

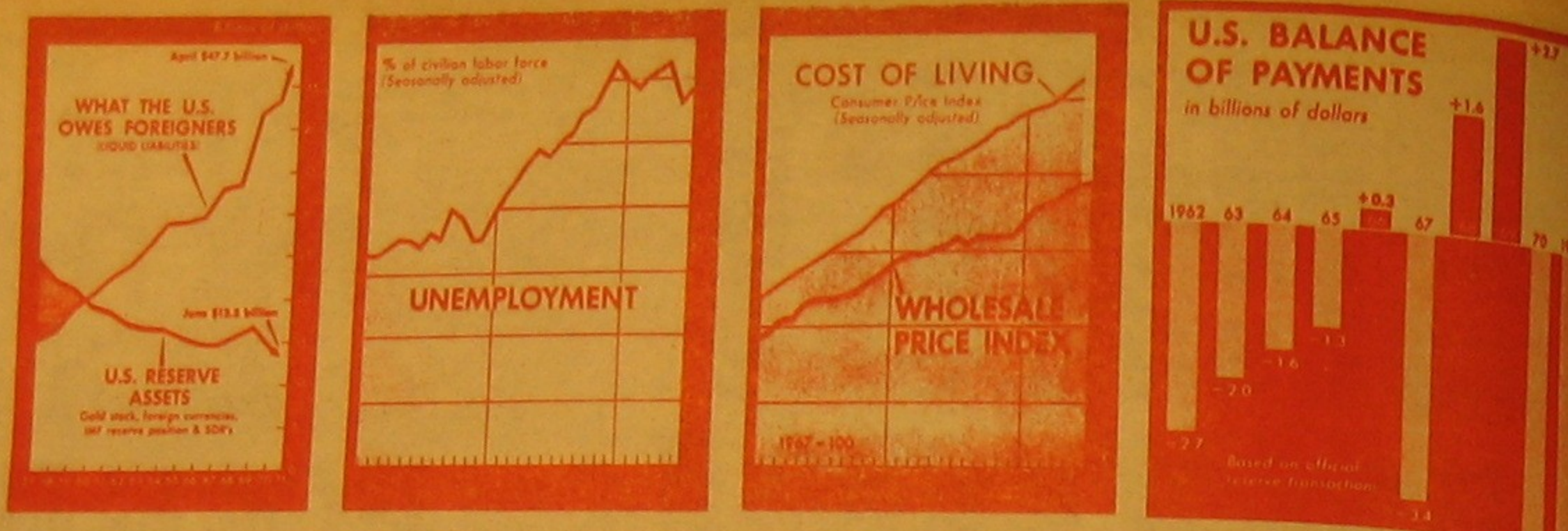
DIRECT ACTION

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**IN THIS ISSUE:
MYTHS OF
ZIONISM,
POLLUTION,
THE DOLLAR
DOWNFALL**



BRITISH TROOPS OUT OF IRELAND!



THE DOWNFALL OF THE DOLLAR

ERNEST MANDEL

The July issue of Quatrième Internationale carried an editorial dated July 5, 1971, on the worsening crisis of imperialism. The following sentences are of particular interest:

"The capitalists will thus follow a different tack. Their response (to a recession that threatens to become general) will be concentrated in two areas. They will try to increase their foreign markets and to boost the rate of profit at the expense of the working class.

"Increasing international markets mean expanding East-West trade, with the US joining in the game (relaxing embargoes against the USSR, resuming exports to China). Likewise it means stepped-up penetration of the markets of semi-colonial countries and a new sharpening of inter-imperialist competition. The attempt to raise the rate of profit at the expense of the working class involves trying to limit or abolish the only substantial right the workers have under the capitalist system, the right of collective bargaining. The means for this are 'incomes policies', which virtually all tendencies in the international bourgeoisie have begun to demand."

And further on:
"... in order to strengthen the dollar, American imperialism will combine increased protectionism with a slowdown in real capital outflows and a new effort to retool American industry..."

Six weeks later, these forecasts were borne out by the decisions Nixon announced to the world on August 15. The Marxist analysis of the class nature of the American state, of the fundamental nature of the capitalist system, has been confirmed once again. The American bourgeoisie defends its class interests - not an ideal of freedom. This defence is mounted today not only against the states that have broken out of the imperialist system and against the colonial revolution that threatens to take several more countries along the same road - it is directed against what is historically the most redoubtable enemy of Wall Street - the American proletariat. It is aimed at shaking up Wall Street's most precious allies' that is, its most efficient competitors - Japan, West Germany,

"Freedom", including the famous free trade, is swept aside, as is always the case when the system founded on private property, that is, competition and anarchy, is shaken by a serious crisis.

Disintegration of the International Monetary System

For three and a half years we have been witnessing the slow death agony of the international monetary system founded at Bretton Woods under the supremacy of the dollar. This system sought to escape from the dilemma that has confronted the capitalist economy since the beginning of its historic crisis of decline marked by the first world war: either maintenance of the gold standard with more and more catastrophic crisis of overproduction; or abandonment of the gold standard and a retreat towards economic nationalism, protectionism, and inconvertible currencies, which signifies not less disastrous consequences for capitalist international trade.

The solution consisted of basing capitalist currencies both on gold and on the dollar, of maintaining stable rates of exchange, and of installing flexible rules, tolerating in reality a permanent inflation, above all whenever a crisis of over production impended, in order to avoid a new 1929. So long as the inflation remained moderate, and the dollar lost its purchasing power at a slower rate than the currencies of the other imperialist powers, the system functioned to the satisfaction of all the imperialists.

Already, at that time, it is true, the arrangement signified a more and more ruinous indebtedness for the semicolonial countries, the big losers at Bretton Woods. But that the 'great' should exploit the 'small' is the most natural of all things in the capitalist world.

No imperialist complained about the deficit in the US balance of payments in the fifties - and with reason! Without this deficit, the system invented at Bretton Woods would not have been able to func-

tion. The capitalist expansion would have died for lack of dollars and gold, that is, of means of international payment.

Things began to turn sour not because of inflation of the dollar - that had been going on uninterruptedly for thirty years. Things began to turn sour when the decline in buying power of the dollar became greater than that of other currencies, when the rest of the world's holdings in dollars expanded out of all proportion to the rapidly diminishing stock of gold held by the US.

From then on it was clear that devaluation of the dollar would occur sooner or later. The international bourgeoisie - including a good part of big business in the US - whether through the multinational companies directly or through go-betweens - began to ready themselves for this contingency. In plain language, this is called speculating on devaluation of the dollar. And in a market economy, when many capitalists ready themselves for a contingency, they precipitate it with a sure hand.

The inconvertibility of the dollar into gold - a consequence of the disproportion between dollar holdings in the hands of foreigners and the gold reserve at Fort Knox which shrank to the "minimum strategic reserve" of \$10 billion - did not begin on August 15, 1971. It has been the reality since the end of the 'gold pool' (end of 1968).

From that time on, the central banks of the big imperialist powers have in reality stopped exchanging dollars for gold. What was a provisional mutual undertaking has now become a definitive rule because of Nixon's unilateral decision.

The real change announced August 15 was thus not the inconvertibility of the dollar, already in force for three years. The real change was the factual devaluation of the dollar, not in relation to gold but in relation to the other currencies of the imperialist world.

Nixon's decision to let the dollar float signifies in reality a decision to depreciate the dollar in relation to other currencies.

Because once supply and demand is permitted to operate freely on the exchange market, this outcome come is inevitable in view of the current state of inflation of the US dollar in relation to the currencies of the principal competitors of the United States.

The irony of history is that in thundering against the 'international speculators', Nixon gave in to them all along the line. It was exactly this depreciation that they were prepared for. In affirming that he was out to defend the stability of the dollar, Nixon did exactly the contrary. He acknowledged 'urbi et orbi' (1) that the dollar has been devaluated. Double talk comes naturally to the American bourgeois politicians just as it does to the gangsters of the star-spangled republic.

In European capitalist circles - beginning with the Gaullists in France - the devaluation of the dollar is being denounced as a serious blow against trade for Europe and Japan. It is certain that Nixon's immediate aim is protectionist in nature. It is designed to help American exports and make imports to the United States more difficult.

But these same circles forget that in the capitalist system, money is not only a means of exchange but a means of payment. Dollars serve not only for world trade; they also serve for the export of capital. What American capitalism gains in the 'commodities' column, it loses in the 'capital' column. From now on, American capitalism will need more dollars to buy a factory in Europe. And a German or Japanese capitalist will be able to buy a factory in the United States with fewer deutsche marks and yen.

Continued next column

1) "To the city (Rome) and to the world" The words with which the pope formerly accompanied benedictions pronounced on the Catholic world during certain solemn church festivals.

