ever, and it was Zhao's turn to suffer for being 'too soft'. The demonstrations of May were qualitatively different from the previous ones: now, for the first time, there was working class and peasant participation. The downturn in the economy was starting to bite, and directly contributed to working class and peasant involvement in the current series of nation-wide demonstrations.

This series of demonstrations should be seen against a backdrop of an economy in trouble. By 1988 the booming economy was showing signs of over-heating. Inflation had risen from 7.3 percent in 1987 to 18.5 percent in 1988. In the first four months of 1989 alone prices rose by a staggering 27 percent. Shortages of basic commodities and the reintroduction of ration coupons for pork after years of abundance had knocked much of the gloss off the reform process and the attempts to introduce overall price reform had resulted in disaster. Meanwhile, the issue of official corruption continued to grow. All this made political reform and government accountability more essential than ever. Yet the government continued to stonewall. It felt its power threatened by the numbers and class composition of the demonstrators. It was in this climate that Li Peng introduced the martial law decree on 19 May.

The martial law order was to do little to reassure the government of its power. The local Beijing military garrison, sent in to implement martial law rule, proved unwilling to exercise its power over the people it was in theory defending. Beijing troops would not turn on the people of Beijing. The same could not, however, be said of troops from other regions. By the end of May, Beijing was completely surrounded by troops from rural garrisons loyal to Deng Xiaoping and Yang Shangkun. The stage was set for the bloodbath that followed.

The reign of terror continues. Now, however, the secret police have replaced the troops. As a result, the murders will be more carefully calculated, they will be more specific, and they will be far less visible. The news spectacle has died away, but the terror will continue until the government is satisfied that the opposition has been entirely silenced. While this is being accomplished the government will continue to promote the image of business as usual. Hopefully the world will continue to say that while the terror continues there can be no business as usual.

Michael Dutton.

Alas Poor Johnny

When Andrew Peacock usurped the usurper for the Liberal leadership back in May, the media had a field day. There were endless accounts of of the minutiae of the coup; myriad explanations of how it was that Howard remained, Queeg-like, oblivious to the last; and much competition for the retrospective title of "I guessed it first" among self-satisfied pundits.

On the subject of what the change of leadership actually means for the Liberals' future, however, there was near-to-total silence. The Sydney Morning Herald's Mike Steketee did note, a little bemusedly, that some of the party's leading Dries were in the "Gang of Five" who ended the reign of the Driest of them all - thus suggesting that it was hardly a triumph for the Liberalism of Menzies and Fraser. But if we were clear on what the Liberal's palace coup wasn't, there was little or nothing to offer on exactly what it was.

Stekette was undoubtedly right to note that the new Peacock shadow cabinet, leavened though it is by many of the Wetter faces evicted during the Howard land lordship, hardly suggests a change towards the "human face of Liberalism". Ian Macphee, his crusading days suddenly in the past, was briefly in the foreign policy job, and Chris Puplick had the environment: but these were obvious, "safe" jobs for Wets in a compromise coup. On the other hand, we now have John Hewson at the Treasury and John Stone in Finance should the Liberals win the next election: probably the most right-wing combination in the economic portfolios since Federation. (Not to mention the likelihood of Mr Charles Copeman, Mr Ian McLachlan and Mr...
Peter Costello on the backbench.) Undoubtedly the young turks of the Victorian Liberals were embarrassed by the attempted reversal of their purge on Wets in that state; but then, there were quite likely as many Dries irri-
titated by Mr Kroger’s (and Mr Howard’s) inept handling of that episode as were delighted by it. In the balance of forces in the Liberal Party on strict ideological grounds, it seems clear, little has changed.

Or, if you believe some analyses on the left, things may actually have got worse. A popular diagnosis on the left after the Peacock accession was that it “masked” (that familiar conspiratorial term) an even more dramatic “New Right push” - that the friendly face of Peacock was to be the front for another yet Drier season. In this analysis the key was to “see behind the style to the substance”. It seemed that in their da­

tardly way the Right was always plotting to get further Right again, if only by stealth.

Yet both of these analyses in their different ways miss the point. On the one hand, “style” is important, and the difference between the symbology of the Peacock and Howard leaderships is not all window-dressing. Again, John Howard’s project as Liberal leader was never simply the reduction of the party to a cabal of free-market economists and union-bashers - however much it may have seemed like that at times. Howard’s world view, his political instincts, even his intuition of the temper of the times, were essentially those of Margaret Thatcher; his project was an antipodean Thatcherism, shorn of its trappings of fake-fur imperial blustering and “British Bulldog” bellicosity. And the Thatcherite project was never simply reducible to the canon of free-market economics and class-war jingoism. It was (and still is) an ideological marriage of the “moral” anxieties and panics of “small people” in an age of disintegrating moral certainties and splintered values, with the political authoritarianism necessary to "stop the rot". Or, in another famous couplet, the marriage of the free market and the strong state: the one underpinned by the moral agenda and its criticism of the “permissive” Seventies, the other anchored by the ideology of the household budget writ large.

It is not the Dry agenda which has suffered a defeat as a result of the Peacock revival: on the contrary, if anything the focus is likely to be more narrowly on economic conservatism than before, if only because the economy is Labor’s biggest Achilles heel. Rather, the loser has been the moral agenda, the terrain of Howard’s “Future Directions”, with its invocation to the economic fears of “little people” about their diminishing stake in society, as well as their moral fears about its standards and direction. There is after all no natural affinity between the astringent amoralism of the free marketeers and the moral crusaders. Mr Peter Shack and the Reverend Nile probably have less in common than do Mr Keating and Tom Uren. Now, undoubtedly, Andrew Peacock will run with the general themes of “Future Directions” - if only because the policy was hammered out at the cost of so much toil, tears and sweat. But it is difficult to believe that the lexicon of “traditional moral values” will seriously survive the accession of the twice-divorced society playboy, the Cavalier to Howard’s Puritan.

When the Liberals say that Howard had “ideas”, but just couldn’t win, what they are really saying by dumping him is that the ideas were just too hot to handle. Putting the lexicon “into place” just proved too difficult in the time available. This doesn’t mean that if Mr Peacock wins the next election it will be back to the Fraser years of stiff-upper-lip conservatism and "keeping politics off the front page": far from it. In the Liberal Party the New Right still holds the initiative, even if its public credibility is by now a little shopworn.

But what it may mean, following the lore of cookbooks, is that the Liberals will "first catch their election victory". It’s much easier to take the political agenda by the scruff of the neck when you’re already in government; much more difficult to get into government that way. Margaret Thatcher didn’t win in 1979 because she was popular, but because British Labour was very unpopular. Since then it’s been another story. If the Liberals win the next election, it will still be time to batten down the hatches. But in trying to get there the Thatcherite model has certainly taken a bit of a beating.

David Burchell
Green Fever

The rise of the Independents in Tasmania has sent shock waves of concern through the major parties and firmly entrenched Green issues on the political agenda on a national level. The poll of 18 percent is the largest recorded on a statewide basis anywhere in the world and makes Tasmania the only place outside West Germany where the Greens hold the balance of power.

The explosion of the Independents onto centre stage in 1989 has been a long time coming. From one seat in 1980 to two in 1986, and five in 1989, the Independents have gradually tapped into the green groundswell while the major parties ignored it.

In the last three years, the Gray government has forced onto the agenda a range of projects around which Green extra-parliamentary opposition has crystallised. Debates have raged over proposals to log the National Estate forests, the construction of a silicon smelter in a residential area, the giant Wesley Vale pulp mill. On each occasion, the parliamentary Labor Party has sat impotently on the sidelines while the Green movement has slugged it out with the Gray government and big business. In so doing, Labor vacated the reformist ground to leave the Independents a clear run.

The signing of the Labor-Green accord - which set out a program of parliamentary and policy initiatives - has guaranteed the Labor Party minority government, with the Independents retaining a distance from the machinery of government. The accord includes agreements for: fixed four year terms; freedom of information; land rights; repeal of anti-gay legislation; a Wilderness Act; public disclosure of bulk power contracts; nuclear warship safety plan and mineral royalties; affirmative action policies; nomination of sections of the Western Tasmanian wilderness for World Heritage.

Many of these are issues long advocated by the Greens to the opposition of sections of the ALP and conservative forces.

Within days of the Independents gaining the balance of power, the pillars of Tasmanian society dramatically changed tack from ridicule of the Independents to enticement. The editor of the Launceston Examiner who, for years, had been antagonistic to conservation, had a hand-written note delivered to Bob Brown's remote rural home. The editor of the Hobart Mercury, which had also editorialised against the Greens, rang to offer his congratulations. The Hobart Chamber of Commerce made contact seeking discussions, as did the Chamber of Mines. The grassroots rebellion against unwanted developments which they had tried to crush had survived. The time had come to try to limit the damage.

But the Independents have eschewed co-opting processes, as they have the spoils of power. Ministerial positions, there for the taking, were not sought. Symbolic of the Independents' aversion to parliamentary privileges is the move to abolish the traditional perk of subsidised liquor for Ministers. With substantial philosophical differences between the Independents and the conservative parliamentary Labor Party, there will be substantial differences on many policy issues.

The Independents will retain their right to ask questions of the government on the floor of parliament, while extra-parliamentary groups will maintain external pressure. For the next term, moreover, the Independents have three more members to cover more issues and, under the accord, will gain support staff where presently they have only what they pay for out of their own pockets.

The ALP, with 13 seats, needs all five Independents present to avoid suffering defeat on the floor of the House. Any backdown on the contents of the implementation of accord renders the ALP vulnerable to the further erosion of its support base at the next election. In public perception the Independents have become the real opposition for many and have effectively ensured that, for the foreseeable future, the ALP cannot govern in its own right.

Much of the Independents' program will undermine the standing of entrenched business interests which dominate Tasmania's economy. At present, seventeen major companies dominate the economy - consuming 66 percent of the state's electricity, mining 90 percent of the minerals and 85 percent of the timber production. The very same companies have provoked intense environmental controversies over the past fifteen years.

The fate of the program of reform hinges on two vital factors - the extent to which the Greens allow the program of reform to be watered down, and the degree of obstructionism from the conservative Legislative Council. The latter is likely to frustrate many of the proposed legislative reforms such as freedom of information and gay law reform. The Greens will undoubtedly be subjected to substantial pressure to be 'reasonable', 'responsible' and willing to 'compromise' from the media, big business and conservative unions. The countervailing pressure to maintain and extend the agenda will depend on their ability to retain their roots with their respective groups.

Despite these possible setbacks the Green momentum appears unstoppable. The federal ALP, increasingly nervous about the prospect of the next election, is keen to ensure that the Green/ALP connection is projected successfully onto the federal level. Out of the fires of anti-conservation, which burned so brightly seven years ago when Gray came to power, has come a bold new experiment. The ripples of hope from success in Tasmania will spread far beyond these shores.

Bob Burton.
It’s easy being Green

Diana Simmonds

It is unfortunate but true that ‘the environment’ is flavour of the month at the moment. Unfortunately, because in media terms, this means that next month, when another toxic spill lays waste another urban creek, the response is likely to be—“Oh, environment. Sorry, love, we did that last month.”

It’s also unfortunate because, with television’s love of immediate imagery and easy answers, it allows professional green persons to get away with murder.

Murder, in this case, actually means sloppy, soft and generally lazy thinking and rhetoric.

It’s so easy being green right now - save the trees, save the forests, no more wood chipping, no more poisonous paper mills. Sure. Absolutely. Indubitably in fact. But where are the ideas for alternative working schemes, industries, future productive job schemes, industries, future sustainable thought behind them?

We must stop logging.

Yes, we must. Sort of. But the people whose livelihoods depend on logging also need to eat, have holidays, clothe and educate their children and be able to look to the future without feeling utter despair and rage. What are they expected to do? Where are the policies and plans for environmentally sensitive development?

Sting jets in for twenty minutes. Great photo opportunity, but what did it mean?

Nothing, because standing on a tree stump railing at timber workers is akin to blaming a fly for our glorious shit-covered beaches.

Where is the will and courage to address the real cause of this catastrophe? Our planet, its environment, and us - loggers and logheads alike — are suffering from advanced greed. Greed is what capitalism is all about: make more money, sell more products, make even more money, sell even more products. Convince people that they want, need, must have them. Go on doing that. And on and on. Never be satisfied with the profit sheet, with three BMWs, with only six palatial homes. And if you’ve got more money than even the most thrusting phallic tycoon can imagine doing fun things with, then the world is next: power, more power, greater profits, bigger buildings, giant empires, multi-mega-corporations, nation-states. You name it, they can be bought, stripped of life and worth and thrown away, at the laughable cost of a few scrumptious crumbs to politicians and even fewer to their stupid or helpless populations.

While loggers and logheads confront each other across a stripped hillside, the real cause of their anger and anguish is miles away. In board rooms and parliament, in Tokyo, Canberra, London and New York.

Harris Daishowa - and the rest - will remain serenely above the hubbub unless we do the unpleasant thing: hit them in the pocket. Witness Noranda-North Broken Hill’s instant sulks over Wesley Vale. They weren’t prepared to lower their profit sights and pulled out - for the time being anyway. But this still doesn’t address the question of how communities which presently rely on the woodchip and other environmentally and economically unsound industries are going to face the future without them.

Not everyone can or wants to run a gifte shoppe or bijou eatery and, anyway, tourists, even environmentally sensitive tourists, are as finite a resource as any other. What needs to be looked at, urgently, is a way of converting these exploited profit centres for foreign corporations into value-added industries for Australians. Instead of exporting wood chips and importing quality goods, we have to turn it around.

And we can’t and don’t want to compete with the third world’s supply of cheap labour. And we have to come to grips, rapidly, with the tablet of stone which says that growth and profit must both continue, in perpetuity. They must not. This is what we have to address, not the evil forest workers of Eden and Tasmania; they’re in it with us - up to their necks.
In March this year, Ms Bliss made a killing on the crest of the real estate boom, selling the building for $885,000. Back to Sixty Minutes. This was the same program which deliberately screened a strong attack on the Chilean dictatorship just after the controversy broke about Bond’s purchase of that country's telephone network.

For all the jibes thrown at Sixty Minutes, Cassandra thinks it takes a bit of guts for a program in the private sector with ratings hicups publically to distance itself from its station owner.

CONSERVATIVE US business magazine Forbes has discovered the unacceptable face of capitalism: the Vancouver stock exchange. Here's what Forbes writer Joe Queenan said of the Canadian Bourse, through which one-third of Canada’s trading volume passes:

"A lot of that volume, one suspects, is wash sales and money laundered through shells that were mining outfits on Tuesday but by Thursday were in the three-dimensional pangalactic anti-AIDS cybernetics business. Though the sleazeball entrepreneurs who launch these cruddy companies may come and go, the infrastructure of chicanery remains ... "And: Asked how many companies listed were real companies with real employees, products, profits and futures, one dealer said, "I don’t know of any. You go into a stock because you know the promoter can run it up to 12 bucks and then you try to get out before the bottom falls out."

"Every so often, beleaguered British Columbia regulators muster the resources to jail some hapless thug. The VSE then trumpets the imprisonment of the criminals behind an International Tixel as an example of how it is cleaning up.

"But it is never clear what one particular lowlife did that made him the object of prosecutorial vigilance, while scores of other lowlifes beat the rap. The fact is, being thrown off the VSE for being crooked is like being thrown out of the Khmer Rouge for being too bloodthirsty."


ALEX MITCHELL is not in good odour with parts of the Left in Sydney after his expose-shock-horror of the naíve property dealings of the Sydney branch of the WWF in the Sun-Herald.

However, from Mitchell’s Notebook (SH, 21 May) comes the following item: The latest book by Britain’s Lord Chalfont is not selling well in Sydney - despite his much-publicised visit last month.

This is hardly surprising. The book is called By God’s Will: A Portrait of the Sultan of Brunei, the world’s richest man and one of the most appalling despots of the 20th century.

Chalfont, at army officer and former defence correspondent of The Times, concludes the sultan is "the source of justice and the impartial overseer of good administration for his people" and a man with "a friendly and easy manner, a sense of humour and an obvious affection for his people"...