COVER:

BELFAST FEBRUARY 3. Women have played a leading role in defending the nationalist ghettos of Northern Ireland from repressive forces. On Kashmir Road women of all ages spearhead a confrontation with British troops and Royal Ulster Constabulary. A brutal military raid provoked the week of fighting.

On pages 8 and 9 of this issue there is an analysis of the Irish struggle and recent events. A solidarity demonstration with the Irish struggle has been set for Sydney on September 24. (See page 7)



Ernest Mandel

That is why American imperialism long resisted the temptation to devalue. The Gaullists, who have spouted for a long time against the Yankees for buying 'our' factories, are decidedly inconsistent in their ideas. Yesterday's complaints are forgotten in exchange for the new complaints. Today, what is involved above all is to protect 'our' foreign markets and to sell 'our' goods. If not, unemployment will rise in France and along with it the threat of a new May 1968 at the door...

The different reactions of the various imperialist powers are tied in with their particular interests and their respective levels of power. The West German capitalists, who are the strongest, do not fear a new minor revaluation of the deutsche mark (an inevitable consequence of floating exchange). The British, who are the weakest, are seeking to profit from the confusion and carry out a discreet new devaluation of the pound.

The Italians, the most threatened socially, wish, above all to avoid any change in the lira. As for the French capitalists, who benefitted from the effects of the devaluation of the franc during the West German boom, they would like to keep their cake while eating it. Their 'two-tier' exchange means that French exports would profit from a lower exchange rate for the franc, while the movement of French capital would profit from the lower exchange rate of the dollar.

Such a short, possible in a small country for a system, quickly becomes impractical in a more important imperialist power. It opens the way to all kinds of speculation, gambling on the stock market, illicit trading and outright frauds (but perhaps that is why the new Societe du Dix Decembre, which is already up to its neck in the affair of les Halles and the Garantie Fonciere, plunged into the new situation with delight: these gentlemen thieves have long knives, particularly when they are inside the government!) Just who is to compel an exporter to repatriate his deutsche marks in a 'commodities' column when he can obtain a larger sum of francs in a 'capital' column? Just who is to check up on fictitious imports designed to obtain deutsche marks at a good price to be resold at a higher rate of the 'free market'?

The fact that after twenty years of expanding international capitalist trade - which it should be noted, had only by 1965 brought per capita exports back up to the level of 1913 - complete anarchy, insecurity, and disorder again reign says a lot about the insoluble historic crisis shaking the system that survives in the West, thanks to the traditional labour leaders!

Behind the Monetary Screen

Marx liked to repeat that monetary phenomena were only reflections of the economic life, and whoever sought to explain crises essentially by these phenomena, was mistaking the appearance for the reality. This observation remains as valid as ever.

When the dollar is depreciated, when the international monetary system set up at Bretton Woods goes down, this is above all not because of wicked speculators, or too imprudent creditors, or too prudent bankers (especially in other countries). It is not because money is 'badly managed' or because the advice of Professor Rueff has not been followed, or because one has not gone back to the exalted philosophy of the French peasants and kept one's savings in a sock, or hidden in a washing machine, in the form of gold coins. It is because the economic system as a whole is sick.

The fundamental cause of the inflation is the indebtedness of governments, businesses, and consumers. This indebtedness has been mushrooming since 1940 (that of the governments since 1914) Without this indebtedness and this permanent inflation expansion, full employment, economic growth have become impossible in a capitalist system in decline. The armaments economy is the basis of state indebtedness. Abnormally swollen credit is the basis of private indebtedness. For thirty years, neo-capitalist 'prosperity' has ridden on an ocean of credit. Sooner or later waves of inflation were bound to engulf the ship. The collapse of the dollar has shown that the 'stabilisers' constructed with such pain were no longer able to resist the smashing of these ever more powerful waves.

Capitalist prosperity depends on two conditions - a rising rate of profit and an expanding market. The logic of capitalism is such that these conditions coincide only at certain moments. When they coincide

temporarily, this in itself creates the conditions for their subsequent separation. The two coincide momentarily during the course of each economic cycle and periodically on a more general and durable scale. Since 1966, we have entered a long period in which the coinciding of the two is being undermined more and more.

To emerge from the recession that has been hitting the American economy for the past two years, Nixon requested Congress to give a tax credit on investments and to repeal an excise tax on automobiles. The industrialists and bankers, as well as not a few 'liberal' politicians, applauded. What's good for profits is good for the United States. Who would dare think otherwise in the paradise of free enterprise?

Right-wing trade union figures like George Meany protested under pressure from the ranks. What about the freeze on dividends and undistributed profits as a counterweight to the freeze on wages? Where are the guarantees against rises in prices? Where is the compensation for past losses in buy-

ing power already sustained by the wage workers?

These protests signify that the American workers are going to battle harder for their standard of living, threatened by inflation, taxes, the consequences of the war in Vietnam, and the repercussions that can be counted on as the American bosses seek to answer international competition. They signify longer and harder strikes. But not only that. They involve, above all a new contraction of the domestic American market (the reductions in public expenditures and the increased cost of imported products both serve to reduce overall buying power already under full retraction.)

How is unemployment to be wiped out under these conditions? Moreover, don't the bosses at bottom want to maintain unemployment in order to hold down wages? But under these conditions, how can the economy be genuinely started up again (and, in passing, assure Nixon's reelection next year)?

The European capitalists are not without guile. They point their fingers at American protectionism. They have become the attorneys of free trade. But at the least economic shock, they too will come out foursquare for sacred self-interest. They will defend their foreign outlets by devaluations one after the other (French franc, pound sterling) or by stabilization measures (deutsche mark) which will end up by provoking unemployment either at home or among neighbouring countries.

With Wall Street playing some of its trump cards, the reaction in the Common Market was 'every man for himself' to such a degree that the European bourgeoisie could not lay out any collective defence against American protectionism. Big business may well end up by compelling its politicians to act in the sense of closer European 'solidarity' out of fear that Uncle Sam will export his unemployment to the old continent. But how to divide the risks, the losses, and the profits of such solidarity? This is the subject of the current bargaining.

Under these conditions, it is excluded that the inflation will stop. A recession that threatens to become general, increasing unemployment, excess capacity hitting a half dozen key industries cannot be combined with a halt to inflation except at the price of a new 1929, a price that no imperialist power is ready to pay. But persistent inflation joined to exacerbated international competition signifies an erosion of the international monetary system that can no longer be averted. This means that an inter-imperialist agreement on a sufficient new international reserve money is impossible. And that makes certain the threat that the growth of international trade will be slowed down. The conclusion is accentuation of the reversal of the 1945-65 expansionist tendency.

The violent perturbation of the dollar means more than devaluation of a symbol and a monetary system. The international capitalist system as a whole has emerged from a long cycle of expansion to begin a long cycle of much slower growth and many more crises.

In reality, since the German recession of 1966-67, the international capitalist economy has not had a single year of general prosperity. There has not been a single year without a recession or monetary crisis somewhere. The merry-go-round has only begun. The long cycles last on an average of twenty to twenty-five years.

If the workers so desire, if they provide themselves with a revolutionary leadership that is up to the height of the historic task, this cycle can give rise to the victory of socialism in the West. If their struggles end in defeats because of lack of an adequate leadership, then capitalism will seek to resolve its structural crisis in on their flesh and bones, as it did during the thirties and forties. The crisis that has begun is thus both a promise and a warning.



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THE EMPLOYERS' OFFENSIVE

SOL SALBY

The worldwide attack by capitalists on the working class is going to involve the Australian working class in some very bitter struggles for survival. Elsewhere in this issue Ernest Mandel, the noted Belgian Marxist economist, outlines the bourgeoisie's response to a recession that threatens to become general. Capitalism is of course an international system and these measures, particularly those taken by Nixon, are going to intensify the class struggle in Australia, as well as in America.

McMahon and company are not worried by the direct impact of Nixon's surcharge, 70% of Australia's exports to the US are covered by quotas and are therefore not affected by the 10% surcharge. Any further increase in unemployment in the US or further decline in world trade could affect them severely. The real impact of Nixon's measures on the Australian economy is going to come indirectly.

When Nixon spoke about the 'unfair edge

that some of our competitors have', he had a certain capitalist country in mind. His reference to the 'dark days of Pearl Harbour' gave a broad hint of whom he meant. 29% of Japanese exports are going to be affected compared to 8% of Britain's or 9% of West Germany's. As Japan is Australia's best market, the repercussions on Australia are going to be quite serious. Any intensification of the trade war will cause the Australian ruling class to repress the working class even further, including the reduction in real wages through inflation.

They are going to tell the workers to reduce their wage demands to 'improve our competitive position'. Two out of the three top trading partners of Australia are already experiencing a crisis (Britain and the US) and the third one, Japan, is likely to have a crisis soon.

The impact of the 'Nixon Economic Package' is being added to by the current

downturn in the Australian economy (as evident by recent figures covering investment and production released by the Bureau of Census and Statistics), the anti-inflationary measures taken in the last budget, and the rural crisis. The rural crisis itself reflects the tendency of the prices of raw materials to fall under capitalism.

It also reflects the reduction of wheat sales to China as well as, most importantly, the lack of planning which caused an increase in the production of wool when its advantage over its substitutes was falling.

The results are already evident. While unemployment increases and real wages decrease, the squatocracy is being subsidised through the Australian Wool Commission. Meanwhile expectations for the near future are bleak. Unemployment is going to pass the 100,000 mark (this is an optimistic expectation for January by McMahon) Other senior ministers are far less optimistic on the basis of the August unemployment and job vacancy figures. They predict it will be more likely to be 120,000 or more. Other economists are predicting a similar situation to the early 60's which will mean up to 160,000 unemployed! Those worst hit will be the school leavers, young workers and migrants.

Such an assault on the working class' standard of living and employment is accompanied by an attack on the working class' only weapon: strike action. Recently, we saw the Summary Offences Acts in Victoria and New South Wales and the Public Order Act of the Commonwealth government. Next came the campaign conducted by the bourgeois press against 'irresponsible strikes'. Now we are faced with an even more vicious assault, with three state governments in the process of introducing a bill to impose secret ballots on any union planning to go on strike.

Similarly, Mr Lynch, the Federal Minister for Labour and National Service, has promised a similar law for unions covered by federal awards. These are laws which discriminate directly against

Apart from job-site sellouts, the A.S.C. & J. have provided a convenient alibi for B.W.I.U. (Building Workers Industrial Union) leaders.

In Victoria the failure of the B.W.I.U. to engage in anything beyond the most economist of activities is often explained away by references to the A.S.C. & J. "rivals" and their attempts to recruit disgruntled B.W.I.U. members. When the 26 unions refused to further subsidize the right wing clique dominating the Melbourne Trades Hall Council, the B.W.I.U. & A.S.C. & J. remained in the T.H.C. and failed to participate in the multifarious and challenging activities of the so-called rebel unions. Some carpenters referred to Chandler of the B.W.I.U. & Turner of the A.S.C. & J. as Tweedledie and Tweedledum.

Whatever the outcome of this particular campaign--including outright defeat--carpenters will never remain silent or inactive again. The experience of engaging in vigilant activity and the general involvement in union activities during the strike, have developed new militants capable of challenging their sclerotic leaders.

Rank-and-file members of both unions have expressed their interest in forming a rank-and-file unity committee. The unity committee, primarily devoted to ending dual unionism, could extend to areas previously untouched in the building industry, i.e. the introduction of demands for workers' control and a serious

the organised labour movement in another group in society is forced to have a secret ballot.

The recent Congress of the ACTU has been very disappointing to those who expected the union leaders to take a militant stand against the attack on the union movement. Hawke and company preferred to compromise! While the stand they took on the Penal Clauses of the Arbitration Act was mildly stronger than previously, Congress rejected an amendment to the resolution moved by Laurie Casemichael (Assistant Federal Secretary of the Amalgamated Engineering Union and a supporter of the current leadership of the Communist Party of Australia) calling for 'massive industrial action on a national scale' if the government tried to collect any of the fines. This amendment was defeated by 364 to 284 at a time when the so-called left had a majority and controlled the Congress. The general atmosphere of the congress was one of compromise as outlined in Hawke's Presidential address.

The furthest Congress was prepared to move was to engage in mass propaganda and to issue a pamphlet on wages, prices and inflation refuting the employers' lies.

Socialists who understand the nature of the reformist leadership of Bob Hawke should organise to combat the workers' illusions and fight against the current of ruling class repression by providing an alternative programme. Socialists should advocate full employment and decent living conditions for all; all work on the job should be divided among the workers by reducing the hours of work without a reduction in wages. This slogan of a sliding scale of hours is the only one which will maintain the solidarity of the working class and will not lead to its internal division.

Inflation is, in fact the result of an unbalanced economy, that is, an economy that is not planned to meet the needs of the whole society, but one which follows the logic of individual profit. To combat the attacks on the standard of living of the working class through inflation we should introduce the slogan of a sliding scale of wages i.e., a continuous adjustment of wages to prices. The program of the NSW Socialist Left which calls for nationalisation under workers' self-management of the financial institutions, the industrial enterprises without compensation, is the one that ought to be supported inside the ALP, particularly as Labor seems likely to win the 1972 elections.

NO COMPROMISE ON SECRET BALLOTS OR PENAL CLAUSES!

FOR A SLIDING SCALE OF WAGES AND A SLIDING SCALE OF HOURS!

FOR A SHORTER WORKING WEEK WITH NO REDUCTION IN WAGES!

FULL EMPLOYMENT FOR ALL!

effort at tackling divisive craft unionism -- an ailment which runs rampant in the building industry.

Carpenters, in common with journeymen such as stonemasons and printers, were organized well before the industrial revolution. The craft pride and precision of a 19th century tradesman has no place on a multi-storey office block in 1971. The skills of a carpenter, plasterer and skilled builders labourer are fast becoming comparable. Only militant class solidarity can begin to overturn long-ingrained prejudices. If no other gain is won, the active rank-and-file among the carpenters have brushed aside the artificial separations engendered by dual-unionism. No leadership--and this must include the leadership of the A.S.C. & J. (builders labourers)--have matched the unity demands by militant carpenters. All other building unions have stood on the sidelines and awaited the results.

At the time of writing, the outcome of the dispute remains unclear. The full bench of the Arbitration Court seems unlikely--particularly in view of pressure from the Commonwealth Government--to yield any worthwhile gain.

The consensus among carpenters is that the fight will have to be carried directly to the master-builders and their clients--the real estate and banking firms of Melbourne's Golden Mile.

Vietnam Withdrawal in Perspective

George Fyson

The following article has been reprinted from *Socialist Action*, a revolutionary socialist newspaper from New Zealand.

The August 18 announcement of the withdrawal of Australian & New Zealand troops from Vietnam does not mean that the demands of the antiwar movement have been met: the withdrawal is neither immediate nor total. The troops are to be out by the end of 1971 when if they wanted to the government could pull them out tomorrow. And the New Zealand & Australian army training units are to remain, to help build up the forces of the Saigon regime.

Nevertheless, the step is clearly a response to the pressure of the antiwar movement.

Naturally, the government refuses to admit that the antiwar movement had any effect, and the press has deliberately played down its role too. To concede otherwise would be to encourage mass protest to continue and to be adopted more in support of other issues.

The withdrawal also signifies a failure in military terms: the revolutionary fighters in Indochina have not yet been defeated. To avoid admitting this, it is claimed that the war is "dying down". Justifying the latest announcement Holyoake (the New Zealand prime minister) said: "In those areas where New Zealand and Australia have afforded combat support, South Vietnam is better able to stand alone, and New Zealand's aid is better directed to training and other forms of assistance."

But wars such as the one raging in Indochina which are the product of deep-rooted social antagonisms, do not just die down without some resolution of the situation. On the contrary, the facts show that the war is continuing. The Saigon forces are still suffering casualties at the rate of 1,000 per week; there are still around a quarter of a million U.S. troops in Vietnam; large scale bombing goes on as before, and the U.S. is not even considering stopping it; the bombing has already produced more than 100,000 refugees this year, according to the July 24 *Guardian Weekly*; and heavy fighting is taking place right now in parts of South Vietnam, as well as in Cambodia and Laos.

However, the withdrawal of U.S. and allied forces to date is having an effect

in Vietnam, and Nixon is very rapidly approaching the situation where he will have very little room to manoeuvre if the revolutionary forces should launch another major offensive.

The National Liberation Front is still perfectly capable of doing this if they choose, according to an article in the *Christchurch Press* August 19, by New Zealand reporter Peter Amett. Though the situation in the Mekong delta is reported to be "subdued" elsewhere it is different.

"... in the Central Highlands and the region that borders North Vietnam, the Viet Cong forces are as strong as they were in the toughest days of the war. And while obviously war-weary and bloodied, they still exhibit strong leadership, spirit and determination.

"The North Vietnamese have retained the initiative in these regions while the South Vietnamese have become progressively weaker with the departure of United States marines and infantry divisions."