Why, then is the sultan guarded 24 hours a day by a crack unit of the British SAS?

A clue to Chalfont’s sycophancy may be the sultan’s decision in 1987 to hire international public relations company Shandwick Pty Ltd to clean up his image.

One of the directors of Shandwick is none other than Alun Chalfont, Baron of Llanlaryn.

A WALK along the promenade at Bondi or St Kilda reveals a new fashion: Soviet chic.

Sweatshirts emblazoned with Cyrillic letters, hammers and sickles, Gorby badges - even old Vladimir Illyich himself.

But more is on the way.

The latest craze is a Soviet watch whose numbers spell perestroika in Cyrillic and whose hands are miniature workers’ spanners.

To counter Monopoly, the board game spawned by British imperialism, the Russkis now produce Glasnost (Nevsky Prospect instead of the Old Kent Rd?). US-based Zylos menswear now features a line called The Working Class, with US-based Zylos menswear now features a line called The Working Class, with dark jackets and caps modelled on 1920s US-based Zylos menswear now features a line called The Working Class, with dark jackets and caps modelled on 1920s US-based Zylos menswear now features a line called The Working Class, with dark jackets and caps modelled on 1920s US-based Zylos menswear now features a line called The Working Class, with dark jackets and caps modelled on 1920s US-based Zylos menswear now features a line called The Working Class, with dark jackets and caps modelled on 1920s...
Janine Haines

Janine Haines is engaged in the biggest gamble of her career. At stake is her personal political future and the survival of the Australian Democrats.

At the next federal election, the woman generally described as the 'public face' of the Democrats steps aside from the comparative safety of the Senate to stand for the South Australian seat of Kingston. Winning the first House of Representative seat for the Democrats is the only way forward, she believes. But it means facing up to sacrificing the party. "If I lose, I'm out, there's no next time."

For not only must Janine Haines make a successful bid for Kingston but the seven existing Democrat seats in the Senate must be retained to keep party status.

And she has chosen to make a move for a voice in the House of Representatives at a time when her party is already under pressure from an unprecedented surge of public support for independent environmental stands demonstrated in the recent Tasmanian election. It is a pressure that threatens to split the environmental vote, posing a real danger, not just to the future of the Democrats but, at least according to Haines, for the whole Australian environment movement.

As she freely admits the threat, her frustration is evident; frustration at the years of often fruitless effort spent getting environmental issues on the political agenda when, now that those issues are high in the public eye, they are being credited to the rapidly rising Green Independents.

Though agreeing the fault lies largely with her party's seriously inadequate public profile, she is at a loss to provide a solution. Instead, she would identify a culprit: in her opinion the insidious political media. Challenged recently in Tasmania by a reporter on the party's inability to achieve political results, she told him to ask his colleagues the same question. "I can't hold a gun to the journos' heads," is her testy comment.

Sadly lacking through the Democrat profile may be, the same cannot be said for Haines. Whether she represents the true face of the party, though, is a matter of some debate.

Her presentation of the Democrat stand on those issues is not always supported within the ranks. She is said by some to be too conservative and a constant source of tension, though her ability to get the message across seems unchallenged. Those who oppose her conservative stance on some issues cannot argue her ability to command respect inside the inner sanctum of the party room, and in the Senate, where she is much admired for the ability to think on her feet and get to the guts of an issue.

For more than a decade she has remained steadfast in her stands on women's issues, the environment, nuclear power, and social issues affecting the sick, the old and the underprivileged. She has raged against the hypocrisy of political life and the inability of the Australian public to understand the political system.

A former senior maths and English teacher, Haines became the first Democrat in the Senate and the first woman leader of an Australian party in parliament. She has learned her job well. Her critics would say too well - arguing that she has become sleek in style, in contrast with the original rough-hewn, but honest, Democrat image.

The ability to get her point across does not always provoke admiration among those, some of whom close colleagues, who have experienced the sharper side of the Haines personality. "Flies off the handle easily", "verbally lashes out", "allows personal views to override what is best for her and the party", "petulant", "other Democrats often take on an appeasing role to manage her", are just some of the remarks offered.

Haines does not deny the tendency to dominate and hold her own in the Senate "in a very loud voice", but personally admits to being very tired of political gameplaying. "I'm an enormously shy person. I really don't like people pointing at me in supermarkets." She has always attributed much of her political success to solid family back-up support, from daughters Melanie, 18, and Bronwyn, 20, and Ian, husband of 22 years. His unfailing support is much the same as most politicians' wives, she claims, but most politicians would never think to acknowledge it.

The Haines media persona over the years has provided a kaleidoscope of images ranging from 'prissy' and 'schoolmarmish' to 'feminist' and even 'bimbo'; all descriptions she finds amusing. "It's wonderful that no one can pigeon-hole me. I'm not abandoning the complexity of my personality to fit some black and white image. "Complexity, that's what life's all about."

Right now, though, life for Janine Haines and for the Democrats is about surviving the next political test. What seems obvious, and is supported by Haines, is the need to broaden the party image.

Sources close to her are hedging their bets, believing the battle for Kingston could go either way. One thing seems clear: for better or worse, a lot depends on the commitment of Janine Haines to take the Democrats into the next decade.

Clare Curran.
Two centuries have passed since the French Revolution. Barely have we worked out whether to support or to oppose our ‘own’ bicentenary and we are faced with another. Who cares? Spare us the jingoism, the toy flags and gimmicks, the vomit on the footpaths, the TV jingles and hype. Yet there is something significant about the French Revolution something which is in no way narrowly ‘French’, but rather universal in its message and impact.

The French Revolution has always been a dramatic symbol for socialists. Its mythology became part of the mythology of Revolution - People against the Old Regime, as Proletariat would stand against Bourgeoisie, French Revolution as dress rehearsal (of sorts) for the October Revolution, Jacobinism as the first form of Bolshevism, Red Terror as prelude to Stalinist Terror, the guillotine as forerunner to the Moscow Trials.

More than this: the French Revolution also gave us the language of human rights, of liberty, equality, sociability (who today would call it fraternity?), the hope of democracy, the project - however flawed - of putting the Enlightenment to work. Here I want to discuss mainly issues connected with those. In the first part, I refer briefly to the French Revolution as such. In the second, I discuss the Enlightenment and its recent, negative reception and, in the third, the positive legacy of the Enlightenment and the question of citizenship.

1789

The French Revolution is, for us, like the Russian, bound up with its images. Just as many of us think of Eisenstein movies when there’s talk of October so are our images of the French Revolution caught up in film, from British black-and-whites to Depardieu as Danton, the tricolour, the Bastille - even the Angels have a song about storming the Bastille. Somehow the ghosts won’t disappear, we think of the contemptuous Sun King, the breadless masses, the scribbling philosophes, the hard-headed, then beheaded Robespierre, left, right, tennis courts ... tumbrels.

The French Revolution also had its less spectacular dimensions. Few today would view it as the birthplace of the welfare state but, in a sense, it was. Price controls were one sign of this. The idea that citizens had rights as citizens and not as the ranked members of different estates was another. Social rights were born with Article 21 of the June 1793 Declaration, where public assistance was first viewed as social obligation, whether by way of work creation or support of subsistence. The idea of intervention in the popular interest had its genesis here. Yet the Revolution is typically viewed solely as the progenitor of revolutionary violence, which it also, among other things, was. As the young Trotsky put it, the problem with Robespierre was (and with Lenin) was that he juxtaposed Rights of Man and Citizen with the Guillotine. The Guillotine obviously spoke louder. Modernity was thus inaugurated by coercion - Robespierre’s utopia was a republic of compulsory virtue, welfare state was overshadowed now by police state, by committees for protecting the public from themselves.

Yet the Revolution was also an attempt to make history, to work upon the premise that history could, in fact, be made by people. And here we need to talk of the Enlightenment, which preceded the Revolution and, in one way, made it possible. These days the Enlightenment gets consistently bad press. These days it is absolutely unfashionable to talk of making history. Radicals themselves have led the way with new, hopeless case. The marxist cultural thinkers Adorno and Horkheimer set out in 1944 to chart the dark side of the civilising process in their major study The Dialectic of Enlightenment. The logic of their case, however, was that ‘western rationality’ produced the ‘totally administered society’. It was as though the Enlightenment only had a dark side. A similar case has been put with apparently unremitting pessimism and even more widespread influence by Michel Foucault, for whom
modern societies are ‘carceral’, modelled in *Discipline and Punish* upon Bentham’s panopticon-principle of the all-seeing jailer. Foucault implicitly plays on the symbolic connection between surveillance, the Eye and Enlightenment, as though the aim of Enlightenment were social transparency. What this seems to suggest is that critics of Enlightenment now view it unanimously as domination, just as earlier conservative opponents of the Revolution viewed it as ‘nothing but’ the Guillotine. Poor creatures we are, without hope.

**Rethinking Enlightenment**

Amidst this gloom, it’s worth asking what exactly the Enlightenment stood for. The short answer is that it stood for lots of different things, many of which would be completely unrecognisable to the postmodern reader. First of all, it needs to be recognised that the Enlightenment was not French, but cosmopolitan - German, English, Scottish, Dutch and Italian as well as Parisian. Second, and even more controversially, it was not purely rationalistic. Rousseau and Diderot argued for the primacy of the passions; even David Hume agreed Crotocos, not ‘reason’, was its central value. Romanticism was arguably as central to it as the defence of critical rationality. To put it in other terms, Bentham, Foucault’s new spook, was not ‘representative’ of the Enlightenment project at all. As Cassirer has argued, the central figures, if any, are Kant, Goethe and Rousseau, and what’s most striking about this triumvirate is how very different they are.

To read in the Enlightenment is, in fact, to be struck by its differences, and its defence of difference. Reason is a central value, but not in the sense that everything can or ought be explained; it is more often a reason of curiosity and scepticism than an ethic of rational mastery. Autonomy is frequently its central value. Yet Kant, who argued powerfully for autonomy as the central value of Enlightenment, also argued for the limits to knowledge. Similarly Goethe argued that we can never know all, yet we still pursue truth. Cultural relativism, similarly, finds its roots in Montesquieu, and there was no more vehement enemy of the idea of progress than Rousseau or for that matter Voltaire in *Candide*. So antimodernism, like romanticism, was also part of the Enlightenment. Thus, ‘modernity’, the period which opens with the Enlightenment, itself already contains what others these days call postmodernity. Postmodernity, in other words, is too often a trick of definition: it constructs ‘modernity’ as *Enlightenment=Rationalism* and therefore classifies what no longer fits as peculiarly ‘postmodern’, which it often isn’t.

In this context, it’s worth saying something about Marx. Unrepentant modernist? Child of the Enlightenment he certainly was, but a bruising opponent of Bentham. For as the Enlightenment meant difference, so is there difference in Marx. The early Marx, in particular, agrees with Kant and Schiller in his romanticism. Marx shared the fascination of modernity with antiquity. He also held to the romantic sense that humans restricted in their lives by social arrangements could still self-develop in contexts which were less severely circumscribed than those of capitalism. This argument became shared by socialists and social liberals in Anglo cultures into the twentieth century.

For Marx, as in different ways for William Morris, R.H. Tawney and T.H. Marshall, the social question concerned the way in which private property constrained the self-development of individuals. The ideal of a society of co-operating individuals, possessing integrity and integration, working through a division of labour but not governed by it was their hope, and it is an Enlightenment hope. But modernity makes this hope possible while working against it: economic life determines political life, the dull compulsions of economic life make political participation difficult and diverse self-development impossible.

If we trace the development of Marx’s thought from the 1844 *Manuscripts* through the *Grundisse* to *Capital*, we see him adjusting to the dawning necessity of divisions of labour beyond our control. The realm of freedom is now placed outside work. But the sense of diversity and social development of individuals merely ‘academic’ interest, unless we imagine that we can develop arguments for socialism without thinking about the currents in modernity. As the later Foucault was prepared to recognise, we are stuck with the Enlightenment, whether we like it or not. The Enlightenment, like modernity, has its bright as well as its dark side. We thus need to address our situation using the arguments with which the Enlightenment has endowed us. Children of Enlightenment, we need to develop our endowments into talents, which has never yet been done.

Like the French Revolution, we can view the Enlightenment as an attitude, or a project, rather than an event. The implication of this case is that while we need new arguments and theories, there is likely also a stock of discourse which has hitherto been little used, or else ill used. Some of the problems which face us are absolutely new, and need new responses. Some aren’t. Reformism in particular has been exhausted because it has not really been tried. Democracy remains a core value because it has still not been realised. Citizenship remains a catchcry because it has not yet been taken seriously.

**More Citizenship**

Citizenship itself is an ancient value. Only modernity, however, has worked with the sense that property made citizenship problematical, rather than identifying it with wealth or status. Into the twentieth century the idea of citizenship, like that of democracy, has been sullied by its institutional reduction to mechanical practices. Just as democracy has been tokenised into its allegedly representative forms, so has citizenship been channelled into ‘civics’ and then
forgotten. As Stuart McIntyre has argued, citizenship in Australia has been constructed in terms of duties to the effective exclusion of rights. And as Weber argued in *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, ours is a culture which collapses into the fetish of appearances - the good citizen is the person who gives the outward appearance of civic behaviour.

So why the recent fuss about citizenship? The idea has a long heritage on the left, and has been revived in order to rethink the relationship between economy and polity beyond the limits of class theory, which privileges proletarians over citizens. Class theory, in both its marxist and its labourist forms, has traditionally addressed political questions via a commonsense version of the labour theory of value: rights were to be accorded to those who really produced value, not to the capitalists who legally appropriated it. Questions of value as such were thereby cast in economic terms: rights, like wealth, should go to the "real producers" of wealth. The terms of calculation here are those of bourgeois political economy: domestic labour, the work of caring, the work of providing services somehow fell beyond the pale.

The idea of citizenship better addresses the issue of social contribution as such. Citizens are just that: individuals who contribute to social life in different ways, more or less private or public; members of a community, however defined, whose rights ought to be established by this belonging and not by their economic class or status, wealth or power. Citizenship is a concept without specific gender or ethnic attributes. It privileges only the idea of the person, the social individual as a being with spiritual and material needs and rights to civil, political and economic justice as well as social responsibilities.

As far as social rights are concerned, the argument about citizenship is that society needs to enable them, for the economy serves to limit the capacity of social individuals to develop and to participate in public and private life. This kind of enablement may be sponsored by the state, but it need not be monopolised by the state. Into the twentieth century ethical socialism became immersed in the statist tradition established by the post-war welfare state and implicit in the work of the Fabians. But as even the Fabians knew, in their better moments, municipal socialism was incredibly important, as was the principle of co-operation. People obviously need housing and education for themselves and their children, but there is no absolute necessity that central planning need deliver them.

The value of citizenship as a slogan here is not that it solves problems, for no concepts or theories at all can themselves solve our problems anyway. The point, rather, is that it can help us begin to address some of the problems which, in a sense, have been on the agendae since the French Revolution - since, in fact, a public agenda has existed. To argue in this way means to take seriously, once again, the legacy of the Enlightenment, and of socialism as its troubled inheritor.

With marxism, it is arguably Gramsci who comes closest to addressing these issues: the "bourgeois revolution" should be held to its claims, on which it cannot deliver because it is bound not to the pursuit of freedom but to that of private property. More, Gramsci understood the significance of belief, and thus of language and ideas, and he understood our historicity, our embeddedness in historical relations of our making, or those of the generations before us. Our own traditions are not speechless before our present situation.

I do not mean by this to suggest that we do not need new theories, but rather that we do not need completely new theories, for not all of our problems are completely new. Postmodern radicals too easily overlook that modernity, in which we live, combines elements of the premodern as well as modern and postmodern. The spread of modernity is not novel to the 1980s and 1990s. Older questions may therefore also have some older answers - we should at least take the possibility seriously. Into the 'nineties the rate of change may be sufficient, like Gramsci's times, to allow radicals to exert more influence on their times than they may have expected. Plainly, the timeliness of ecological radicalism is one such possibility, the image of 1789 two centuries on in China (despite its recent terror) another.

I do not want to suggest then that modernity is a project yet to be fulfilled out of the Enlightenment legacy and it alone, exclusively. The point, indeed, is that we still work within its field, and can use its arguments positively, and not just in a strategic way. They are good arguments. The dialectics of the French Revolution set into motion the trends which led both to totalitarianism and to "liberal socialism". Dance as the marketeers might on the grave of socialism, theirs is a danse macabre which we cannot applaud. The market cannot cope with the crises of our age. Social theories which advocate refuge in the margins cannot give us much more hope than stoicism. 'Liberal socialism', or social liberalism may be more useful than we have been prepared to think because it at least offers some contributions to a radical vocabulary for the 1990s. For if the French Revolution is still talking to us, it is surely asking us why, in human terms, we have progressed so hesitantly toward liberty, equality or sociability since 1789. The French Revolution, Luther-like, nailed up some anticipation of what humanity might be striving towards. That it failed to live up to its hopes, over a few short years, is surely less surprising than what we, as socialists, have failed to achieve since. In this, symbolic sense we should say that the French Revolution has just begun. Modernity is full of surprises. Maybe some of those coming can yet be ours.

PETER BEILHARZ is an editor of *Thesis Eleven*. He teaches Sociology at La Trobe University, Bundoora.
The democratic movement in China has been crushed. With it has gone, at least for the present, a whole outpouring of original thought in Chinese society. Much of it, ironically, came from within the Communist Party itself. Su Shaozhi, now in hiding, was one of China’s leading reformist intellectuals. Here, in a previously unpublished paper exclusive to ALR, he lays out a manifesto for the movement.

Until late 1986 Su Shaozhi was the head of the Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought Institute in the Academy of Social Sciences, Beijing. After a series of articles implicitly criticising the Communist Party’s style of work, he was sacked, and thereafter was identified by the authorities as a dissident. This hitherto unpublished article, delivered as a lecture in 1987, is the clearest and most detailed expression of Su’s views on the need for reform and democracy, and reflects many of the values and goals of the now-suppressed student movement.

For Su, political reform meant democratic reform. For many in the Communist party, however, only a government dominated by a strong leader can bring about economic prosperity. This view, known in China as neo-authoritarianism, has been promoted vigorously in recent years, and in April this year even Deng Xiaoping was quoted as supporting it.

In an interview in the liberal Shanghai World Economic Herald in the same month, Su made it clear that while he was not opposed to authority per se, he was most definitely hostile to neo-authoritarianism. In the April 24 edition Su and other leading dissident intellectuals called for a re-evaluation of the recently deceased ex-Party secretary Hu Yaobang. This was regarded as a veiled attack on Deng Xiaoping: the issue was banned and the paper temporarily closed. When it did reappear it was without its liberal editor, Qin Benli, sacked for "seriously violating Party discipline".

The bloody suppression of the students in Beijing weeks later, and the waves of arrests which followed, have temporarily silenced the voices of democracy. Su himself has gone into hiding, and there are great fears for his life. Even if the State were to kill or silence Su, however, the issues he raises will still need to be addressed if the Communist Party is to regain the legitimacy it lost in Beijing in June.

The lack of a theoretical basis is an important reason why it has been difficult to deepen the reforms in Chinese society. We have already done much, but our theory has been either unclear or we have been unprepared to articulate it. This, then, has blocked reform. Vice-Premier Wan Li has already made it clear that the "double one-hundreds principle" is also applicable in the political and policy-making arenas.

A commentator in the People’s Daily also clearly pointed out: "political problems can be discussed". This opens the way for the freedom to explore and overcome a number of theoretical dogmas, a task which will be of benefit to the reform of the political system.

Which dogmas of social and political theory have to be overcome in the reform of the political system?

The first is the dogma whereby socialist society is said to be made up of only three forces - the working class, the peasants and the intellectuals - the divisions between which are said to be disappearing. In reality, the analysis of socialist society also needs group stratification, by social groups or interest groups. Otherwise, the reality of contradictions among the people will not be adequately reflected, and they will not be handled appropriately. How can this sort of division be carried out? Is it to be done on the basis of income? On the basis of one’s place in social production? Research and discussion of this is underway in Chinese sociological circles, and this kind of discussion should be permitted and even encouraged.

The second dogma that needs to be overcome is that which asserts that the workers, peasants and intellectuals in
A socialist society are bound by comradely bonds of mutual co-operation, and that on matters pertaining to politics, morality and justice their views are identical. This sort of "interest monism" needs to be replaced by "interest pluralism". In socialist society there exists three types of interests: social, collective and individual. In socialist society our fundamental interests and long-term interests are of course identical. Nevertheless, there still exists a variety of strata and groups. These strata and groups all have their own immediate interests, individual interests, regional interests and commercial interests - which are not all the same. For instance, workers and peasants have different interests concerning the raising of prices on sideline products. The Party must understand and encourage the expression of each type of viewpoint and criticism. It will formulate its policy decisions much better if it does so by understanding and co-ordinating these various viewpoints.

The third dogma that needs to be done away with is the monistic, absolutist and omnipotent concept of Party leadership. We must get rid of that great all-encompassing unified structure under which the leadership of the Party committee is everything. Party leadership should be exercised over the line, over principles, policy and political ideology; it should raise and examine problems at a macro or strategic level. As for the analysis of specific problems at a more concrete level, we cannot rely on what the Party says and definitely cannot rely on what the Party leadership says. Frequent, there is a very bad tendency whereby Party leaders are seemingly all-powerful. A person serving as a Party leader is suddenly an expert on everything, irrespective of the field; be it cultural, academic, theoretical or whatever. In essence, this is the continuing evil influence of the "golden mouth and jade words" of feudal despotism.

Within this problem there are a number of relations which require research. One is the relationship between the Party and the law. At a general level one must ask: which is more important, the Party or the law? Our Party constitution stipulates that the Party and Party members must act within the limits of the constitution and the law; they cannot overstep the law. The Party participated in the formation of the constitution, but the constitution is definitely not a Party formulation - rather, it is a formulation of the people. Moreover, the judiciary must be independent. If this is not the case, it will be detrimental to the establishment of a legal system.

Secondly, there is the relationship between the Party and the government. In a great many socialist countries the Party and the government are one: government power becomes Party power. In China the provincial and municipal Party committees have taken complete control of many matters which were originally the preserve of provincial and municipal governments. This actually discourages activism in the regions, and in reality it weakens the Party's leadership. We should seriously consider comrade Deng Xiaoping's declaration that "the Party and the government are separate". Thirdly, there is the relationship of the Party and the mass organisations. The union movement was, for example, formerly said to be the link between the Party and the masses. If by link is simply meant connection, then there is no problem. If, however, by link is meant conveyor belt, then in reality the union has become a Party structure and has lost its independent capacity to represent the interests of the workers.

To get to the nub of the matter, what needs to be investigated is the way in which the Communist Party has become a Party of power. What needs to be asked is this: in the socialist construction period, when the exploiting class, as a class, has been eliminated, what elements of the Party's work methods drawn from the revolutionary period are now in need of reform, and with which is it worthwhile to persist? I think that in this regard there is a difference between the Party as underground organisation and the Party
The Soviet Withdrawal from Afghanistan
Edited by Amin Saikal
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& William Maley
University College, University of New South Wales

Nearly ten years of bloodshed and political turmoil have followed the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979. Unable to overcome fierce insurgent Mujahideen resistance, Soviet leadership has opted to cut its military losses under a veil of UN diplomacy.

This book explores the background to the decision to withdraw and its broader implications for the Soviet armed forces, Sino-Soviet relations and world politics.

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as party of government. In the past, in the debates between Lenin and Rosa Luxembourg, Lenin stressed iron discipline while Luxembourg stressed democracy within the Party. The question of who was correct must depend upon concrete analysis. During the Party's underground period, of course Lenin was correct. Without iron discipline, there can be no single line of leadership. With everything passing through democratic discussion, the Party could face destruction. After obtaining power, however, the Communist Party becomes the Party of power, and here Luxemburg is correct. At this time, the key question is the development of internal Party democracy.

The fourth dogma we must get rid of is the view that bourgeois democracy is obsolete. In the past, we considered bourgeois democracy was serving the interests of the capitalist classes and that it was a kind of sham democracy. From a historical perspective, however, the catchcries of bourgeois democracy such as liberté, égalité, fraternité, and many of its systems - such as checks and balances, general elections etc - were all advanced by the "third estate" (including the burgeoning bourgeoisie and the working people) in the anti-feudal period. Needless to say, the labouring people really needed those rights - although, during the anti-feudal period the bourgeoisie themselves accepted and supported these demands.

However, things changed after the bourgeoisie had consolidated their hegemonic position. They tried to restrict or eliminate these demands and to change democracy into a sham form. The significant thing about capitalist society today is that those who strive for democratic freedoms, for true elections and a balanced distribution of power, are still the broad masses of the people. Hence we cannot totally reject the forms of democracy in capitalist society.

In the resolution of the Sixth Plenum of the Twelfth Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party, there were breakthroughs in this regard. The resolution stated: "In human history, the the struggle of the newly emerging bourgeoisie and the labouring people against the feudal despotistic system, forming the concepts of democracy, freedom, equality and fraternity was a great liberation of the human spirit. Marxism critically inherits these bourgeois concepts but also differs from them at the level of principle". We must not allow the right to use the banner of democracy, freedom, equality, fraternity, human rights and humanitarianism to fall unchallenged into the hands of the capitalist nations. These things are, for us, not only banners but things to be strived for. Engels once said: "How can we demand that others give us freedom of speech if we eliminate freedom of speech in our own ranks?"

Here, the freedom of speech spoken of by Engels can be extended to democratic freedom.

Finally, a number of doctrinaire readings of marxism concerning social and political theory need to be eradicated. For example, if the government wants to adopt a measure for raising the prices on agricultural sideline products, the peasants will naturally endorse this, while the workers could disagree. We cannot possibly stop the workers from expressing their opinions: we could only adopt suitable measures to satisfactorily resolve the situation. We should not be afraid of people raising their opinions and airing their criticisms. If there are differing opinions it should be possible to discuss them, and discuss them calmly and dispassionately. Only by this method will we find the best result.

Reform is a kind of trail-blazing, of doing things which have not been done before or by others. Therefore one must boldly explore. Who can say that their opinion is definitely accurate or completely correct? This requires discussion, there needs to be contention between different opinions and we need to have the courage to put forward different plans and proposals after which we must search for the finest schemes and promote the development of reform. Opposing the historic tendency of our nation's political reform. Reform is a kind of trail-blazing, of doing things which have not been done before or by others. Therefore one must boldly explore. Who can say that their opinion is definitely accurate or completely correct? This requires discussion, there needs to be contention between different opinions and we need to have the courage to put forward different plans and proposals after which we must search for the finest schemes and promote the development of reform. Opposing the historic tendency of our nation's political reform.
IS the PARTY OVER?

The major parties, we are told, are 'on the nose'. The old left parties are in decline. Is the political party as we've known it in the Twentieth Century an anachronism? Sarah Benton, writing from Britain, thinks it is.

The political party as we have known it is an anachronism. Out of all the tasks it is set there are only two it can carry out with any adequacy: it can contest elections and it can produce a caste of professional politicians to take part in the ritual of public affairs. People have expected so much more.

But the party can rarely enforce democracy in government or civil life; where "the private" advances, so the party's control of the state recedes. It does not usually emancipate its individual members; it is not a means through which people can exercise more choice in their lives or more control over their lives. It is not an "authentic" voice of the people: the most common view of party politicians is that they lie. Far from standing for democracy, for most people, the political party represents ritual tedium for the masses who at worst fear they are subjected to the professional exclusivity, fanaticism and manipulation of the few. It is not surprising that political parties of the old sort are in decline all over Europe and North America. Only those that have changed their ways face the future with anticipation.

The "old parties" are those that were established by the 1920s. They differed from each other in ideology and social composition but they were all a response to two phenomena: the advent of the mass vote and the emergence of the all-powerful nation state. Each of these - the state and the mass vote - shaped the development of the other through the medium of the party. The pace-makers were the mass parties with a formal ideology of socialism - including the fascists of Italy and the Nazis of Germany, both of which began with, at least, a rhetoric of power to the masses via the state as, of course, did the communist parties.

Unlike the upper class, with its access to many forms of power through the army (Prussia in particular), church (Italy), land (most of Eastern Europe), and business (Britain, Germany, USA) both the professional middle class and the then huge working class had access to power only through the party. The development of systems of mass production, especially in the USA, Germany and Britain, also shaped the mass vote and produced the potent imagery of the working class as a single, dynamic whole.

Even those who were dismayed by the dawn of the party age, noted the exciting power of mass politics. "All is hurry and agitation; night is used for travel, day for business, even 'holiday trips' have become a strain on the nervous system. Important political, industrial and financial crises carry excitement into far wider circles of people than they used to do; political life is engaged in quite generally; political, religious and social struggles, party-politics, electioneering, and the enormous spread of trade unionism inflame tempers, place an ever greater strain on the mind, and encroach upon the hours for recreation, sleep and rest." (This is Freud in 1893, quoting a contemporary in 'Civilised' Sexual Morality.)

The catastrophic failure of capitalism after the first world war ensured that the mass parties represented the best claim to manage the future. With the dereliction of mass unemployment, only a greatly enlarged role for the state could produce balance, stability and social equity. To socialists of all sorts this was so obvious it was just common sense. Where social democrats diverged from communists and fascists was in their pursuit of a state that would be invulnerable to demagogues and the mob.

It was their parties that took the lead in shaping modern politics. In the name of delivering power to the people, socialist parties from the 1930s and particularly after the second world war treated politics as a profession and reforming society as a matter of good management. The crunch came in the 1950s; those governments which had ceded fewest political rights in civil society, for workers or consumers for instance, found themselves the most stultified. They produced a form of government
which cannot regenerate its own political drive, whether it was the Soviet Union's "era of stagnation" or Britain's Labour Party.

Today's Right is quite right to recognise that an era was ending in the 1960s. Before 1950, it was still possible to conceive of the political party as the "modern prince", modern because the collective agency of party had superseded the mediaeval individual leader; but a prince nonetheless, an heroic entity. This romantic conception of party endured until the 1960s; it nested even in the most prosaic bosom of British Labour. For instance, Francis Williams, a true Labour loyalist, friend of Clem Attlee and former editor of the Daily Herald, describes the birth of the Labour Party (Fifty Years March, The Rise Of The Labour Party) in this way: "And now, on that February morning in 1900, the curtain was rising on a new act in this tremendous drama ..." And: "The Party born on that grey February day in a drab commercial street off Fleet Street was to ... mobilise behind it and become the chief instrument of a political uprising of the working classes of Britain that was to change the social and economic face of the country out of all recognition ..." This hero would go on to carry through "a programme which would have seemed the wildest and most revolutionary utopianism to those passing along Farringdon Street about their ordinary business on that February day in the first year of the new century".

Romantic? Undoubtedly. Francis Williams was writing in 1950. A dip into any account of politics between 1890 and 1920 will come up with even more stirring stuff. Thus (and quite randomly), a Mr. Pickles urging political unity at the Co-operative Movement in 1917: "I am attending meetings one night as a socialist, another as a trade unionist, and another as a member of a co-operative board, but I am working for democracy in sections ... Let us put all our cards on the table, stand together, and go forward for democracy - (ap­plause) - triumphant democracy". His rallying cry was for party unity, but he spoke too for the unity of the masses who made the party. The hero of modernist imagery in the 1920s and 1930s was, if not the mass itself, an anonymous worker, individual in statuesque form but not in character.

Like a prince of old, the party demanded loyalty, inspired love and devotion, promised delivery from evil, fought battles on behalf of the needy, brought nobility into the grey, drab lives of the many. Because it was a collective, it also exacted discipline and demanded sacrifice. It would not have been heroic had it not. (The forms and imagery of the military were never very far away either.) And if the party was a heroic warrior, so, too, were the people. The party was the people, they and it were a single whole.