Amett quoted one American "of long military experience": "So what can the strategy be for Saigon when the Communists attack, as expected, in Spring next year? Does Saigon send troops from the delta to protect the north? If it does it will have real trouble in its back yard--already 80 outposts have been overrun this year in an upsurge of guerrilla activity."

There is a continuing problem of "providing the South Vietnamese with leadership", said Amett. In the view of many American experts, "the leadership problem goes right up to President Thieu."

The farce of "democratic" elections now being acted out in Saigon indicates that this is very much an understatement. The government and its allies can hardly claim to be withdrawing because they have made South Vietnam "safe for democracy", when even Thieu's equality reactionary rivals, Vice-President Ky and General Minh, find it impossible to accept the conditions under which the "elections" are to be run.

Despotism remains in the Saigon regime, and its military forces are beset with decay. According to Amett's report, "An American official said that there were increasing instances of banditry by soldiers who held up buses and stores. "This is disquieting like the deterioration of the Nationalist Chinese armies in the late 1940s," he said."

The weakness of the Saigon forces, the strength of the Indochinese revolutionaries and the rise of a mass antiwar movement in Australia, New Zealand and the U.S. has posed a sharp dilemma for Nixon. He has been forced to go to China for a way out. Statements and reports from the Chinese government on its preparedness to intervene and smooth the path for another 1954-type settlement have been contradictory, but its attitude is justifiably of great concern to the North Vietnamese and their co-fighters in South Vietnam. John Gittings, writing in the *Guardian Weekly* July 24, reported in an editorial in the July 19 *Hanoi party newspaper Nhan Dan*, expressing the fear that the process of "compromise between big countries" may lead to attempts to "make smaller countries bow to their arrangements."

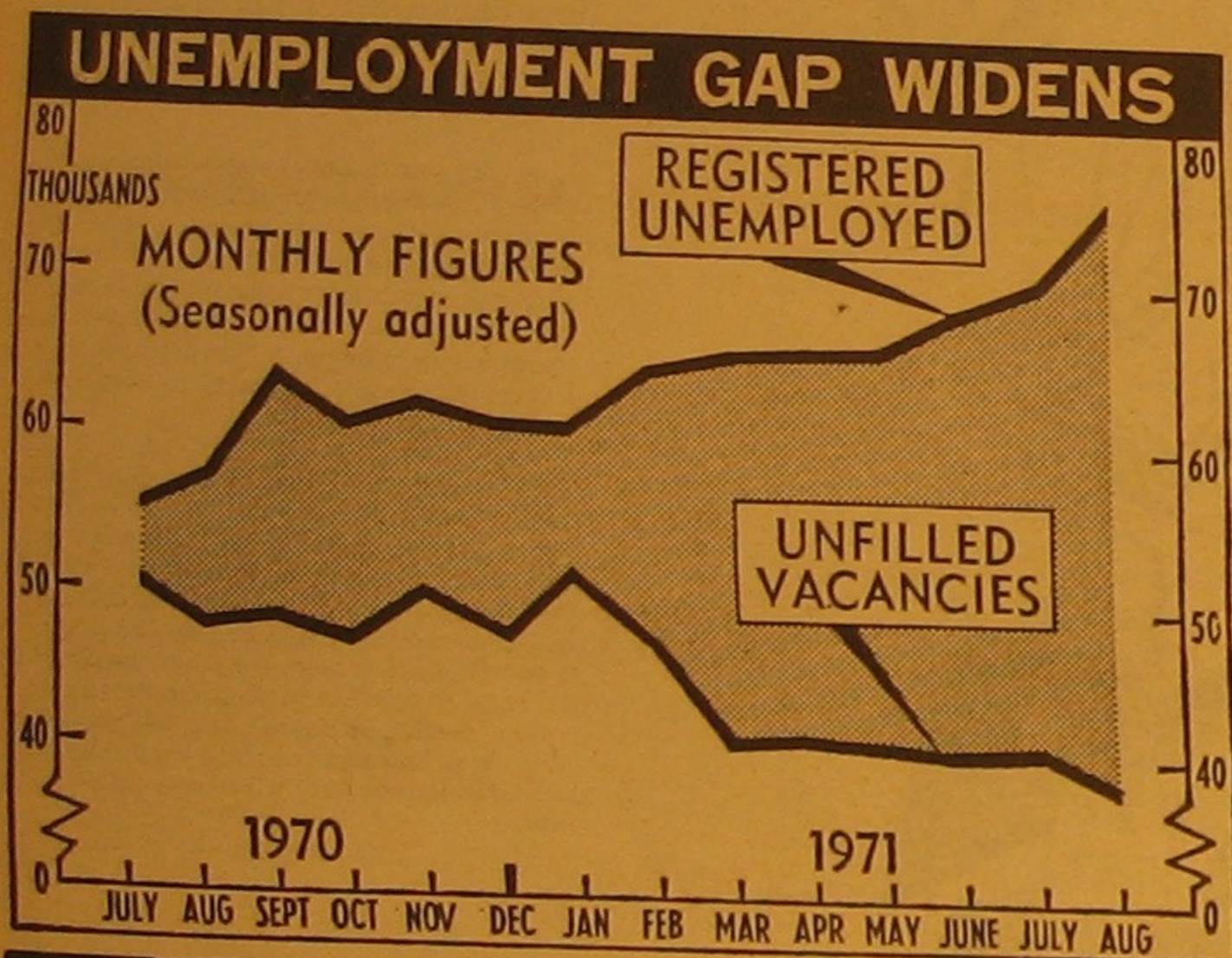
The antiwar movement is fighting in defence of the right of the Vietnamese to determine their own future free from outside interference, not for a ceasefire on American, or American and Chinese terms. Only through the immediate, total and unconditional withdrawal of all U.S. and allied armed forces and material from Indochina will self-determination be possible. The success of the antiwar movement so far must be sustained with continuing mass pressure for this central goal.

Gittings pointed to the essence of Nixon's

new China strategy: "China has handed Nixon a devastating victory over his own domestic antiwar movement... who will believe the antiwar argument that Nixon's programme of Vietnamisation is a fraud designed to perpetuate American control by indirect means, in the general euphoria of Nixon's China diplomacy?" Hanoi, he explained, is dependent on Peking for significant economic aid and for about 80 percent of its light arm requirements. This means that Peking can very easily apply pressure on Hanoi if it wants to.

The U.S. has offered a concession to China, in the form of a willingness to admit China to the United Nations, and to a new "two China" policy. But the issue of Taiwan is still disputed, since Peking insists that Taiwan is part of China. This question indicates how delicately Nixon will have to tread if he really wants to work out a compromise with Chairman Mao in the next few months. Nixon's China diplomacy is surely one of the factors motivating the simultaneous announcement of Australian withdrawal, from Vietnam.

The antiwar movement is fighting in defence of the right of the Vietnamese to determine their own future free from outside interference, not for a ceasefire on American, or American and Chinese terms. Only through the immediate, total and unconditional withdrawal of all U.S. and allied armed forces and material from Indochina will self-determination be possible. The success of the antiwar movement so far must be sustained with continuing mass pressure for this central goal.



CARPENTERS' STRIKE

ROD QUINN

After decades of quiescence, Victoria's carpenters, stonemasons and tile-layers have shaken the building industry.

At least 20,000 other building workers were laid off in the campaign which culminated in the two week strike of 11,000 tradesmen.

Job meetings, demonstrations outside the Arbitration Court and mass stopwork meetings laid the groundwork for the strike.

The building workers, aware of earlier N.S.W. tactics, used a rank-and-file campaign committee to ensure good morale, policing of jobs and maximum mass involvement.

Commissioner Watson's total rejection of the carpenters' claim for a \$10 wage increase spurred them to engage in direct action and to demand in addition full accident pay and long-service leave.

On Monday, August 23rd an extremely spirited meeting of strikers voted to resume work (47% voted against) on the union leadership's recommendation.

A full bench of the Conciliation and Arbitration Commission was convened to re-hear the carpenters' case and the unions recommended the return to work with a further stop-work meeting planned to consider the Commission's decision. At the time of writing, the Commonwealth Government has intervened in the hearing and the case could drag on for weeks. Militants have argued the strikers have been sent back to work at a time when unity and morale were good and cracks were already appearing among big builders.

Building workers and their unions suffered seriously from the defeats of the late forties and early fifties. Gains won during and just after the Second World War were cut back by inflation and recession caused periods of unemployment. The left sectarian tactics of the then influential C.P.A. exposed workers to attacks by the groupers and other anti-trade union forces. A legacy of that melancholy period is the existence of a rival carpenter's union--the A.S.C. & J. (The Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and Joiners) the A.S.C. & J. have, for the past 20 years, sabotaged building workers' struggles.