Nobody today regards the party in this way. Lingering romantics see it as having been "corrupted" by power or betrayed by weak, susceptible men while the working class retains its character as a martyred unity. For others, the loss of illusion is just part of the modern condition. The loss of faith is in the party, in the state, in politics itself - and in the masses. To read today the futurists quoted by Marshall Berman (All That Is Solid"

... We will sing of great crowds excited by work, by pleasure and by riot; we will sing of the multicolored, polyphonic tides of revolution in the modern capitals", is to know we live in a different era.

Today we do not believe that the mass can be made into a single, heroic whole by a political party. As Marshall Berman notes, a distinctive feature of today's modernity is the sense of fragmentation, accompanied by a generalised loss of meaning. The "new times" argued by Stuart Hall (ALR 108) are characterised thus: "greater fragmentation and pluralism, the weakening of older collective solidarities and block identities and the emergence of new identities associated with greater work flexibility, the maximisation of individual choices through personal consumption". Not only is the whole fragmented, so is the "self" too. The Co-op's Mr. Pickles in 1917 perhaps felt the same; unlike us with our
kaleidoscopic selves, he felt all could be made whole by the party. He felt his individual, sensate self should be lost in the party surge to democracy.

Our conceptions of party have not been brought into line with this new reality of multiple selves who can no longer be marshalled into one mass party with a single aim: to win control of an all-embracing state. The attempts by party leaders to reshape their parties as both professional elites and purveyors of popular political culture are jagged with these contradictions. Here the crisis of purpose runs deep. What are all those members for? If party members are the cadres of a political mission, what exactly is that mission? For the old form of party is an anachronism not only because it’s the wrong shape, not only because we no longer come in just two or three classes, but because so much power has been shifted out of the state machinery which the party was shaped to control.

The desultory connections of people, party, parliament and state are common to many countries. They are testament to the disappearance of power; like the Scarlet Pimpernel, political power no longer has a fixed, visible locus. It is not found firmly in the state and certainly not in the parliament; it is not tucked in the pockets of M15 pursuing its paranoid fantasies through our keyholes nor is it filed in the cabinets of Luxembourg or Brussels. It is not floating in a silicon valley or sitting snuggly in the IMF, the Group of 7, the headquarters of Coca Cola, among Italian freemasons circling the Vatican or in the safe of a mighty arms manufacturer.

It’s in all those places and none, here, there and nowhere. There is no single citadel to be captured, no commanding height which, once scaled, gives a political party power over the civic universe. As the fragments of power swirl frustratingly in and out of vision, conspiracy theories multiply. Many of them are correct; there are indeed conspiracies hatched and carried out by private companies, shady networks of military and commercial interests, the state’s secret underworld. Some do considerable damage; all are anti-democratic. Never dismiss a good conspiracy when one is hauled into the daylight. But do not either attribute to it a Boy’s Own capacity to rule the world through its secretly acquired powers. The world’s not like that.

If political power cannot be delivered by simple control over the nation state, then the form and functions of parties, designed to win such control, have to change if they are to survive.

It is for this reason, as much as the changing sociology of class relations, that the Conservatives in Britain have been the dominant power this decade. Their rhetoric of rolling back the frontiers of the state is an acknowledgment of the limits of the nation state in today’s conjunction of economic and political power. This is not because the Thatcherites were immensely more perceptive than the socialists; rather it was because the Conservatives have never been so dependent on state powers to get what they want. They have thus had a freedom of manoeuvre in a changing world which parties of the Left have not enjoyed. The fact that much which constitutes "Thatcherism" has been, like earlier Conservative eras, an ad hoc response to circumstances is clear. In Popular Capitalism, John Redwood, a tipped-for-the-top British Tory MP who worked in Thatcher’s policy unit, describes how accidentally they arrived at privatisation. The strategy that became the driving force of Thatcherism was not planned but stumbled upon.

Parties in other countries have followed suit, though much less wholeheartedly. The crisis for British left parties has been far more acute both because the economic problems which the nation state is expected to solve have been more grave for much longer; and also because of the peculiar role of trade unions in Britain. In no other country have unions, party and state been tied together so intractably in what became a deadening mission to create a bureaucratic corporate state.

At the time it seemed to be a juggernaut that could not be diverted. Hence, what seems like the overkill of Thatcherism in severing those links. For Labour, the consequences have been near-fatal. Because that alliance was dominated by a peculiarly British labourist/corporate view of political power, the Labour establishment was also less flexible, less responsive to both external circumstances and to nudges for change that came from below. For it should not be forgotten that criticisms of Labour’s dependence on a bureaucratic state and undemocratic union leaderships came first from the left.

In the 1980s, the political party became a magnet for the movement which had developed out of the ‘60s and ‘70s. This is a comment on the limits of movements, a pointer to what parties alone can deliver.

Unlike the party, harnessed to the needs of the state, the movement was truly "modern". It rejected class as a determinant of individual political choice. It sought to eliminate the gap between personal feeling and public action. The liberation of the political actors was as important as, if not more important than, the conquest of opponents. The movement rejected institutions for itself, as these would tend to freeze political positions and embed conflicts to win control. It upheld direct action both as a form of self-expression and as more effective than formal political procedures. The movement was oriented towards action, but changing culture and attitudes were goals as legitimate as law reform. Its modernism lay in its rejection of the idea that there is a single oppressed people or a single source of authority to be undermined, or of power to be captured.

Most of these ideas were common to the Black movement, the women’s movement, the gay movement and, later, the green and peace movements.
and, to a limited extent, those disabled by injury, illness or addiction. They have in common the fact that their potential membership is circumscribed, and their goals are not universal. In this, they differ from parties.

Nationalist movements, now so powerful as the agency against Communist Party ancien regimes differ again. Though they share the emphasis on culture and speak the language of liberation and radical change, they have powerful roots in old traditions of masculinity, land and family honour all of which bind together dominant racial communities. They look backwards to an old brotherhood as well as forward to a new democracy. Apart from the greens, only nationalistic movements have produced national parties and, unlike the greens, they alone claim to speak for the whole people, rather than acting as an avant garde to advance a minority view.

Green parties in all countries have attempted to be "parties of a new type" and to a considerable extent they have succeeded. Their structures are much looser and, in particular, they acknowledge the "person" in politics. Like movements, green parties expect individual members to embody political principles in their personal life.

These trends are a direct result of the movement ethos, which sought to dissolve the barrier between public and private principles. There is the same stress on authenticity; only that which comes direct from the self, the author, has validity. The British SDP, in its early days when feminism was a strong influence, demonstrated its modernity by establishing "networks" to encourage women's participation. But, in opposition to the Liberals especially, it also raged against "old-fashioned" sloppiness. New practices were designed as much to create a professional elite as to dissolve the gulf between professional and amateur in politics. The requirements of power and the exigencies of size both count against new forms.

larger and more established the West German Greens have become, the harder it has been for them to maintain their ethos of an open democracy.

We should not be romantic about movements. Many of those we still refer to as the "new movements", as representing the spirit of a new age, have lost their elan and cohesion. Their values survive and networks have proved resilient. But the mood is of consolidation and solace, rather than advance.

There have been successes. All the "new" movements achieved lasting changes in awareness. They have been truly liberating. They have changed the lives of the direct participants and of those around them. They have given a political voice to those who would otherwise be silent. They have all challenged the conventions of politics. Movements have been the main agents in exposing the anachronistic structures of party politics.

Parties are not, of course, going to wither away. How, then, can the party be changed so that it is a positive agent for freedom and democracy? How can parties both aim to win state power and act independently of the state, as voices of the people?

We must first accept a limited role for government and the state. The most we can ask of a state is that it lays down the essential standards of free and fair treatment on which civilised life depends. In actuality, that is a lot more than the nation state or transnational institutions do at the moment.

If the potential of the state as an initiator of progress is less, then there has to be a corresponding increase in the self-activity of our multiple selves in civil society. We all have to imagine how things ought to be run in ways that keep open democratic channels without requiring compulsory attendance at weekly meetings. How can the health service be made responsive to its clients? The bus service? The railways? How can a local community get its streets cleaned when and how it wants? How do we balance the rights of street-cleaners with the rights of street-users?

This is the issue of political leadership and, for labour parties, it means a different relationship with the parliamentary sphere. Instead of seeing it as the apex of the pyramid, it should be just one wing of the party. Forms of political power outside parliament need more energy devoted to them. This will be increasingly true if the party is serious about decentralisation.

As we have learned from movements, people will begin to form political groups as a need arises. The party should not seek to take these over, as communists have done, institutionalise them - or ignore them, as was labour's way. Rather, it must be able to bring together temporary alliances of interest groups which may well feel themselves to be in conflict. This will mean co-operation with other parties on specific issues and values.

Too often, parties of the left are perceived as dogmatic and exclusive, rewarding only those they agree with. The party must be the principal defender of democratic channels for everyone. Through this, it can be the defender of civil society against the authoritarianism of the state.

In short, the old relationship of homogeneous state and class, which created the mass political party of reform, no longer exists. But the very fragmentation of society creates a need for clear political leadership; the alternative is a drift towards popular and governmental authoritarianism to stave off "things falling apart". The creation of a political form that can provide that leadership, as well as the promotion of civil political activity, independent of the state, are the two overriding needs.

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The Democrats have traditionally been regarded by the left as a "soft-option" centre party. Catherine Goonan argues that, on the contrary, they should be seen as the left's natural allies.

The Australian Democrats are often portrayed in the press and in the federal and state parliaments in which they have representation as the 'fairies at the bottom of the garden party' or as 'flakes', a fact which speaks volumes about their marginalisation from mainstream politics.

The emphasis given by them to social justice, the environment, education, women's issues and Aboriginal land rights has meant that the Democrats are often portrayed as politically 'soft', i.e. not dealing with 'hard' economic issues or hard, number-crunching politics.

When Don Chipp retired in 1986, the Democrats were portrayed by the media as having lost the political credibility that went with having a long-serving ex-minister as their leader. But the departure of Chipp, John Siddons from Victoria, and other liberal-right Democrats around Australia also meant that the party was able to become significantly more radical. Their platform and policies now place particular emphasis on social justice measures and the environment, and all policies, including those on economic issues, are designed to work towards a politically and economically equal society within the existing political and social structures.

The radicalisation began in the early 'eighties. The party had historically attracted members who were disillusioned with the two big parties and became increasingly more attractive to people in the conservation movement. In 1985 there was a major schism in Victoria over their decision to direct preferences to the Labor Party in the state election. Over seventy percent of the membership voted to direct preferences and the remainder gradually left the party over the period of two years. The attrition was predominantly of the old-style Democrats who had joined when Chipp was leader. As the old guard moved out, the Democrats began to attract young conservationists who were willing to consider more radical policies. This, in turn, made the Democrats more attractive to younger people who would have traditionally joined the ALP but who were disillusioned with the direction Labor government had taken.

Victoria presents the clearest example of a dramatic shift in the Democrats' direction, but the same process has occurred in each state, without the drama, and to a slightly lesser degree. Jean Jenkins, Democrat Senator for West Australia, is a good example of the type of middle class conservationist attracted to the Democrats who has become increasingly radical as she has become more aware of wider political issues.

Janine Haines is nowadays the most conservative of all the Democrat politicians. Yet, while she is out of line with mainstream Democrat ideology, she is the longest-serving Senator and the media and public respond well to her. Failure in her bid for election to the House of Representatives at the next election is the only likely reason for the Democrats to change leader in the foreseeable future.

One of the Democrats' main catchcries is the "politics of SHE: Sane, Humane and Ecological". The other is "Radical, not Left". Their closest overseas soul siblings would be the Green parties of Europe. Like the Greens, their membership is mostly tertiary educated and middle class. Their collective vision is of an en-
environmentally sustainable society, where the population and decision-making is decentralised and people have equal access to both economic and political power. Federal intervention would mainly be directed towards the containment of corporate economic control. This, in turn, would allow the expansion of small business and co-operative enterprises.

They emphasise allowing people autonomy and ensuring them access to important information about issues which will affect themselves and the wider community. They do seem to have a developing understanding of the concept of ruling ideology and the agents which disseminate and reinforce it. Along with Ian Macphee, the Democrats were among the few in politics who publicly opposed the increasing concentration of media ownership. One of their main arguments was that it would increase the marginalisation of small and economically powerless groups, groups whose voices are seldom heard. They perceive one of their main roles in parliament as presenting, in a national public forum, issues and opinions which are ostensibly ‘marginal’.

Trying to present an ‘alternative political agenda’ is not an easy row to hoe. The media tends to portray such a group as either ‘loony’ or dangerous, or sometimes both.

So far there has been a tendency to portray the Democrats as do-gooders, but harmless. In actuality their ultimate aim is a massive restructuring of society, even if they don’t have a fixed idea of the final form such a society would take.

Endeavouring to define Democrat ideology is a lot like nailing jelly to the proverbial wall. This is due partly to the fact that the party is still in a period of rapid change. But, largely, it is due to the absence of a theoretical framework which allows groups to express their ideology coherently. A document which has found much favour among Democrats was a commissioned analysis of their policy platform by Trevor Blake of the Graduate School of Environmental Science, Monash University. From the mish-mash of policy, statements and manifestos, compiled on an ad hoc basis, Blake was able at least to pinpoint the values of a society the Australian Democrats reject. It might shed more light on the political motivation of the party’s membership to quote part of the report.

The historical impact of dominant interpretations of economic viability, moral integrity, cultural integration and political stability is manifested, in part, in both repressive and social consequences and social and environment-
I find myself somewhat critical of the failure of the left in the union movement to analyse properly and use the Democrats' change in political direction. Much has been made by unions of the barrier posed to any sort of relationship with the Democrats because of their support for sections 45D and 45E of the Trade Practices Act. The last time the removal of these sections of the Act was before parliament was during Don Chipp's leadership. In October 1988, a meeting was organised between the leaders of various leftwing Victorian unions and the Democrats' spokesperson on Industrial Relations, Senator Paul McLean, and Victorian state president Sid Spindler. The Democrats were informed by the unions that the ALP had made several approaches to the Democrats to gain their support for the removal of sections 45D and 45E if the Labor government brought the legislation before parliament. The Democrats then informed the unions that, over the past two years, no approaches had been made by the Labor government on this issue.

It is my firm belief, though one not well received at that meeting, that the unions have been lied to by the federal government on this issue. I have no reason to doubt that Paul McLean was telling the truth as it was he who organised the amendment, voted on by the entire national membership, to remove from policy the opposition to secondary boycotts. The ballot came in recording a tied vote during November 1988, and has yet to be reballed. The more likely scenario is that the Labor government introduced the legislation to rescind sections 45D and E when they knew it had no chance of being passed (a move to appease the unions) and have not moved to reintroduce the legislation now that it will quite probably get through.

The Democrats would be quite happy for the union movement to secondary boycott the uranium mining industry out of existence, and this is the union movement's main leverage with the Democrats. However, they are sincerely concerned about the impact on small businesses if 45D and E are removed. It's worth while emphasising the focus on small business here as there is little sympathy in the Democrats for the tax avoidance and socially and environmentally irresponsible tactics of bigger companies. If it is possible for the union movement to find some way to ensure that small businesses will not be sent to the wall if 45D and E are removed, then there is a better than even chance that the Democrats will vote for its removal.

The Democrats are not the political neophytes portrayed by the press. If the unions or the left seek their support on industrial legislation, they will want cast iron guarantees that small businesses will be protected. It is not up to the Democrats to work on this type of legislation alone. It is up to the union movement to approach the Democrats with a list of proposals. So far, the majority of overtures have come from the Democrats. They are a small, under-resourced party whose Senators each carry the load of an average of five portfolios, and they manage to do remarkably well with the few advisers and staff allocated to them. They do not have the money to employ professional advisers and the politicians and their over-stretched staff do not have the time to cover all areas in detail. At present the Democrats are the only voice in federal parliament pushing social justice strategies. Democrat Senators have lost count of the times that left Labor MPs have approached them after debates saying "I wish we could say that". Caucus decisions have muzzled Labor's socialist left in parlia-

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They see the union movement as being male-dominated, patriarchal and paternalistic, with entrenched interests preventing the rise of women
ment, but the Democrats are saying it for them.

They are extremely angry about the broadening gulf between rich and poor, and the decline in living standards of low income earners and those on fixed incomes. They seem to hold this point of view without the realisation that it is because of the marginalisation of the left in government policy which has aided such phenomena.

Over the past year the Democrats have come out publicly:
*against Hoyts (on the grounds that their employment restructuring is dangerous in the long term and motivated by the ideology of the New Right);
*against wage rises based solely on productivity rises (on the grounds that low income earners needed income rises no matter what occurred);
*against the two-tier wage structure (on the grounds that weaker unions would be severely disadvantaged);
*supporting public transport unions and pushing for greater use of the interstate rail network (on the grounds of environmental protection; they are more than willing to promote subsidies to rail and other public transport users);
*negotiating with unions and industry to ensure that unions with a membership of three thousand, rather than the one thousand proposed by government, were not forced to amalgamate under the Industrial Relations Act. (This last on the grounds that many smaller unions had been looking for appropriate bedfellows for years or were even then in the process of de-amalgamating because the amalgamations proved unworkable.)

By no stretch of the imagination could the Democrats' industrial policies be classed as union-bashing, but their view of the union movement is not wholly positive. They regard the unions as pushing a too-narrow set of interests and as focussing too much on the immediate interests of their workers within an industry, rather than considering the immediate and long-term interests of the larger society. This view has been sustained by some unions endeavouring to protect workers' jobs in industries which are environmentally damaging. Furthermore, they see the movement as being male-dominated, patriarchal and paternalistic, with entrenched interests which prevent the rise of women and which do not just neglect the interests of women workers but, in fact, actively play down their importance.

The greatest hurdle remaining to a good relationship between the Democrats and the left is the issue of compulsory unionism - a concept which the Democrats find philosophically untenable. They do allow that it is unfair that workers who pay no union dues benefit from the organisation and negotiation of unions for improvement in working conditions and pay increases and so propose a 'fee for service' payment. It has to be said that this is a solution which is grounded more on optimism than reality.

It is important to understand the significance its liberal origins still hold in key areas of the party. In much the same way that US citizens hold the First Amendment dear, so do the Democrats regard it as a fundamental right to have freedom of choice. Enshrined in their constitution is the requirement that when, in parliament, a Democrat politician's conscience conflicts with party policy, she/he must vote according to her or his conscience. So far, however, this has had no real effect on the Democrats' voting record in the Senate, which is one of one hundred percent consistency on matters of party policy.

The Accord and Australia Reconstructed are favourably viewed by the Democrats largely because of the values of consensus inherent in each and because of the stability each has brought to Australia's industrial relations. Australia Reconstructed has a special appeal as it offers models of economic and industrial flexibility which the Democrats perceive as being vital to achieve a radically new society. The Democrats have a great deal of trouble understanding the difference between 'militant' and 'radical' unions, and have little idea of the way in which unions work on a day-to-day basis. They seem to be under the impression that the Accord brought an absolutely new era in the way unions negotiated with management.

Democrat policies are full of contradictions in a number of areas, something made clear in the report by Trevor Blake. They express clear concerns about neo-corporations, and the spectre of 'Big Government, Big Business and Big Unions', while welcoming the stability this brings. When the chips are down, however, they are more positively disposed to unions than corporations, largely because they perceive unions as playing only a small part in the problem of environmental rape and misuse of resources.

At present, there is a strong tendency for the Democrats and the left to look at each other in terms of their respective media stereotypes. For many on the left, the Democrats are a 'middle class' party, a 'bunch of liberal do-gooders', not really of the left. For many in the Democrats, the left still summons up images of the state ownership of everything, of male union bureaucrats and stalinist apparatchiks. It may well be that the Democrats are at odds with much more traditional left thinking. Yet a good deal of their criticism is the same criticism which has animated the left itself in recent years. It is high time for the left to catch up with the new face of the Democrats.

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The Fitzgerald Inquiry has been great theatre. It has also been hailed as proof that Queensland’s own peculiar political system is capable of reforming itself. John Wanna is not convinced. Even a change of government, he argues, won’t alter much.

At its height, Queensland’s Fitzgerald Inquiry rivalled a carefully staged series of show trials. Brisbane audiences queued for hours to secure seats; a "who's who" of Queensland appeared in the witness stand; a bevy of coy prostitutes ran the kerbside gauntlet; and an insatiable mob of local and interstate media was agog with the daily theatre. Queensland and, for much of the time, Australia was hooked on the sheer entertainment value of the inquiry. An un-ravelling plot of crime, sex and power made it irresistible.

Public hearings finally ended in February 1989 after extensive and vigorous investigations by Commissioner Fitzgerald and his staff of over a hundred. The final report will be delivered on July 3. The impact of the inquiry hearings has led many political commentators to suggest that, after years of abuse, neglect and corruption, the political system was indeed capable of becoming responsible and accountable. The very existence of such a far-reaching inquiry gradually became construed as evidence that the system of checks and balances to power was operational and effective. Government could be monitored through existing institutions, and thus did not require substantial change. In short, democracy was safe and robust. Accountability existed and, indeed, triumphed even if its renewal from the ashes had been seriously doubted for decades.

This apologetic media account shaped the terms in which the inquiry was represented in the public domain. Queensland politics became fuelled by a polemical but inconclusive public brawl over corruption and accountability. Much of this "debate" has taken the form of alleged charges and counter-charges, unctuous assurances, and political party breast-beating. More importantly, the public debate remained at the rhetorical level, with very few substantive proposals emerging or being implemented. Many promises were made; but actual reforms to the political system were much less forthcoming.

During 1988-89 the three main political parties each assumed a holier-than-thou approach while engaging in a major public crusade against corruption. All political parties promised to deliver a new integrity in government while maintaining a suitable reticence over the details of specific action against corruption. Corruption was taken up as an election issue worth running a campaign on, but considered to have little resonance and little pay-off for those elected to govern. Thus, the three main party candidates for the state by-election in disgraced minister Don Lane’s old seat of Merthyr each declared corruption the main political issue facing Queensland. Yet their respective party organisations remained far more circumspect. Prospective or incumbent governments had much to lose from continued attention to corruption. The immediate political risks of particular action or proposals were high.

As a result of the Fitzgerald investigations, the political issue of corruption became prominent news in Queensland, capturing the public consciousness. The abuse of public office whether by politicians, senior public servants or police officers became a major talking point for many Queenslanders. Yet, almost ironically, the outcome of such raised-consciousness was not sustained outrage.
or mass disillusionment. Rather, of more immediate concern to those living under Queensland's illiberal and frequently uninformed political culture was a rare chance to be on the inside, in the "know", to exercise speculation, and perhaps to believe what they, of course, had suspected all along.

Increased public awareness of corruption brought with it some social acceptance often premised on simplistic theories about "rotten apples" in the police and parliament. Such views allowed usually puritanical but phlegmatic Queenslanders to maintain the pretence of their own moral rectitude. Despite the many allegations of corruption and perhaps because of the unceasing public exposure of them, some Queenslanders adopted a self-righteousness typical of insular and hypocritical political cultures. This sanctimonious attitude was nowhere more apparent than in the new contours of conservative politics in the post-Bjelke-Petersen era.

Living in the city seat of a "bush" government, Brisbane residents believed the hearsay evidence presented to the commission of inquiry. After all, most Brisbanites had, at some time, driven past the seedy brothels in the traffic-congested Fortitude Valley. Many felt relieved that what they had "known" for years was finally coming out into the open. Most local residents retained their own anecdotal and sometimes apocryphal stories of police corruption, brothel torchings, and apparent extravagance from ill-gotten gains. The media representation of the inquiry allowed them to make sense of the fragments of their own knowledge, especially as Commissioner Fitzgerald acknowledged that he had uncovered merely the "tip of the iceberg". Living uneasily under a majority rural government rife with cronyism, Brisbane conservatives also reflected that government was, by nature, a corrupting process; too readily so when one party held office alone, and for so long.

Without diminishing the public attention given to corruption, the media's presentation of the Fitzgerald Inquiry generated a gradual indifference to the issues as the proceedings continued. This may be largely unavoidable with any long-term political issue. A few notable personalities were targeted for their misconduct and hounded from public office, as was the self-confessed corrupt ex-Transport Minister Don Lane. But, apart from this reaction, a resigned complacency emerged about the need for real changes in the system. This complacency was raised to an art form by the succeeding Ahern administration, which denied any accountability for previous maladministration - despite maintaining a ministry substantially similar to that of its predecessor.

Complacency was also evident from a further two sources of public perception. There were many who considered that corruption arose from the personal failings and lack of integrity of particular figures in public office. Others contended that the existing political system was impervious to change or unlikely to adopt serious reform. Therefore inquiries, extensive publicity and scandals were routine occurrences but unlikely to produce any significant changes.

A further downstream effect of the media coverage of the inquiry may be
attributed to the emphasis placed on the roles and awaited fates of implicated personalities. Given increased public awareness of corruption, expectations of "heads rolling" were raised. By highlighting the spectacular, media accounts encouraged the view that extensive dismissals and criminal proceedings against many of those allegedly involved would result from the inquiry hearings. This perception later became a pressing political problem for the governing Nationals, as many of the "heads" were their own supporters or appointees.

In 1987-88 the inquiry produced important, though limited, political fallout. As in Japan where leaders accused of corruption are often replaced to preserve the networks of influence, Queensland saw a spectacular political "coup" surrounding the challenge for the premiership by Mike Ahern. The immediate impact of acknowledged corruption was exploited by those in cabinet seeking to oust the aged Premier. After the resignation of Bjelke-Petersen in December 1987, his safe rural seat of Barambah was initially lost to the far-right Citizens' Electoral Lobby. The "Minister for Everything" Russ Hinze resigned in mid-1988 under pressure from the new Premier and the ensuing Gold Coast by-election produced a twenty percent swing against the government. Then, in 1989, the former Transport Minister Don Lane resigned after admitting to fraud, electoral infringements and abuse of public office. The Police Commissioner was stood down for over a year before being relieved of his commission by parliament. Various other serving police officers were given indemnities or were implicated in hearsay evidence. But the overall political toll was relatively slight given the significance of the allegations and the amount of evidence uncovered by the Fitzgerald Inquiry.

The Royal Commission may well have missed the opportunity of most political impact by being unable to deliver its final report until July. But this delay made it clearer that the number of public officers likely to be charged was relatively small, and the number likely to be convicted even smaller. It became increasingly evident that those accused of corruption during the investigative process, but pleading not guilty, would escape trial on charges of corruption. One reason for this was that often the type of evidence given at the inquiry was presented in a legally ambiguous manner that provided insufficient grounds on which to secure convictions. Much of the "evidence" offered to the inquiry was hearsay evidence, often unsubstantiated and uncorroborated, with many questions remaining to be answered. It was also difficult to charge major figures who had left their public duty and whose recollections of previous events were hazy. Self-incrimination remained the principal means by which corrupt public officers were rooted out. Given that most officers did this under indemnity from prosecution, few could be expected to be brought to justice.

Indeed, charges for perjury, contempt of court and increasingly for tax evasion (a la Al Capone) became the favoured means of proceeding against alleged conspirators. Moreover, while many prominent names were mentioned to the inquiry, few political figures or crime bosses were caught in the investigative net. This appears somewhat contrary to intuition, given that the enduring nature of the networks of corruption seems to indicate a certain degree of complacency or complicity from those in political office. No one in elected public office came forward prepared to accept responsibility for the continuation of extensive corruption, despite collectively having "responsibility" for the administration of public affairs within the state government's powers.

Beyond the issue of personal corruption, this factor emphasises the basic asymmetry of responsibility in Westminster-style parliamentary systems. In theory, responsibility is borne individually by the respective minister and collectively by cabinet. In practice, actual responsibility is transferred to branch level officers. These career administrators find responsibility thrust upon them and, unlike politicians, have no avenues of retreat or alternative substitutes. The recognition of this asymmetry in 1988 was one of the factors behind the police force's widespread and, on a number of occasions, publicly declared loss of confidence in the Deputy Premier and Minister of Police Bill Gunn.

The high-level political manoeuvring surrounding the Fitzgerald Inquiry exposed this asymmetrical responsibility. Politicians accused of com-
plicity in corruption possessed far greater capacity to evade their responsibility than did serving officers. Some police were dismissed, charged, stood down, forfeited their superannuation, or were sacked by parliament; the politicians, however, emerged personally unscathed or were allowed a graceful resignation on full entitlements. Only their party’s immediate electoral stocks were affected, and this damage was repairable. Thus, although the government lost the by-election in the marginal seat of Merthyr in May, surveys showed that the electors (unlike the candidates) no longer ranked corruption as the main issue affecting their vote.

Career public servants in contentious or corruption-prone areas were placed in an invidious position. Some became personally corrupt and, like many in the Licencing Branch, chose to profit from their opportunities. But others more problematically were caught up in a wider set of structural problems. They administered "problem" policy areas, were often required to interpret, formulate and implement policy arising from their experience on the ground, were often pressed to accept "least worst" policy compromises, and found it necessary to separate moral questions from commercial or enforcement ones. Such policy discretion would typically assume a level of “corruption” without necessarily involving individual officers engaged in personally corrupt practices.

The difficulties of this position became exacerbated if the government was publicly reluctant to help resolve such issues or was evasive over its formal responsibility. The Queensland government’s public assertion that prostitution did not exist in Brisbane epitomises such an approach. The position was made even more invidious when those administering policy suspected higher-up participation in covering up corruption, giving tacit consent to known illegal practices, or in unofficially condoning the "least worst" policy responses to field officers. In many appearances before the Fitzgerald Inquiry, police maintained that government ministers knew of and condoned policies of containment towards prostitution and associated criminal activities. Yet, because of their positions, these ministers were able to deny formal knowledge of containment policies and thus evade responsibility.

This imbalance of responsibility and the issue of policing difficult policy areas have been aired but not constructively debated in the public arena. The complexity of issues involving decision-making discretion, organisational histories, sub-cultural administrative behaviour and structural "corruption", has been submerged in the lengthy processes of investigation and reporting. During the term of the inquiry the more fundamental issues became collapsed into a hunt for a few guilty men, a crusade for scapegoats who could accept the blame personally and so minimise disruption to the system. Consequently, the seriousness of the issues at stake has barely surfaced on the public agenda.

Thus the investigative process gradually translated into a series of dramas around the recollections of individual witnesses. Media reporting focussed on personality clashes, individual credibility, key dialogues between counsel and witnesses, and on allegations relating to other prominent personalities. Commissioner Fitzgerald became the steely interrogator, determined and purposeful. The counsel assisting the inquiry appeared as the tenacious Doug "Bulldog" Drummond. Commissioner Terry Lewis was represented as suffering from misplaced naivete and incompetence, although his diaries suggested that he was not quite as naive as the public were given to believe. The "bagman", Jack Herbert, was depicted as wily and calculating; Russ Hinze as a populist "stirrer" who could talk his way around anything, and Joh Bjelke-Petersen as the archetypal Queensland politician, somewhat bumbling but cunning and evasive.

In some ways the Fitzgerald Inquiry came full circle. Established with limited expectations, it developed into a major investigative exercise in Queensland’s political history. Fitzgerald was popularly regarded to be among the most powerful men in Queensland. The Fitzgerald Commission emerged as a special type of government-established inquiry. It broke out of the conventional constraints that limit or marginalise the typical inquiry, and pursued investigative directions far beyond those initially envisaged. Despite the claims of immediate
Tom Mann was a leading pioneer of socialism in Britain and one of the union movement’s greatest organisers in the early part of this century. Mann’s relatively brief stay in Australia, when he led a big Broken Hill miners’ strike, had such a powerful impact on the development of working class politics in this country that Australian authorities never allowed him to return.

In association with Spokesman Books the AMWU has published this selection of Mann’s writings which show his intellectual development from his association with the emerging socialist movement of the mid-1880s to his syndicalist stance of the World War 1 period.