Vietnamese independence fighters

THE SHAME OF WESTERN PORT

KESTER BAINES

Many people are beginning to realize that environmental pollution has become a major threat to continued life on Earth as we know it. But despite this, self-interested individuals and corporations persist in their insane projects of Earth destruction for short-term financial gain. Examples occur with alarming frequency, the latest in Victoria being the massive industrialization plan, already under way, for the Western Port Bay region southeast of Melbourne. The consequences of this plan if implemented will be much more damaging and far-reaching than anything that was planned for the Little Desert, yet the fight to save the Little Desert was more determined and better publicised. One reason for this is that the Westernport Regional Planning Authority has refused to make the plans public despite a stated intention to do so.

The Save Western Port Coalition has now produced a booklet outlining the Planning Authority's intentions, with photographs of Authority maps showing proposed works. These plans are almost unbelievable folly.

The Planning Authority. The Westernport Regional Planning Authority is made up of two councillors from each of the six shires in the region. These twelve men, all amateurs at planning, cannot be overruled by any branch of government, though they must pay due regard to statements of planning policy.



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and are not prevented from voting on matters in which they have some financial interest, some of the members have enormous investments in land in the area. All meetings of the Authority are conducted in secret.

The Plans. Many miles of the mainland coast of Western Port Bay will be reshaped by large-scale filling of the bay. French Island which the Authority has allocated entirely to industry, will have its coastline squared off for wharves and cheap land, and be connected to the mainland by two causeways and later a tunnel. The 84 square miles of French Island are destined for dirty and dangerous industries with low labour requirements. Envisaged are a uranium enrichment plant, petrochemical works, a cracking plant and another refinery, aluminium smelters and processing plants for paper and zinc.

All these will be predominantly foreign-owned. The western and northern shores of the bay will be reserved for industry, but, the Authority concludes that Phillip Island 'should not be considered for major industrial or urban development at the present time'. Just a light squaring off of the northern shore and development of wharves and small industries like joineries and workshops will be enough for Phillip Island at the moment, the Authority has benevolently decided.

Organic wastes will be discharged straight into the bay, and highly toxic chemicals such as mercury, cyanide and lead will be piped across Phillip Island and discharged from the 30 fathom mark on the south coast of the island - in the feeding grounds of the penguins and seals.

Land grabbing and speculation. Speculation has accelerated since 1960 when a group of locals formed the Western Port Development Committee with the aim of pushing Western Port as a site for industry. Many of the persons involved already had land holdings which would rocket in value in any boom, and four councillors on the Committee have been accused of 19 cases of corruption involving direct financial interest in matters on which they have voted. A real estate syndicate bought up cheap farmland which was later sold to British Petroleum.

Other investors have moved in as well and buying has gone on even on French Island, including the acquisition by BHP of 2000 acres. Speculation has also made inroads on Phillip Island. A 1967 Parliamentary Inquiry into port facilities for the area stated:

"...the Town and Country Planning Board became aware that certain local enthusiasm for large-scale port development at Western Port was tending to overshadow the facts."

"It was suggested by the Board that in the interests of ensuring a minimum of speculative ventures, some high level investigation should be carried out..."

miles inside the mouth of the bay and the tidal excursion is only about four miles, so effluent released even at the beginning of the ebb tide travels only four miles towards the mouth before the incoming tide starts to take it back to its point of origin. It has been calculated that with continuous release of pollutants approximately 1000 times the average hourly discharge will remain trapped in the bay. This massive poisoning would result in the destruction of the delicate ecological balance of the whole region.

Why Western Port should not be industrialized.

Western Port, like any other area, should be used so that a maximum number of people obtain the maximum possible benefit. When the facts are examined, the conclusion is reached that few people are going to benefit under the present plans. Those who will be overseas shareholders in foreign companies. No Victorian is going to gain - but those who are making big money out of it could be considered as not losing as much as the rest of us.

Industrialization of Western Port would have the following effects:

*Destruction of a large marine recreational area at a time when such areas are becoming increasingly necessary near large cities like Melbourne

*Destruction of the area's fascinating and prolific flora and fauna through air and water pollution wholesale takeover of land and by bay filling which will destroy the mangroves, mud flats and salt marshes so vital in the food chain supporting fish, some 173 species of birds and eventually even the penguins and seals. Robert M. Buchanan, the ex-American creator of the Western Port industrialization plan, said quite bluntly that Victoria had to make a choice: it couldn't have both industry and wildlife in the area. There have been forty minor oil slicks in the bay in the last 18 months and residents have complained of air pollution from the refineries.

*Destruction of the bay's fishing industry, which supplies about 20% of Melbourne's fresh fish.

*A severe effect on the established tourist industry. The State at present receives between 10 and 20 million dollars per year from the Western Port area.

*It will add to Victoria's problems of centralized industry and, by means of a commercial/industrial corridor from Dandenong to Hastings, take another step towards turning an already too-large Melbourne into a detestable megalopolis.

*Cost the Victorian people a huge amount in public spending on works and subsidies. Already, at least \$40 million has been spent by the government on port facilities and the three industries now there - two oil refineries and the Lysaght steel works at present under construction. Much more will be spent, and because of the government's willingness to do so despite advice to the contrary, industries are now lining up to cash in.

*Waste large amounts of public money by duplication of port facilities. The Parliamentary Inquiry found that the port of Melbourne was only opening at one quarter of its traffic capacity.

The only reasons why Western Port is attractive to industry are

- i) the government's inducement policy of public spending on works and subsidies, and its extremely favourable agreements such as that made with B.P. in which no mention was made of the company's effluent, except to say that it was allowed to discharge it into the bay without penalty or fee and
- ii) the industries would be close to shipping facilities.

Even if one is prepared to accept that Victoria really needs 200 square miles of predominantly foreign-owned highly automated, noxious and dangerous industries there are other places in Victoria which could go without doing nearly as much harm. In fact, eventually the pollution controls required at Western Port will need to be so effective that in the long term Western Port could prove to be the most expensive choice for the companies. Government incentives could be transferred anywhere else, and places like Portland and Altona have good access to port facilities. Western Port is a balloon that has been inflated largely by self-interested local businessmen and officials.

What must be done? A moratorium on planning and new development must be called for a substantial period to allow a thorough study of the ecological effects of industrialization to be carried out, and adequate funds provided for such a study.

There must be a public enquiry into the motives, qualifications and connections of those who hold the fate of Western Port in their hands.

There must be a change in the Town and Country Planning Act to ensure that no plan can be made without the consent of a public authority deciding the future of such a public asset as Western Port be composed of personally profit-motivated amateurs. Such Authorities must also be made answerable to the Parliament. Anti-pollution legislation must be more vigorous and be enforced. The Victorian government has backpedalled on pollution because it is trying to attract industry. Also, citizens must be able to sue companies which damage the environment.

The public must be informed of what is happening at Western Port. The Planning Authority has not made its plans public because it knows they are not in the interests of the general public. The people must demonstrate to the government that they are not prepared to have public money used for projects actively hostile to the public interest, and they must force the Planning Authority to acknowledge that there is more to industrial planning than merely catering for the needs of industry.

All the above are only demands for reform within the framework of capitalism and parliamentary democracy, and do not get to the root of the problem. While capitalism exists we are going to be continually faced with situations like the Western Port crisis. All industrial enterprise should exist for the purpose of human welfare, not for the profit of a few at the expense of the rest. This demands co-ordinated planning and workers' control of industry, and this is realizable only in a socialist situation.



WOMEN'S LIBERATION CONFERENCE HELD

RUTH CHAMPION. As expected, the press presented a quite distorted image of Australia's first national women's liberation conference held in Melbourne over August 28-29. For those who participated it was a serious attempt to discuss the problems that women are confronted with, particularly in fighting for equal pay, or more accurately for the right to 'one rate for one job'. The theme of the conference was "Women in the Trade Unions" and the issue of an equal rate of pay tended to predominate in the papers that were presented over the two days.

Papers frequently took an extremely reformist line with, for example, one speaker putting forward the idea that there would have to be a general redistribution of incomes if women were to receive equal pay. This was based on the assumption that the economy as a whole can only afford a certain amount for wages, a common argument used to excuse the capitalist economic system.

Many women recounted their experiences at their workplaces and also struggles that had been waged for equal rates of pay for women. Discrimination against women was discussed and the farcical nature of the 'equal pay' decree, in many cases, women working at what is specifically 'women's work' are not eligible for the same rates as men. One good example of this is the plight of nurses.

Another important point of concern to the whole women's movement is national co-ordination though unfortunately little discussion was given to this. If we are to have an impact on women, it is necessary for all groups to join together for action around such demands as free abortion, free contraception, free 24 hour child-care centres, equal pay and equal job and educational opportunities, and other demands that the women's liberation movement is beginning to put forward.

In the daily press we were accused of practising discrimination by refusing to allow men speaking rights at the conference, while asserting that we were trying to end discrimination. This was an extreme distortion. One of the important aspects of the women's liberation movement is that women can come together to discuss the problems they face as an oppressed group. No matter how sympathetic many men may be they cannot have the same consciousness as women, who have become aware of their status and want to discuss this with women who have shared common experiences, and wish to take action with other women around issues of concern to women. We were amused by the fact that before men were denied speaking rights, the first two speakers at the opening of the conference were... yes, men! We felt that for too long men had dominated the floor of conferences and it was now time for women to learn to speak for themselves, (especially as it was a women's conference!)

On the Monday we held a small (about 80 women) but spirited demonstration that started at the City Square and which marched around the city and then up to the ACTU Congress. Though small, this demonstration was probably one of the most vocal Melbourne has ever witnessed. As we marched down the streets with placards and banners on display, we chanted slogans and sang songs to a somewhat bewildered throng of shoppers and workers

out for lunch. Many leaflets were distributed stating our basic demands.

These leaflets were later distributed to the ACTU delegates for whom they had particular relevance. Such demands as paid maternity leave and paid shopping time are just two of the demands that were directed towards the ACTU. Not only were delegates presented with leaflets but they were also shown that women are no longer prepared to passively accept their lot or on the other hand passively accept token statements of support by union officials. We demonstrated that we want action and that we are prepared to fight for it. Many delegates were confronted about their policies towards women and found themselves on the defensive. For us this was just the first step in a fight for the rights of women, in a fight for our liberation.



MILITANT WOMEN

Several actions among Sydney's working women in the past few weeks have shown that they are achieving a new level of consciousness.

On August 29 eight women cleaners staged a sit-down strike for about one and a half hours on a Pan-American Jumbo jet. The women sat down in the plane and refused to move until a sacked co-worker was reinstated. Following the arrival of a union representative the woman was reinstated pending further discussion in the forthcoming week.

Not long prior to this strike there were two other actions by women workers. In early August there was a strike of 300 women at a printing works in Sydney in demand of higher wages. Almost coinciding with this was the picket of a factory by 30 women workers. They were demanding that 8 male non-unionists employed at the factory be forced to join their union.

These actions are important because they show that women are beginning to realise the powerful influence they can exert if they act together; if they unite they can present a strong front and have their demands fulfilled. No longer do they serve merely as an alternative, cheap form of labour, prepared to suffer sub-standard pay and conditions. They too are beginning to fight for the same rights (and special rights) and rates of pay as male workers.

NATIONAL ABORTION CAMPAIGN LAUNCHED IN U.S.

Over 1,000 women met in New York over July 16-18 to plan a National campaign for the repeal of all anti-abortion laws and anti-contraception laws and no forced sterilization. The campaign is being co-ordinated nationally by the Women's National Abortion Action Coalition (WONAAC) and the coalition is planning mass marches in Washington DC and San Francisco on November 20.

Reports from all around the country indicate that support for the demonstrations are growing. Press conferences have been held in many areas to publicise the demands of the campaign, and to urge women to join in building it.

Although the New York conference was extremely successful in launching this campaign and in bringing together a large number of women to discuss plans for action around these issues, it was marked by a bitter debate which resulted in a group of about 150 women walking out after trying to disrupt the conference.

This group, calling themselves "Women for the Inclusion of Sexual Expression", on finding they were in a minority at the conference after their proposals had been defeated, devoted a large amount of time and energy red-baiting other women at the conference and trying to disrupt it by disconnecting microphones and shouting abuse.

They distributed a leaflet called "What Every Woman Should Know" which attacked the Socialist Workers Party and the Young Socialist Alliance for 'co-opting' and 'manipulating' the women's liberation movement as it had the peace movement. One WISE supporter even moved that staff members for the Coalition state their political affiliations. This was soundly defeated after discussion.

It was pointed out that these witch-hunting tactics, used successfully by McCarthy in the 50's, don't work any more and are always used to obscure political issues and prevent people from considering different ideas on their merit. The WISE women made their exit chanting 'Off the Trots!' (Trotskyists - meaning the Socialist Workers Party and the Young Socialist Alliance)

All the tactics employed by these forces to disrupt and red-bait were rejected overwhelmingly by the conference which proceeded to adopt a proposal to set up a national co-ordinating committee to build the November 20 actions.



The demonstration to the ACTU congress on Monday 30, August.

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6 Photos. Top left. Signs like these give the Shire of Hastings a besieged look. Above: A Western Port beach. Right: Industrial pollution at a Port Kembla ocean beach.



IRELAND: THE STRUGGLE CONTINUES



The Australian press has generally tended to explain the current crisis as the heating up of Irish religious differences that most of the rest of Europe got over hundreds of years ago. Such an explanation is completely superficial. The issue is not religion but a complex combination of economic and political factors. While the religious differences are real, they do not arise naturally but are the by-products of the British conquest of Ireland. Because of the world wide dilemma of international capitalism the British ruling class needs to maintain its domination of the Irish working class so that it can export some of its employment. This means a much more intensified struggle in the north but more so in the south as the republican sounding Fianna Fail government squirms, more obviously to the southern workers, under the yoke of British imperialism.

The Subjugation of Ireland.

The maintenance of the ultra-reactionary social system in Northern Ireland, dominated by Anglo-Irish landlords and businessmen, and held together by means of a virtual police state, has been attributed to the incommensurability of the Irish.

This outlook of the British establishment has been faithfully echoed by the press in Australia.

In fact, the Protestant-Catholic division did not originate in Ireland, but was established by the English through the wars of conquest in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The tribal collectivism which the English invaders confronted in Ireland proved extremely resistant. It was possible to uproot it only by a genocidal war, and a crime of this magnitude required a religious justification. The ideology of the emerging capitalist class of England, first under the Tudor monarchy and later under the revolutionary bourgeois dictatorship of Cromwell, took a religious form—Protestantism. William Rufus heard of Ireland as 'a land very rich in plunder' and took a great oath to invade it. It was no moral scruple that withheld him from the deed. His successors, however, sought and found religious reasons for invasion, confiscation and war, and found these more easily after the Reformation, since the Irish people adhered to the old Faith. Under Elizabeth I renewed barbarity to impose the Reformed Religion on the Irish people was unleashed so as to cut them off from England's rivals on the Continent.

However not till 1690, when the battle of the Boyne had been won by William, when Limerick had fallen, and the Irish chiefs, the 'Wild Geese' had flown overseas, did England's conquest at last seem complete.

Irish laws and customs, the whole frame work of the Gaelic civilisation had been annihilated. Music, literature, and classical learning had been driven into hiding. The people of Ireland were leaderless and impotent to rebel. They had their language still, and their religion, nothing else. The English had completed their task of conquest: it remained only to secure the spoils to the victor by law. Possession of the land was not the primary British aim. The inhabitants had been exterminated and driven off their lands as 'leathen Amalantes', and Protestants from England and Scotland, 'the Children of Israel', were settled in their place.

This settlement took place throughout Ireland, but was most extensive in the north east where resistance by the Irish clans had been strongest. The descendants of these settlers form the basic stock of the Unionist population of Northern Ireland today.

Early efforts to subdue Ireland had been largely frustrated by the tendency of the English settlers to inter-marry and adopt

Irish customs and laws. After the Reformation, however, the distinction between Catholic and Protestant, coinciding in the main, with the distinction between the conquered and the conquering race, provided a means of differentiation convenient to the law.

Using the Protestants as the instrument of its rule and according them privileges in recognition of this function, British Imperialism succeeded in hardening the religious difference until it assumed a caste character, similar in many respects to racism.

The only institution in any way representative of the native population that survived the conquest was the Catholic church. Discriminated against as Catholics, the people developed a deep-seated loyalty to Catholicism, thus becoming captives of a reactionary ideology and hierarchy which impeded their liberation struggle.

The Growth of the Industrialised North

The north is the most industrialised part of Ireland. It is here, in the late eighteenth and throughout the nineteenth century that an industrial bourgeoisie developed independent of the rest of Ireland. The linen trade plus the northern custom, had created a pool of capital which could finance the more expensive technology of the industrial revolution.

Once steam power and a degree of mechanization existed in the north the rest of the country could not compete in industrial terms. The strength of the north plus the crushing economic power and proximity of the greatest capitalist state in the world, Britain, meant that no industrial bourgeoisie developed in the south. Instead, the increasing debts in the southern countryside during the time of the Great Famine in the 1840's and 50's led to the emergence of the money lender or "gombeenman" - for the time being, the southern bourgeoisie.