An introduction by John Laurent gives an account of Tom Mann’s life and political involvements and sets the context for Mann’s essays. Tom Mann — Social and Economic Writings is available from the AMWU, 136 Chalmers St, Surry Hills, NSW 2010 (attention Karen Barnes) for $12.50 including postage.
success, the Fitzgerald Inquiry shows, above all else, that the political system is not working. After all, the inquiry was an ‘accident’ which went awry for the government: it was not part of the regular process of accountability. The fact that this inquiry not only uncovered extensive evidence of corruption and misuse of public office, but also found it to span over three decades, is sufficient proof that mechanisms of accountability are ineffective. In Queensland politics, commissions of inquiry serve merely to close previous chapters of corruption rather than provide a structural assault on the enduring practices of corruption in public office.

What, then, is to be done? One response with considerable support in Queensland calls for a change of government. It is often suggested that a Labor government or even a balanced coalition would disassemble the persistent networks of corruption. However, a change of government may not guarantee a renaissance in public administration. Despite good intentions, the pressures of governing a state with entrenched networks of corruption would inevitably compromise ideals. Moreover, other Labor governments in Australian states have shown, even in recent years, that they do not have what it takes. Over the last two decades Labor governments in Western Australia, New South Wales, and even South Australia provide examples of Labor’s accommodation to corruption when in office. Crime syndicates in Queensland have allegedly already made sizeable campaign donations to the Labor Party, as they have over the years to the Nationals. A change of government, a return to coalition, changes in cabinet, or even a change of leader may have effects at the margins, but none of itself is sufficient to engineer the changes necessary to ensure the containment of personal and systemic corruption.

In Queensland history the electoral defeat of a government has tended to produce the continuation of a similar style of government under a different party label. The defeat of the Labor government in 1957 brought a change of party in government rather than a change of government. Both political parties in government before and after 1957 eschewed public accountability largely as a tactic to preserve their political regimes of patronage. The Country Party/Nationals continued government in the style adapted by Labor throughout its years of domination of Queensland politics. Unlike the 1950s, today’s politicians are less rough and tumble, more smooth and technocratic, but their capacity to evade public accountability, misuse public office, or turn a blind eye to corruption has remained largely unchanged.

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Of French political figures from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries who would you say is the most representative of the spirit of the 1789 Revolution? Napoleon? Non! Victor Hugo? Non! Georges Pompidou? Non! Jean Juares (founder of the Socialist Party)? Non! Leon Blum (leader of the Popular Front in the 1930s)? Non! Charles de Gaulle? ... OUI!

Or, at least, thirty percent of the 16,000 respondents to a major opinion poll held in France at the beginning of the year thought so. This put de Gaulle twenty-two percent ahead of his nearest rival, Jean Juares, on eight percent, with George Pompidou at seven percent and Francois Mitterrand at six percent. Perhaps the most important figure, though, is the 46 percent who ne se prononcent pas (have no opinion).

One thing is clear: that the 'Spirit of the Revolution' is not as vibrant in popular consciousness as some historians and politicians have maintained, and a lot of Phrygian caps and sans culottes will have paraded around the Place de la Bastille before the preferred meanings of this national history lesson are established. Questioned on who were the most important figures of the Revolution, 48 percent said Robespierre with, in descending order, Danton at 40 percent, Marat at twelve percent and Louis XVI at eleven percent. When the same group was asked what exactly it was that they knew about Robespierre, the majority could not say. And, while

The French have been brainstorming the Bastille, and interpretations of 1789 will never be the same.
Media interpretation of Laurie Carmichael’s definitive interview in ALR was varied, to say the least... After all, Carmichael is a controversial figure.

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thirty-seven percent cited the taking of the Bastille as the most important event of the Revolution (which it certainly wasn't), an almost equivalent thirty-four percent ne se prononcé pas on any event. As we might recall from 1988, it is not so much the historical detail that matters but the ways in which national history is remembered, the distinctive patterns and images of its representation of the present. This, of course, is what it's all about.

It is clear that Le Bicentenaire will be fertile ground for all sorts of political adventures. Royalist skinheads(!) at a mass for Louis XVI in Paris in January declared that "the French Republic is a syphilitic whore". These were possibly the same skinheads who had recently attacked the singer Helene Delavault with tear gas while she was performing her show La Républicaine. Jean-Marie Le Pen, leader of the far right Front National, has called for the reconvening of the Estates General (the 'governmental' body convened by the king in 1789 which provoked the establishment of the republican National Assembly). In classic populist style, Le Pen has claimed that "The French People no longer enjoy the advantages of a monarchy but suffer all its inconveniences, as well as the additional inconveniences of a Republic ... Real power has been usurped by a caste of bureaucratic mandarins and union officials who form the new privileged nobility."

On the other hand, President Mitterrand took the initiative early in the year to expand the significance of a key Revolutionary event - the Declaration of the Rights of Man (only sixteen percent of the 16,000 respondents recalled this as a significant event, by the way) - into the domain of immigration policy. France has long confined its migrants, mostly from the Maghreb countries and former African colonies, to a legal and constitutional limbo without voting rights and other paths to law and welfare resources by defining them as 'guest workers'. That is, rather than as citizens with claims to Liberty, Equality and Fraternity, Mitterrand's declaration at the very beginning of January, that he would be seeking ways of "enlarging the idea of the rights of man" by conferring full citizen rights on the one and a half million people held in this limbo was a smart and pre-emptive move which has enraged the Right.

Also on the Left, Georges Marchais, general secretary of a French Communist Party (PCF) now much reduced in size and vote, has insisted that "... the Revolution is not a dead thing. Even after two centuries, it still worries the powerful". It was, he concedes, a "bourgeois revolution" but also one that was "democratic and popular" based on a strategic alliance of progressive bourgeoisie, peasant masses and urban sans-culottes against the aristocracy. Marchais' speech also had specific implications for the current situation in Europe as he located the "profound consciousness" of this revolutionary tradition in the natural alliance between the "world of labour" and the "national interest". Always a popular theme of PCF strategy, this national emphasis is targeted at the plans for unification of the European market in 1992.

Nation, State, Market: three basic indices in traditions of historical, political and social thought inaugurated by the Revolution of 1789; they are also three themes up for critical re-examination in 1989. Francois Furet, formerly a PCF member and a prominent historian of the French Revolution has taken the opportunity to pronounce - in a very French historian sort of way - that "The French Revolution is terminated". What he actually means by this is that much of the political logic and baggage which has been inherited from the Revolution needs to be fundamentally rethought. With more than a passing glance at his former PCF comrades, he argues that "We are finally getting away from the Leninist catechism on the revolution". The analogy between 1789 Jacobinism and 1917 Leninism is the issue here. The critique is not only directed at the left, however. The 'grand' categories of nation, state and market inherited from the Enlightenment and the Revolution in traditional political, historical and social theory are also being tossed into the critical line of fire. How far, in this form, they can actually explain how societies work and change is a persistent theme in the French debate.

Furet's most recent two-volume 'revisionist' history of the Revolution is a best-seller and history in general is big business in France this year. The country is full of vigorous local historical societies and associations but it is not likely that there will be a fraticidal Vendee or a Grande Terreur. The nearest thing so far is the sacking of the 'aristocratic' Daniel Barenboim from his enormously well-paid job as Director of the new Opera de la Bastille by a 'socialist' administration.

The Marxist historian, Michel Vovelle, who is in charge of academic events for the bicentennial, is not well-pleased by what he sees as the current ascendancy of the revisionists with their insistence on cultural history, conflicting motivations and "micro-events" rather than the neater, grander 'grand' categories of nation, state and market inherited from the Enlightenment and the Revolution in traditional political, historical and social theory. It is, of course, rather difficult to stage a commemoration of a decisive event when people are disputing not only whether it was decisive but also whether it was an event. Botany Bay and Sydney Cove were much easier!

Left and Right traditionalists as well as revisionists are battling it out on television and radio in prime time with, by all accounts, enormous audiences. Imagine that! These things actually matter quite a lot in France. At stake for many is the nature of the Republic, its political culture and logic, and the inherited models and patterns of government. This, presumably, is why a figure like De Gaulle, who in his own version of the Republic, figures so prominently in popular memory.

One of the central issues is the per-
ceived paradox that, while the Revolution provided the Declaration of the Rights of Man it also furnished the first modern form of totalitarian dictatorship in 1792-4. This is fertile ground for banal 'epochal' statements from this or that French philosopher on the continuities between 1789 and Pol Pot or Stalin and the Gulag but, then, French philosophers have always been prone to such statements, especially since the Revolution. In more particular and detailed ways this is, however, producing some interesting lines of debate on the expansion of the concepts of human rights and freedoms and some rethinking of inherited concepts of equality. Faced with the 1992 unification of the EC, it is also forcing some reconsideration of the implications and limits of national sovereignty and corresponding forms of political action and representation.

And who knows? Perhaps some of this rethinking on freedom, rights, equality and sovereignty - the "completion of the Revolution" as one magazine appropriately put it - might even flow on to some of the Republic's overseas territories like Kanaky and Mururoa? The guardians of the Revolution will need reminding of this before the party really gets under way in July.

Having a Ball

With a waddling gait and a terrific bawl, Lucille Ball subverted the feminine ideal of 'fifties TV. Gillian Swanson recalls.

Lucille Ball died on 26 April; she was 77. Just a little while before she was taken ill, she appeared at the Oscars ceremony in a dress with a huge slit up the side, looking like Lucy in one of her disguises. On the stage her contained, slight body and energetic laughter gave hints of the chaos of her performances.

The memory of Lucille Ball's performances is one of extreme and sustained movement. I remember her in about three films, even though she made over eighty, but it felt as if she was there all the time on television. Lucy was on once a week all through the 'fifties and 'sixties. In that time, Lucille Ball became Lucy for many of us, whatever different things that meant.

For me, growing up in Britain, Lucy meant the modernity of American television sets. The glamorous new apartment and its furniture showed a home and family endlessly moving within domestic space - they spoke as

they stood, walked, gesticulated, while we just sat down or got the dinner. They were on their way in or out, had callers, made plans and concocted performances for each other.

And Lucy, above all, was never still. She never stayed in place as the wife and mother at home, she constantly stepped out of her correct role and had to perform acrobatics to struggle her way back in - or rather to convince the men she was in her place, for we'd been around for the flurry and knew better.

As a child Lucy's moments of chaos and disorder filled me with anxiety - everything kept going wrong. I wanted her to clear up the mess, get the horse out of the bedroom, take of the disguise and get down off the ladder two storeys up. And she always did, just in time for Ricky to come home at last so everything could go back to normal. But the credits went up too fast for me ... I wanted the beginning and end bits to fill the show. Later, as I learned that women could defy the word of the men who regulated their behaviour, I would seize on these moments of disruption: perhaps she was not out of her control, but out of their control. Suddenly that became inspiring.

Lucy was performed in defiance of her definitions. The star, housewife, woman jostled against each other. She moaned and complained, got bored, angry, excited and, above all, manic. She walked splay-footed, bent at the hips, her movements were exaggerated and she jerked. Quite inappropriately to the understatement of 'fifties femininity, Lucy shouted constantly and once in every episode she bawled. At the points when all her ingenious and complicated plans had gone wrong, her despair was so centrally placed that the active parade of her feelings filled the moment - head thrown back, eyes closed and mouth open she became a parody of orgasmic excess.

This is a key moment to understanding what Lucy can mean for women, and which explains to me the
transition of my reactions. It is this climactic moment that expresses the helplessness and the pain of her predicament surrounded by the insidious men whose casual demands are translated into a malevolent context within which to perform herself.

But it is, of course, also a moment when she and her actions overpower the context that has been created for her when, instead of sitting and whimpering as the lesser of us might, she threw herself around and filled the soundtrack with her own terrible noise louder than any other around her, reminiscent of the air raid sirens they still tested in the 'fifties and early 'sixties, a noise which something had to stop and the quicker the better. And of course something always did, usually to her momentary advantage, and back we went to order again.

But, despite its neat narrative disposal, this performance of the body disrupts some of the boundaries of feminine quiescence. Not quite using the grotesque, Lucy continually inflicted damage and distortion to her sexualised image.

Using mudpacks and slapstick, disguise and cross-dressing, her ruses presented moments of chaos for sexual order and stability. This blurring of the categories of sexual difference was enacted within the domestic and the family, in defiance of her male keepers, Ricky and Mr. Mooney, and with the collusion of other women, especially lumpy, cuddly and faithful Ethel. This was the source of the pleasure and anxiety that Lucy offered us.

The play between character, star and performance in Lucy exists in the persona of Lucille Ball too. But, most of all, there is the space between these and our memories that makes her death a bit like losing one of the landmarks of our own remembrance.

GILLIAN SWANSON teaches in Humanities at Griffith university in Brisbane.
with "Uurr yuck mummy".

Interestingly, the women seem happier and more comfortable with their current looks and lifestyles. Most have remained in the workforce in marketing or allied fields such as promotions and public relations, acting and television.

The covers themselves reveal significant shifts in the representation of the female body. The early covers adopt the conventions of the pin-up girls shot with head, breasts and cleavage. From 1976, covers show a greater variation; the 1976-77 covers emphasise sultry looks of the whole body and active body poses. This variation has persisted with occasional deviations: covers in 1983-84 returned to head and shoulders shots but without the cleavage. Recently, shots have become more experimental, such as the black and white film noir cover in January 1989.

Almost every cover invokes the direct gaze of the model to the camera (viewer), posed in a so-called "come hither" look. Photographs are cropped so that the eyes are positioned a third of the way down the page, the field to which the readers' eyes are first drawn.

Despite its claim to address the young and risqué, the magazine has retained the conventional format of showing women how to make it in the world - via fashion, make-up, diet, and keeping abreast of cultural fads and social issues. It counterpointed the suburban sobriety of magazines like Women's Weekly which chiefly addresses mothers and homemakers, though its readership is much wider. The emphasis on recipes (feeding the family), D.I.Y. homemaking and a suburban lifestyle were down-played in Cleo in favour of a progressive appeal to a younger, energetic and critical readership. It was consumer-oriented - but towards a special consumer group of young women with relatively high disposable incomes, a desire for new things and an interest in change.

Cleo engaged this new woman in self-rating quizzes that various aspects of that new femininity, and informing her about relevant issues and taboo topics. Most controversial were the sealed sections which tackled a wide range of taboo issues, especially those concerning sexuality; including breasts, plastic surgery, sexual erotica, sexual pleasure (male and female), sexual diseases, and women's health. By introducing readers to the delights of phenomena such as the G-spot in 1981, Cleo sought to make specialist knowledge widely available, particularly by the device of graphic (unforgettable) illustrations. The sealed sections have been replaced by more practical orientations - actual life choices and situations of the everyday. This practicality is balanced by the promotion of escapism through fantasies of the New You and by the celebration of celebrities and their (enviable?) lifestyles. My June horoscope, for example, predicted that I'd be "led astray at times". (I'm still waiting.) At a time when women's issues are being rolled back, the Cleo approach sacrifices political vision for pleasure, fantasy and commercial logic.

Jennifer Craik.
The Yeltsin Phenomenon

Were the Soviet elections the first step towards a pluralist democracy in the USSR? Or were they just another dress rehearsal for a long-suffering people? An interview with Soviet playwright Mikhail Shatrov.

Mikhail Shatrov's controversial plays on historical themes have made an important contribution to the process of perestroika and glasnost. The Peace of Brest brought the hitherto taboo figure of Trotsky onto the Moscow stage. His father was shot in 1937 in Stalin's purges. Shatrov recently stood as a candidate for the Congress of People's Deputies in Leningrad. He was interviewed for Marxism Today and ALR on a recent visit to London, by Monty Johnstone and Francis King.

Western commentators have presented the serious defeat of some leading Communist Party officials in the recent Soviet elections as a rejection of the party itself. What is your opinion?

I totally disagree with this view. It would only be true if the party were just a collection of apparatchiks. But Party members shows that the party deputies elected were Communist about forty important officials were democratisation which the party had dissolution of support for.

The elections were a powerful expression of support for perestroika and democratisation which the party had initiated. It wanted to allow the people to have such elections. At the polls about forty important officials were defeated, which should give them food for thought. I see this as something very positive - particularly in those cases where they had tried to manipulate the elections in the old way by ensuring that theirs were the only names on the ballot paper. But the fact that eighty-seven percent of the deputies elected were Communist Party members shows that the party itself was not defeated. Indeed, it gained.

Do you think these elections have made the process of perestroika irreversible?

They have at least made a big contribution to making it irreversible.

What do you think about the position where there are 750 reserved seats in the Congress of People's Deputies for representatives chosen by the Communist Party and other public organisations?

I think that, for this period in the country's development, it was positive. But I think that, in future, it will be necessary to make all voters equal on the basis of one person, one vote. I, for instance, had three votes. I voted in the writers' union, in the union of theatrical workers, and in my ordinary territorial constituency. That's not right.

Do you think that the Congress of People's Deputies will now alter that constitutional provision?

Quite possibly. There will undoubtedly be some changes.

How do you assess the Yeltsin phenomenon?

I am deeply convinced that Yeltsin's program for speeding up democracy and perestroika is in keeping with our trend of development and enjoys wide popular support. There were only shades of difference between his program and that of the Soviet Communist Party - tactical rather than strategic. His electoral victory was a protest against the intrigues and manipulation employed by the Moscow City Party Committee against him. They did a clumsy job but can be forgiven for this as they had no idea of what electoral campaigning and contests were all about! Apart from this, Yeltsin is a popular personality - a man who had dared to criticise the leadership. People had never seen this before. Previously you could only criticise your equals or your subordinates.

It is easy to see what Yeltsin opposes, but more difficult to see exactly what he stands for. A wide range of political forces organised around his campaign...

That always happens. People vote not just for Yeltsin, but against certain things. However, I would stress that there is also much that is positive in Yeltsin's program, which includes proposals for specific democratic reforms and the restoration of a Leninist conception of socialism with the abolition of privileges.

He has been criticised as a "populist".

Well, he has a number of faults. But I don't see any cause for concern at the moment. Let's see what he does in practice. For example, his election platform called for cutting spending on industrial construction by forty percent as a contribution to reducing our large budget deficit. Why not make him head of a parliamentary commission to try it out and see what he can do?

Do you think that the present one-party system limits the freedom of electors? What are your views on the demand for a multi-party system in the Soviet Union?

We have just had elections in which there were no limits. As for a one-party system, this was never a slogan of the Bolsheviks in the October (1917) Revolution. It just turned out that way under particular historical circumstances. However, I think that, at the moment, the demand for a multi-party system could damage the cause of perestroika, though at a later stage it could be reasonable and necessary. At present that demand plays into the hands of conservative and dogmatic
forces and would divert us from the most serious and pressing question of democratising the Communist party. If progress is made on this, the basis for the demand for a one-party system will be removed. But, at present, the democratisation of the party is proceeding in a slow and contradictory manner. In the party there is a conservative wing, a revolutionary wing, and a centre which can swing from one side to the other.

In your opinion does the democratisation of the party require the legitimisation of these different tendencies within it?

This is a difficult matter as it raises the question of the division of the party into factions and of factional discipline. At the moment I think this would be disastrous for us. I would prefer democratisation to follow another course, namely of communists being able to change their local organisations. The party must reform itself from within. I think it will get round to this.

With regard to a multi-party system, does it not already exist in practice to a considerable extent in the Baltic republics with various groups putting forward their own candidates with their own programs?

Yes, perhaps in the Baltic there are already many parties. Democratisation develops differently in each republic. The new Baltic organisations emerged in the run-up to last year’s party conference. People saw the need to elect delegates who supported the Gorbachev line. They realised that the party apparatus was trying to manipulate things in the old way. These powerful national movements began as a protest against this. But the vital question is - will the party be able to ride this nationalist tiger? It has to work to guide the national demands increasingly voiced under perestroika and democratisation into positive channels. A national movement is a fine thing, but a nationalist one turns it into its opposite just like any idea taken to extremes.

How do you explain the emergence of a Russian nationalist, anti-Semitic and quasi-fascist organisation like Pamyat?

At crucial times in history organisations appear which try to find a scapegoat for the people’s ills. That scapegoat is always the Jews. It was the same before the revolution. I think that, today, there are forces which find it convenient to steer attention away from the records of bureaucratic officials by telling the people lies about the number of Jews in the leadership of the revolution, the collectivisation period and so on.

Can you say how much support Pamyat has?

There were a number of candidates supported by Pamyat in the recent elections and they all lost. In my own constituency, the Oktyabrsky district of Moscow, the candidate supported by Pamyat was soundly beaten by a young, disabled Jewish intellectual, Ilya Zaslavsky, whom Pamyat had strongly attacked.

Where do you stand in the discussion now going on about whether socialism has been built in the USSR?

This is the sort of word game that I don’t really want to take part in, although I have been concerned with this problem since childhood. In my view, socialism is, above all, a democratic society influencing the whole world by its example. In it, people should live well materially and spiritually. I have not seen such a society in my lifetime. But I think that the potential of the revolution is still powerful and has enabled us to start perestroika and attempt to return to socialist principles. Even if things don’t work out this time, even if we are pushed backwards, sooner or later a new generation, a new wave, will arise to bring about humanity’s dream of a just society.

Lenin believed, when the Bolsheviks took power, that they were on the eve of an international socialist revolution. Clearly, this did not happen. Some people ask whether the cost of trying to build socialism in one largely undeveloped country was not too high, particularly in the light of what we know about the millions of victims of Stalinism. Would you like to comment on this?

Certainly the costs were high, and it is legitimate to raise the question which should be considered carefully by future generations of revolutionaries. They were determined by an enormous range of objective and subjective factors. The revolution was not all prearranged by the party. There was a powerful spontaneous movement which it led. Lenin thought that, even if the situation offered only one chance in a hundred of overthrowing the old order, the party should grasp it. As for Lenin’s view of world revolution, it turned out to be wrong. But the October Revolution has been an important factor helping the working class to improve its position in many capitalist countries.

Is there not still a tendency in the Soviet Union to view Lenin uncritically, as a sort of icon, and to interpret him selectively to give support to the political line of the day?

I don’t think we should base our attitude to Lenin on present-day circumstances. Our starting point should be Lenin himself. In his works there is much that is relevant only to the Russia of his day. Even a school-leaver knows many things that Lenin could never have known. So the question should be - what in Lenin is pertinent to our time and what is relevant only to his? In general it is only small-minded people who treat Lenin like an icon. Unfortunately, we have a large number of them.

Do you think that the works of other revolutionary leaders who had differences with Lenin at one time or another - like Trotsky - should be published in the USSR?

How can you possibly hope to study history if you ignore certain people
and events as if they had never existed? How can you seriously understand Lenin if you don't know Trotsky? You'll only be a dogmatist, not a communist. We are idiots when we reject Trotsky without reading him and without understanding what effect his ideas had in Bolshevism's ideological battles. The historical process is indivisible.

Last year's Soviet Communist Party Conference passed a resolution on glasnost which stated that all library holdings should be accessible to the public. Yet in the Lenin Library in Moscow we have found that almost everything written by Trotsky is still in the closed section. How do you explain this?

It just shows how difficult it is to clean out the Augean stables, the seventh labour of Hercules.

What about the non-bolshevik revolutionaries? Do you foresee their role being reassessed?

Certainly. They should all be re-examined. It is really strange that the Bolsheviks won the struggle in real life, but in history and in theory we are afraid to confront their opponents' ideas.

The Menshevik trial of 1931 has still not been officially revised.

It will be.

Now, a few questions about your own work. Last year your play *Onward... Onward...*, treating some of the "blank spots of Soviet history", was bitterly attacked in *Pravda*. Where has it now been performed?

It has been staged in Moscow and in many theatres around the country.

So the attempt to prevent this as reflected in the *Pravda* article has collapsed?

Yes.

How do you account for the fact that the German Democratic Republic didn't allow in copies of the Moscow weekly *New Times* which carried extracts of the play?

It illustrates the situation which exists in the GDR.

What are you working on now, Mikhail Filippovich?

I'm working on a play set in 1923 which will be called *Renunciation*, dealing with events surrounding Lenin's death. I think this was a crucial period which paved the way for the events of 1929 and the usurpation of power by Stalin.

What is the current position with regard to censorship in the USSR?

In practical terms it is not really apparent now. But until a law on the press, clearly setting out rights and duties is adopted, it could reappear at any moment.

Finally, do you still see workers in culture and the arts as, to a great extent, leading the struggle for perestroika, or do you now see the working class coming to the fore?

You know, at first it was the intellectuals in the party who cleared the air for perestroika. Now, the elections show that the process has already attracted millions. It will be very difficult to turn the clock back. It has already reached the stage where the ordinary people think their voice counts. They are being roused from social apathy and inertia. This is very important. The difficulty is that we cannot, at the moment, solve the economic problems which turned out to be much more complex and difficult than we had imagined.

MONTY JOHNSTONE is a writer on the USSR and a member of the editorial board of *Marxism Today*.

FRANCIS KING is an expert on Soviet affairs and Soviet history.
Dear Dr Hartman

A gush of letters followed Dr Hartman's study of the new baby boom in our last issue. On reading the flood of responses, ALR became convinced that this is a service our readers need on a more regular basis.

Dr Hartman welcomes your problems. Please send all correspondence to Dr Hartman's secretary, Julie McCrossin, at the following address: Dear Dr Hartman, ALR, PO Box A247, Sydney South, NSW 2000. All queries will, of course, be treated in strictest confidence.

Hello Patients,
Dr Mary Hartman here again.

Since I last spoke to you via the pages of this magazine about the psycho-sexual fallout from the current baby boom, my chain of lucrative private clinics has literally been flooded with letters from ALR readers. Readers who are desperately seeking help from the sexual hand of healing.

It seems I have tapped an enormous pool of unmet psycho-sexual need.

Here is a common problem from today's mailbag:

Dear Dr Hartman,

I am a 35-year old ageing leftwing teacher who thinks there is more to feminism than EEO. I have been cohabiting on a predominantly monogamous basis for nearly eight years with my lover George. George is a balding public servant who believes in progressive social change, early retirement and the revolutionary potential of taxation policy. We have two small children, Emma (Goldman), two, and Daniel (Ortega), six months.

My problem is simply this: Since Danny came home in his capsule, pattering Baby on his cute little bottom is all the physical intimacy I need. Just the thought of sex exhausts me. Some days I barely have the energy to turn the bread over in the toaster. Humping with George is about as appealing as five minutes stuck in a phone box with Wally Lewis.

I love George and always will. We read the same magazines. We enjoy the same TV programs. We agree to disagree about the housework. But, after a night of getting up and down to the kids and a day of para-military organisation to make sure everybody is picked up and put down in the right place at the right time, my idea of an orgasmic experience is sitting utterly alone in a darkened room with a whiskey, a packet of Tim-Tams, and a good leftwing TV documentary. It's good to know somebody is changing the world, while I'm changing nappies.

Doctor, you must help me. I know that if George and I don't make love at least once a week that we're lighting a psycho-sexual fuse on a time bomb that could blow up our marriage.

As youngsters, we were so noisy in our old communal student lodgings that our housemates would run up the stairs to see if George was having another asthma attack. These days a cuddle in our pyjamas and touching toes while we read together in bed genuinely feels like enough.

What should I do?
(Signed) Worried, Moorooka, Qld.

Dear Worried,

Patient, this is just a classic case of Mid-Life Psycho Sexual Paralysis. I wouldn't be at all surprised to hear that you and silly old George have decided that the only way to keep the two-year-old happy at night is to let her sleep with you. If so, you've just banged the final nail into your psycho-sexual coffin.

I've found this sort of repressed nonsense to be especially common among female university graduates with feminist tendencies.

You spent the '70s sitting in circles 'consciousness raising' and discussing 'sexuality' in the context of French philosophy and psychoanalysis. But in the '80s, when it comes to a good old-fashioned root, you think people are talking about trees.

Quite simply, it's time to stop thinking about 'sexuality' and start concentrating on 'sex'. A Tim-Tam won't take you down the road to psycho-sexual fulfilment, but George might - with the right encouragement.

Always remember, if men wanted sex with equals, they'd have intercourse with each other. For an appropriate fee I can teach you how to kick domestic and work goals by day, and then at night transform yourself into a simpering sexual kitten to arouse and satiate yourself and your man.

All this without the aid of drugs, wires or special diets.

At my clinics we will teach you the simple practical steps you need to get the jungle juices flowing again, no matter how tired you are.

Our Arousal Maintenance Program or AMP includes surprise mid-week nights in expensive hotels with water views. Reliable child care is supplied back in your home. Our AMP emergency crisis packages include sauna, jacuzzi and light tasty food facilities, plus the screening of intelligent and tasteful but profoundly sexy movies.

The films are shown in special cinemas with off-screen queen-sized bedrooms. The beds have the cleanest and whitest sheets you've ever seen. And there are huge luxury baths, and lots of itty-bitty packets of sweet-smelling lotions and potions to play around with.

Patient, go now to your desk and mail me the authorisation to bill your Visa, American Express or Mastercard. By return mail I will send you all the information you seek.

Fear not, doctor is here.

I look forward to seeing you at one of my clinics.
Take Off Your Hats


If the cap fits, wear it. And there’s many a hat, cap and fez denoting character types in the latest Indiana Jones adventure. A particularly battered stetson is still the trademark of Dr Henry Jones’ alter ego, Indiana, along with the now famous dirty brown leather jacket and stockwhip. Malevolence and evil still stalk in Nazi peaked caps, and the crimson fez can be relied on to add local colour.

Enter into this now familiar world the rather unworldly, if not downright idiosyncratic, plaid hat of Professor Henry Jones, Indiana’s father. In this, the latest modification of the tried and true Indiana Jones formula, the heroine fades into the background as the relationship between father and son forms a focus.

Now, a plaid hat is something of a disappointment when it comes to role models, and so it was to the young Indiana. Not only that, but his father’s scholarly lack of interest in anything other than mediaeval manuscripts actually thwarted the young Indiana’s heroics, according to a ‘flashback’ pre-facing Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade. (The very clichéd, cinematic graphic qualities of this episode heighten its obvious boyish subjectivity.) The preface also reveals the origins of Indiana’s hat, once the possession, it seems, of a gang leader who (significantly a dead ringer for the adult Indiana) wins the spoils but, in a gesture to Indy’s heroism, hands over the hat.

This preface is also a doffing of cap from the man in the director’s cap to the matinees of his youth which have lively and entertaining comedy. Indeed, humour as much as action moves The Last Crusade along at a marvellous cracking pace. Sean Connery is excellent as Professor Jones, whose scholarly values make him particularly invulnerable to any admiration for the ‘man of action’. He is a cynical commentator on his son’s macho posturings (though events prove that ‘a man’s gotta do what a man’s gotta do’). There’s nothing so deflating to Indiana (the name he’s chosen for himself) than his father’s habit of calling him ’Junior’, and it can gall him into peevish, even violent, behaviour.

Unfortunately, the humour fades in the last twenty minutes of spectacular violence, sentiment and special effects. It’s very much like a re-run of the finale to Raiders of the Lost Ark, in which Nazis and Christian mythology were also central. Is this where Spielberg loses his self-conscious grip of the medium, a kind of commentary itself on the film’s actions and values, and lapses into self-indulgence? Has he, like Professor Jones, finally entered into the action, lost one hat for another, and found what the Professor calls ‘illumination’? And how much has faith, either of the religious kind or in something as nebulous as humanity, even love, got to do with it?

Returning to Spielberg’s use of the medium; the way he deploys hats (if not clothes) to make the (wo)man; the irony he can extract from the extravagant; the loving attention to detail and to the texture of the medium itself which can renew cliche at the same time as saying, yes, this is cliche, self-conscious or self-indulgent. It is almost as if he were artefactualising: creating an artificial product that nonetheless rings ‘true’: like a well-crafted, if modern, replica of an ancient church bell. His delight in the medium is very close to his heart. Quite possibly he’s indulging both.
Paradigm Found


Tools of Change comes at an important time - a time when the issues addressed in this book are at the heart of the unfolding negotiations around award restructuring. Arguably, it is one of the most important books for activists in and outside the union movement published for many years.