Therefore the north was the only part of Ireland where an urban middle-class experienced a "natural" historical growth. It was allowed to industrialize unimpeded. Northern linen remained protected because it did not compete with English trade. (The political reason was that the north's superior status was thereby confirmed). Ulster was the only province of Ireland able to resist the Famine, for in the north the land was not devoted to the potato. Parallel to this, the southern bourgeoisie was no longer in a position where the Union yielded even the smallest rewards for it. By the 1870's it was demanding home rule.

For the north, the integral link with British industry, plus the fear of being forced to subsidise the south's industrialisation and act as a catchment area for its taxation led the northern bourgeoisie to oppose home rule.

The Orange Order

The main institution of northern Protestantism is the Orange Order. Orange lodges arose in the countryside as Protestant peasant organisations aimed against fellow Catholic peasants and agricultural workers. After the Famine the depopulation of the south took the form of emigration abroad. In the north it was largely absorbed by the expansion of Belfast. With the shift to the cities of people (caused by the landlords changing to cattle raising rather than tillage because of the larger profit), the lodges followed, importing the traditional values of Protestantism and supplying, in themselves, institutions unifying the leisure, political and religious activities of their members.

With the maturing of a militant working class—quite radical it seems, even early in the nineteenth century—the northern bourgeoisie by its status as the only in-

dustrial bourgeoisie in Ireland, saw that need to use religious bigotry to split a working class solidarity and also to maintain its support for the British connection. To do this it used the Orange Order.

By capturing the leadership of two senior Orange institutions, the Apprentice Boys of Derry and the Royal Black Preceptory, the business elite managed to cement these into high powered political machines. Protestants could now find access to housing, employment and social promotion and the historical separation of differentiated education and residence was confirmed. In return all that was demanded of the poor was their allegiance.

Oppressed Catholic Minority.

There are 500,000 Catholics in the Six Counties of Northern Ireland dominated by a Protestant population of one million. The area is wrongly referred to by anti-nationalist forces as "Ulster", for this old province included nine counties, three of which are now part of Eire. The Catholic minority's subject to severe discrimination about which the Australian press has very little to say. It has been a deliberate policy of the regime to deny Catholics housing and employment, thus forcing emigration and retaining the Protestants in the majority.

While the unemployment rate for the Six Counties is 7 percent, it is much higher among Catholics. In the predominantly Catholic towns of Derry and Strabane unemployment is 17½ percent and 25 percent respectively, while in Protestant Belfast the figure is around 5 percent.

A corollary to this is the increasing disparity between the three predominantly Catholic counties to the west and the more Protestant counties in the east. The government's policy has been to provide incentives for industry to develop in the east, despite the already lower unemployment there!

The discrimination in housing is well illustrated by the fact that in Derry only 500 new houses have been built since 1919. Outside of slum clearance housing, for four fifths of new houses in Northern Ireland are taken by Protestant families.

Catholics are also denied positions of responsibility in the government and the professions. Of the 332 positions in the various government appointed boards through which a large segment of public affairs is administered, only 23 are occupied by Catholics. Of the 319 senior positions in the Northern Ireland Civil Service, only 23 are occupied by Catholics. Source: British Imperial Calendar and Civil List, 1969.

To hold the Catholic population down the Northern Ireland government has over the years organised periodic pogroms, which are led by the Royal Ulster Constabulary and by a much larger force of irregular police, which were known as the "B-Specials." Now formally, though not in practice, disbanded. The former consists 90 percent of Protestants and is armed; the latter is an exclusively Protestant sectarian organisation whose members retain their firearms in their own homes. One of the main demands of the Catholic community has been for the disarming of the RUC and the disbanding of the specials.

The legislative cornerstone of the repressive apparatus upon which the regime is based is the Special Powers Act. In 1963, prime minister Vorster of South Africa, then South African minister of justice, introduced a new Coercion Bill by saying that he "would be willing to exchange all the legislation of that sort for one clause of the Northern Ireland Special Powers Act." Under this Act the authorities are empowered, among other things, to arrest without warrant, imprisonment without charge of trial, enter premises and

search without warrant, declare curfews prohibit meetings and assemblies, permit punishment by flogging, deny any claim to a trial by jury, forcibly detain witnesses and compel them to answer questions, prohibit the holding of an inquest after a prisoner's death, and prohibit the circulation of any newspaper.

Despite the strong nationalist sentiment of the Catholic people, there is very little expression of it possible through the facade of Parliamentary democracy in the Six Counties. Of the two main political parties, the Unionist, or Protestant party is committed to maintaining the union with Britain on which the Protestants' privileges have traditionally depended. The Social Democratic and Labour Party is formally pledged to union with the rest of Ireland, which is overwhelmingly Catholic. The party is essentially the discredited old conservative Nationalist party under a new name. In fact, the SDLP and their clerical mentors have long since accommodated themselves to the caste state which assured them undisputed control of the Catholic population.

Resistance to British Rule

The history of Irish rebellion against British rule is a long one, reaching a high point with the 1916-22 struggle for independence. The result was the partition of Ireland into the "Free State" and Northern Ireland "this was a betrayal of the aims of the movement (which was for complete national independence) by the Catholic establishment in the interests of its own self-preservation. This dovetailed with the interests of British imperialism.

The 1922 partition had two advantages for British imperialism. By dividing the industrialised northeast from the agricultural south and west it blocked any possibility for economic independence for the country. Today, the Republic is still subject to British neo-colonialism, while the north is but a direct colonial enclave.

Secondly, the maintenance of the religious caste-like system, through creating a purely Catholic state in the twenty-six counties, and a Protestant one in the Six Counties, preserved the basis for social conservatism in both parts of the island.

Since the upsurge of the nationalist struggle in the Six Counties that began with the civil rights movement in 1968 this equilibrium has been upset, and the British government is now seeking to restore it by force of arms.

What is the IRA?

The IRA has been the object of a great deal of mystification by the press in this country, the better to misrepresent it. What exactly is the IRA, and what are its goals?

The IRA traces its antecedents very far back into Irish history, in particular to the Fenian brotherhood, which made several heroic attempts in the last century to drive the British out of Ireland. It was actually formed out of those forces in the Irish Army which refused to recognise the humiliating partition treaty of 1922, and waged a fierce campaign against the government in Dublin which had betrayed the nationalist struggle. But the IRA was defeated, though not sufficiently to prevent it continuing in existence as an irregular army, and waging two guerrilla campaigns against Northern Ireland in 1939 and 1956. The recent growth of its popular support in the Twenty Six Counties with the re-

vival of the nationalist struggle in the northeast has forced Dublin to accord it a measure of political and practical support.

Following the failure of the 1956-62 campaign the movement entered a long period of critical analysis. What was important to them was not simply the military defeat, but that they had failed to get the support of the Irish people, and had become dangerously isolated. With such support, their guerrilla war would have been invincible. But without it, the IRA was powerless against the armed might of British imperialism.

The discussion within the IRA gave way to a split at last year's Ard-Fheis (Conference) of the Sinn Fein party, the Republican movement's political wing. A large number of the delegates walked out to form the "Provisional Army Council" and the "Caretaker Executive of Sinn Fein."

Although the "Provisionals" took out a number of genuine revolutionaries, they also took out a backward section of the movement which could not overcome the tradition of Irish Republicanism to rely on purely physical force to the exclusion of political activity in the struggle for independence. The Provisionals also rejected the socialist perspective of the "Official" IRA, charging them with being under communist influence. It is the opinion of many of the Official Republican leaders that the Provisionals are linked with a section of the conservative Catholic ruling party in Dublin, the Fianna Fail, which has everything to lose from the development of socialist Republicanism.

Thus it is essentially a right-wing split-off from the republican movement. To combat the left-wing leadership of the Official IRA, the Provisionals have taken an ultra-militant line with a lot of boastful talk about attacking British forces, thereby handing the imperialist commanders a cover for their provocative actions against the nationalist minority.

Both IRAs today are larger, better armed and have wider support amongst the nationalist population in the north than at any other time in history. However, it is difficult to see how the Provisionals, with their apolitical approach, will be able to break

able to break down the hostility of Protestant workers and win them to the Republican cause, or overcome the sectarian influence of the Catholic church and the Dublin government - prerequisites for a united Ireland free from British rule.

The reply to the question of strategy that was given by the president of the official Sinn Fein, Tomas Mac Goilla, when interviewed by Gerry Foley of *Intercontinental Press* was in contrast, to this, "We continually emphasise the fact that there are three basic elements of republicanism: It's separatist. It's socialist. And it's nonsectarian."

For them, the fight for the liberation of the northern Catholic minority must at the same time be a fight against the anti-Protestant bigotry of the Catholic Church, and a fight in defence of the basic interests of the Protestant working class and small farmers.