Mathews seeks to convince us that work (he writes, of course, about paid work, of which more later) as mass drudgery must be changed through democratisation and that we are at a point in history when, in fact, it can be changed.

He argues that we have reached the limits of the "Fordist" approach to work. "Fordism" is the system of production first developed by Henry Ford in the early part of this century. Its essential characteristics are mass production by large and ever-expanding corporations; the assembly line; the intensive division of work into infinitely fragmented tasks, into bits so simple a monkey could do them, and producing a separation of thinking from doing, command from operation; all reinforced by a systematic authoritarian approach to management.

Mathews argues that the character of new technology, with its emphasis upon and requirement for flexibility, offers the new opportunity to renegotiate the way work is done. The central element of all negotiations to change work must be the infusion of democracy into all aspects of the work process - not just ballot box democracy, or representative democracy, but a continual process of democracy in the control of work. He argues further that this must be an essential element of a wider political strategy to create a democratic alternative. However, Mathews' arguments concerning the capacity of modern technology to provide this opportunity sometimes move perilously close to the "technological determinism" which he is so concerned to refute.

The analysis starts with the origins and content of Fordism as the dominant ideology of work and its management in the twentieth century, and the reasons for its crisis.

A number of primary reasons are mentioned: the worker and student revolts of the late 'sixties; the rise of Japan, Korea and Taiwan; the floating of exchange rates; simultaneous inflation and stagnation (the latter two leading to limits on the mass market). And others are referred to: the rise of environmental concerns, workers' health concerns, concern over the pace of technological change. There is no mention in this list, however, of the rise of the women's liberation movement and the impact it had, and continues to have, upon the worlds of paid and unpaid work, public and personal life - an absence with significance for other aspects of the book.

Mathews identifies its characteristics as signals of an inbuilt contradic-
their inbuilt requirements for an educated and skilled workforce, and a flexible approach to their application; and, as a result of that, a real potential for the labour movement to renegotiate work. Unfortunately, however, his exploration of the implications of the new management techniques - just-in-time, total quality control and value-added management - is somewhat shallow in comparison.

In his discussion on work organisation, to take another example, his focus is on Ford Motor Company’s struggle to improve quality through employee involvement in the 1970s. Yet he makes no mention of the strikes at Broadmeadows in 1973 and 1981 which were, particularly in 1973, strikes against Fordism. I suspect it is still early days to be predicting a new era at Ford around "employee involvement". However, these chapters are replete with clues about the type of claims which could be pursued by unions to transform the way work is done and the way it is imposed upon them. The chapter on skills development for the current claims on award restructuring is particularly significant. Mathews proposes a "skills formation ladder" based on continual training for all workers to oppose the use of new technology to intensify and deskill work. This is akin to the career path claims in award restructuring.

Mathews argues in the book’s final chapters, that this democratisation of work can only be achieved on the basis of "a new form of co-operative industrial relations" or, what he calls a "framework of co-operative accommodation", rejecting an "adversarial mentality":

"Multiskilling, teamwork and flexible deployment are bound to fail if they are not accompanied by changes in prevailing industrial relations systems."

Now, Mathews does not intend that capitalist relations of power should remain undisturbed. He is a clear and convincing advocate that workers should encroach upon and wrest away "management prerogative", its "sacred rights" to control and make the decisions as to what should be produced, how, and by whom.

However, it seems to me that there are limits to the successful pursuit of this strategy through "co-operative accommodation". The essence of the argument is that we must "co-operate to compete". The co-operation is to be between national capitalisms and between firms/workforces. To argue, as Mathews does, that this paradigm is the only alternative to the neo-Fordist transformation of work, teeters on the brink of a kind of "technological determinism".

There are, moreover, inherent inconsistencies in all this.

Firstly, it is uncritical of competition between units of capital, whether these units be firms or nations. Mathews does not face up to the fact that, in competition, someone wins and someone else loses. If an Australian manufacturer becomes so competitive that it gains a market or market share previously held by someone else, then the workers in the latter firm either lose their jobs or are subjected to a more intensified rate of production in order to regain that market share, or establish a new one. Are we to be unmoved by this?

Secondly, this paradigm is also uncritical of co-operation. It may be possible, indeed is probably necessary, to have truces ("accommodations") in which a temporary balance of power is codified in the form of an award but, even there, the overwhelming experience of shop stewards and union organisers is one of constant struggle to preserve and implement the terms of their award. "Co-operation" from the employer is never volunteered, it can only be "forced".

My doubts about the co-operation paradigm are hardened somewhat by the assumption in this book: "workers and their unions have traditionally stood back from work organisation issues, seeing them as the employer’s responsibility". I do not think it is quite as simple as this. In fact, we do not have to dig very far to find a rich history of struggle against Fordism and, especially since 1968, there has always been a "line" in our union movement which has struggled to extend the fight around wages and conditions to include a challenge to management’s control over the work process.

The outcomes of these struggles can only be judged against the character of the response from employers and the state to them. Space prevents a thorough review of them here, but a few examples are the struggle over the speed of the line in the car industry, the Green Bans and numerous factory occupations and work-ins. (In fact, such struggles against Taylorism date back to the First World War.)

Since the late ‘sixties many of these coincided with the emergence of modern feminism which is also very much about control - the capacity and rights of women to exert greater control over all dimensions of life.

Together, these movements brought a sharper focus upon the interactions between the technical and social divisions of labour. The workers who saved the Whyalla glove factory in 1974 by occupying it were mainly women. The ethnic and social divisions of labour interacted with the revolt against the technical division of labour to ignite the frustration and anger at Ford, Broadmeadows in 1973 in a way that was barely comprehended by management and union officials alike. These interactions are not dealt with satisfactorily by Mathews. The section on "Women and Work" is tacked on at the end, almost as an afterthought.

Socialist strategies, programs and priorities must not divorce the worlds of paid and unpaid work. There is now a vital opportunity, including through award restructuring, to re-evaluate the types of paid and unpaid leave arrangements that exist, and the discriminations and inefficiencies inherent in them. The best defence against attacks on holiday leave and long service leave may be to enlarge the amount of paid leave available to all of the workforce through a combination of new entitlements - paid maternity and paternity leave, paid education and
training, particularly - and restructuring, possibly including some modest reductions of existing entitlements like holiday, long service, sporting and academic leave.

These concerns do not render invalid John Mathews' central arguments. His fundamental tenet that we are at a turning point in history when the way work is defined and done can be renegotiated to the benefit of all is most important. For those activists in the union movement who are looking for something better than pragmatic reasons to take award restructuring seriously, this book is essential reading.

DON SUTHERLAND works for the Trade Union Training Authority in Adelaide.

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Thinking Reeds


Gleb Kagarlitsky was 24 when he was imprisoned in 1982 for producing an oppositionist *samizdat* journal, *The Left Turn*. He was released 13 months later. In August 1987 he was elected co-orderator of the Federation of Socialist Clubs, a 'Red-Green' spectrum of left oppositionist groupings. They combat the forces on the 'right', from the Stalinists and the bureaucratic conservatives of the Ligachev style to the neo-fascists of the anti-Semitic *Pamyat*.

In the Philippines under Marcos, and in Chile under Pinochet, for instance, the Catholic Church remained the one institution independent of the totalitarian regimes. The Church provided a sanctuary and a platform for democratic and left opposition, but it couldn't in the Soviet Union. Under Stalin and his successors, cultural and scientific life provided something of a haven but, as Kagarlitsky so well shows, Stalin and his successors sought to squash any sign of independence.

The old Russian intelligentsia, with its democratic and socialist traditions, had been decimated by the Revolution and Civil War. Yet the pre-stalinist years saw a flowering of intellectual endeavour. Intellectuals who survived and accepted the Soviet state were allowed to work in a 'politically neutral zone'. Independent and semi-independent journals continued to publish, even though independent newspapers did not. While Lenin, Trotsky and Bukharin did not hesitate to express their preferences in the creative arts, they never proposed any state intervention against a particular trend.

Stalin faced two potential 'oppositions' - the Old Bolsheviks, and the intelligentsia which had maintained its creative independence. Despite even the bloody holocaust of 1937, intellectual traditions continued. Manuscripts were written, hidden, even memorised. Soviet readers - and censors - became expert in reading between the lines.

Khrushchev's 1956 'secret speech' to the CPSU 20th Congress, exposing Stalin's crimes but not explaining their root causes, quickly led to the 'Thaw' and beyond. Some intelligentsia hoped Khrushchev's speech signalled a democratisation of the leadership while others saw it as simply more deception. Among students, the first oppositionist groupings and *samizdat* appeared. The radical youth returned to the Bolshevik tradition and studied the east European experience of Yugoslavia's self-management, Nagy's Hungary and Gomulka's Poland. Opposition from the right also emerged.

Khrushchev swung wildly in his reactions. He allowed Solzhenitsyn to publish *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*, which immediately established him as one of the living legends of Soviet literature, but indulged in abusing the abstract artists. *Novy Mir*, the literary journal of the radical 'liberal-democrats' survived until 1970 under Tvardovsky, but its demise as an independent journal marked a radical change in the oppositionist intelligentsia. The 'delusions' of the 'liberal-democrats' were crushed, according to Kagarlitsky, while the 'rightist' tendencies, represented by Solzhenitsyn, gained ground.

The 'New Left' which took inspiration from the rise of the western New Left, the turmoil of 1968, and the Prague Spring, also went into decline. The 1970s were times of stagnation and of reaction. Yet the outright terror never re-emerged. The 'historic compromise' of the Brezhnev period allowed some room for 'careful' dissent.

In the 'seventies, Mikhail Shatrov's plays showed Lenin as human, not an icon, clashing with the newly-emerging bureaucracy. Shatrov added "a little of the official falsehood" in depicting those with whom Lenin debated, but nevertheless broke new ground. Alexander Gelman in his plays looked at the workplace, exposing much of the incompetence and creeping corruption of the bureaucrats.

Sociologist Fedor Burlatsky carried out real sociological research rather than 'quotatuation digging', while philosophers began to push to the limits the official Suslovian-stalinist *Diamat*. The Medvedev brothers wrote. Zhores was forced into exile, while Roy was barely tolerated in the borders between the 'legal' opposition and the 'illegal'.

All these 'critical marxists' are now in the forefront of perestroika and
In the book's final chapter - an interview with the *New Left Review*’s Alexander Cockburn in late 1987 - Kagarlitsky says the Left has set up a group called the Campaign for Just Prices “trying to show that price rises are not only unnecessary and unjust but anti-reformist”. It's hard to see how price rises can be avoided when today’s prices represent nothing but creative accounting on the part of the bureaucratic machinery. Kagarlitsky says, however, that some movement towards the market alongside "producers' democracy", with the market serving as "an indicator of the quality of our decision-making".

If the ‘left’ is to argue, somewhat demagogically, that there should be no price rises, it will play into the hands of the Stalinist wing of the bureaucracy. The debate among those Kagarlitsky calls the ‘liberal-democrats’ is much more in line with realities. They advocate a market-determined price structure, combined with the break-up of state monopolies and social adjustments through state intervention to lessen the pain of the lower paid.

In Poland, Solidarity agrees in principle on the need for a price reform as part of a total economic reform package, but demands input into its content and democratic control over its implementation. The Polish opposition is obliged to develop its own very concrete economic and social, as well as political, alternative project. The same task awaits any serious political grouping in the USSR itself.

Much has happened in the past year. The ‘liberal-democrats’ around *Moscow News* have ‘gone to the left’, as Kagarlitsky would put it, and are concentrating on the critical economic issues. As Kagarlitsky himself acknowledges, the dividing line between the ‘legal’ and ‘illegal’ has almost disappeared - he himself has some limited access to the official media, in particular *XX Century and Peace*, the Peace Committee monthly on which former ‘left’ dissident Gleb Pavlovsky works as a journalist.

Whatever divides the ‘left’ and the ‘liberal-democrats’, there’s no doubt much more unites them. They have a common enemy, and in this they find common ground with Gorbachev himself. Elsewhere, Kagarlitsky has criticised the ‘liberal democrats’ of *Moscow News* for defending the publication of Solzhenitsyn’s still-banned works, including *The Gulag Archipelago* which is full of the author’s far-right nationalist prejudices.

Yet, as Lyudmilla Saraskina, a ‘radical democrat’ on the ‘left’ on many issues, said recently on ABC radio’s *The Europeans*, Solzhenitsyn is the greatest living Russian author and the Soviet readership must be able to judge for itself his politics as well as his literature. Saraskina, who has nothing in common with Solzhenitsyn’s ideological position, speaks for a wide range of the intelligentsia.

Kagarlitsky would probably support the publication of all of Solzhenitsyn’s work in the USSR, if only to expose his political views better. But he certainly feels no pressure to make this a central demand. It is more urgent, he argues, to publish Bukharin and Trotsky in full and allow a critical examination of their roles.

"The future of culture is the future of the country," Kagarlitsky argues in his preface. Culture for him is not confined to the creative arts, as central as they are, but is more general, including, in its political aspect, ‘habits’ which become the norm. *Glasnost* then is not only journalistic and artistic freedom, but the basis for such a political culture in which debate is as normal as sunrise.

Unless the economy can be put on an even keel, however, which requires a ‘revolution’ in economic, social and political structures, then, as Kagarlitsky and other supporters of democratisation say, the country will suffer enormous, even irremediable harm. And not only in the Soviet Union - the failure of *perestroika* would make the world a much more dangerous place.
With the Sydney and Melbourne film festivals under their belts, many ALR readers may well feel they've had Film up to their eyeballs. But think again.

There’s a veritable deluge of crucial celluloid upon us at the moment, and Disinformation thinks it only proper to bring readers’ attention to two pics in particular. Mike Leigh’s High Hopes (which hasn’t opened yet) is the latest in a string of chronicles of (yes, you’ve guessed it) the seamy side of Thatcher’s Britain. But this one’s got a novel twist. In Leigh’s future Britain the two-thirds/one-third society is here with a vengeance. The two-thirds have become identikit yuppies, it seems, getting stuck right into the home renovations and the two-week fads. The other third’s a woebegone, mouldering underclass living on yesterday’s dreams and last fortnight’s dole cheque. Cyril and Shirlie, the film’s anti-heroes, are shadows of ’sixties radicalism drifting in the Twentyfirst Century margins in a haze of political nostalgia and wishful thinking. Perhaps a parable with a wider than British resonance ...

High Hopes opens at Melbourne’s Kino on July 21.

Salaam Bombay was voted best film by the audience at Sydney’s film festival in June. A far cry from the staple violence-and-romance of India’s film industry, it’s a chronicle of Bombay’s street kids, starring the kids themselves. In order to make the film in Bombay’s red light district, the filmmakers had to present a special case to the city’s madam’s union. In return for a cash deal and a promise not to film during late-night working hours, director Mira Nair was given free rein. The film’s already been an unlikely success in Paris and New York. Now it’s about to open, belatedly, in Bombay itself. Catch it at the Dendy in Sydney or the Kino in Melbourne, now.

Among the other little gems around at the moment is the remarkable stayer Bagdad Cafe, described by The Age as “cleverly controlled whimsy set among a group of eccentrics in the Mojave Desert”, and featuring the Rubensesque talents of Marianne Sagebrecht. It’s still going strong after several months at the Kino in Melbourne and the Mandolin in Sydney. Distant Voices, Still Lives is the film which, according to one critic, finally disproved Truffaut’s old maxim about ‘British cinema’ being a contradiction in terms. A passionate evocation of working class memories, neither nostalgic nor bitter, it’s also still a survivor at the Kino. After a long stint at the AFI cinema in Sydney, it’s now been relegated to the upmarket Cremorne Orpheum. Business as Usual, starring Glenda Jackson and the increasingly impressive Cathy Tyson, is a stirring piece of straight-down-the-line agitprop on the subject of sexual harrassment. It’s still showing at, you guessed it, the Kino. And of course, for those taking a break from agitprop, the rip-roaring matinee action of Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade (see the review in this issue) is on the Greater Union circuit in Sydney, and at the Russell cinemas in Melbourne. But be warned: if you’ve a secret horror of the species rodent, this may not be the movie for you. 
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