Mac Goilla and many of the other Official republican leaders, including IRA chief-of-staff Cathal Goulding, also see the national liberation struggle as connected with the struggle for socialism, and it is the policy of the IRA to fight for a socialist republic of the whole of Ireland.

Said Cathal Goulding when interviewed by Gerry Foley, "If we don't have a programme and a policy to bring about such development, we are only wasting

our time. We don't intend to exchange foreign capitalist exploitation for native gombeen (Irish moneylenders and small businessmen) capitalist exploitation. Therefore at some stage the struggle for national liberation must develop toward the establishment of the people in the ownership of Ireland, that is, toward a struggle to establish a socialist republic."

The movement of the nationalist minority of the Six Counties is already unfolding in that direction, and through it the participants have taken their place, along with the Palestinian Arabs and the Vietnamese peasants, in the vanguard of the developing world revolution.

Current Struggle.

In its current attacks on the northern Catholic community Britain is seeking to smuff out the growing influence of the radical, secular nationalist movement, whose symbol and mainstay is the outlawed Irish Republican Army.

"Push the people into Bogside... and let's have a death," residents of Derry City, Northern Ireland, heard a British army radio broadcast say last July 7, according to Frank McManus, member of parliament for Fermanagh & South Tyrone. Shortly after this reported broadcast, "Seamus Cusack was shot by a British soldier at practically point-blank range," said eyewitness Nell McCafferty in the July 8 *Irish Times*.

Next day a second youth was shot to death by British troops as he tried to march into the walled part of Derry City in a procession of mourning for Cusack.

More recently a Catholic was shot when the van he was driving back-fired, and the sound was mistaken by trigger-happy soldiers for the firing of a rifle. On August 19 a deaf-mute was killed after attending a civil-rights meeting in the small town of Strabane. Twenty-three eyewitnesses swore that, contrary to any British army claims, the man was unarmed.

Roots of the Current Radicalisation.

The current radicalisation of the nationalist minority has its roots in the contradictions between a helpless (in that it is subordinate) Northern Ireland ruling class and a weakening (in world terms) British ruling class.

Northern industry has been in decline for over a decade. Industrial centralism in and around Belfast has led to the denudation of the areas, west of the River Bank, with the highest density of Catholic population. The balance of payments has been periodically adjusted by cuts in purchasing power. The result has been chronic unemployment and the creation of a high emigration rate, both of which are felt particularly severely in the run down Catholic western areas. The Protestant working class too has been affected by the faltering of Orange capitalism, but the impact has been considerably sharper on the Catholic proletariat. Thus, in the last few years, the Catholic workers and peasants in the north have suffered a relative deprivation within a declining economy. It is in the context of these developments that the recent events in Ulster must be seen.

Internment

"They (the British military police and the Royal Ulster Constabulary) shouted: 'crawl like a dog, you bastard; you are a dog,'" Gerard McErlean reported.

The nineteen year old youth was one of about 300 persons seized August 9 in pre-dawn raids on the nationalist ghettos of Northern Ireland. Roughly 230 of these, according to press reports, are

still being held in the Crumlin Road jail in Belfast and on the prison ship Maidstone anchored in Belfast harbour. They are threatened with indefinite imprisonment without charge or trial.

Sending overwhelming military forces into the Catholic ghettos throughout Northern Ireland at 4.30 a.m. and dragging off 300 men, the British government left no doubt about its intentions. It was trying to crush all opposition to the status quo by brute force.

According to Northern Irish Prime Minister Brian Faulkner's statement of August 9, the raids were aimed at extremists and terrorists belonging to the outlawed IRA. This claim might seem likely to mollify international public opinion, which has been trained to regard Irish freedom fighters as mystical fanatics. It could not impress the people of the nationalist ghettos who know that in Northern Ireland the IRA has served most often as neighbourhood defence force against Protestant pogroms.

It was obvious, moreover, that the attack was aimed not only at the IRA but at all militant opposition to the oppressive system on which the imperialist fortress state of Northern Ireland is based.

In August 1969 British troops were sent into Northern Ireland ostensibly to defend the nationalist minority against pogroms by the Royal Ulster Constabulary and the Protestant B Special militia. Now, only two years later, these same troops have themselves spearheaded terrorist attacks on the nationalist ghettos.

The *Irish Times* reported August 10: "The first arrests began around 4.30 a.m. and inside three hours a full-scale battle was going on between Catholic rioters and British troops. Countless buses, lorries and vans were freely hijacked to make burning barricades."

"There were frequent bursts of gunfire in these (Catholic) areas, and the scene of desolation and destruction was horrific: much worse than that which occurred in rioting last year and 1969."

The August 10 issue of the moderate loyalist *Belfast Telegraph* reported that the Faulkner government was "stunned" at the power of the nationalist resistance.

The militant leaders still free did not tone down their attacks on the regime. In Coalisland on August 16, when the town was completely shut down by a protest strike, Bernadette Devlin told an enthusiastic crowd: "For 50 years we have been denied the right to work, to have decent homes or decent jobs, but now the people of the North are standing on their feet and as long as they remain staunch and determined they will quickly bring this state to its knees."

"We must not wait to see what our neighbours are doing, but we must immediately stop payment of all rents, rates and taxes and let the authorities know that we are not going to subsidise them in keeping our fellow-Irishmen in prison camps or on prison ships. We have the power in our own hands, and we can show to those in power - the bosses in factories, etc. - that without the working people of this state they cannot exist."

Confrontation.

The confrontation sharpened when the civil-disobedience campaign (announced as a counter to the brutality of the army) began to pick up momentum. On August 18, the British troops broke up a sit-in in Derry, arresting the moderate civil-rights

leaders John Hume and Ivan Cooper, both of whom are independent MPs in the Belfast parliament. By this move, the London government seemed to cut its last links with conservative Catholic forces, ruling out any settlement less than complete surrender.

By this act the British government had demonstrated that it would not negotiate with any element in the nationalist community. Jack Lynch, the Irish Prime Minister, now felt it necessary to denounce the British government itself although the regime of which he is the head was built on liquidation of the national revolution, accommodation with Britain, and acceptance of the partition (1921).

The reply to the thinly veiled plea for some gesture by the British government to maintain the credibility of the moderates was an old-fashioned imperialist dressing down.

In the face of Heath's brutal attempt to crush the nationalist community as a whole, all elements of the minority united in resistance to the authorities.

A Worker's Republic.

The mood of the nationalist population in the South can not be gauged from press reports. However, there is no conclusive evidence as yet that the broad masses are ready to fight or that any organisation has developed a programme and a strategy that can give a concrete political focus to the present upsurge and channel it toward a revolution throughout the island. But there are some indications that the latest explosions in the North may have had a deep impact on Southern workers. Bernadette Devlin speaking to an enthusiastic crowd in Dublin said, "Do not feel sorry for us, rather bring down the 26-counties and try to build a workers republic."

The use of internment and the army has had its repercussions within the British bourgeoisie. As reported in *The Economist* of Aug 14 & Aug 21 Mr. Callaghan, the main Labour party spokesman on Northern Ireland, had been ready to back internment on August 8 but had now shifted his position rapidly as opinion shifted within the Labour party to one of: "We will not have our young men placed at risk any longer."

It is hardly profitable at this point to speculate on what the next moves of the London 6 Irish governments will be. But it does seem clear that the repressive course in Northern Ireland has essentially failed and that a very deep and extensive crisis has been touched off throughout Ireland. This situation presents both great opportunities and great dangers for the Irish revolutionary vanguard.

If the Irish revolutionaries can win recognition as the most consistent exponents of the anti-imperialist upsurge that seems to be developing, if they can direct the workers and small farmers toward independent mass action against the imperialist and pro-imperialist forces in the country, they may be able to shatter the bases of bourgeois political stability. If they fail to understand the dynamic of this upsurge, fail to project a program that flows logically out of it, fail to organize the masses in independent action and instead become isolated or pushed to the sidelines, the frightened conservative forces will launch a fierce repression against them. And this repression will fall heaviest on those elements who understand that only the working class and its allies can lead the national revolution in Ireland, who understand and that, to succeed, the national revolution must also be a socialist one.

UNIVERSITY DISCIPLINE

LA TROBE RUTH CHAMPION

The exclusions clauses that all Australian Universities have adopted have in the case of La Trobe led to massive campaign around the repeal of these clauses. The fact that 3 students were excluded at the beginning of this year on what were blatantly political grounds sparked off a mass reaction among students. At an extremely large student meeting 1000 students overwhelmingly rejected the exclusion of the students (La Trobe has an enrolment of only 3000 students many of whom are part-time.) They also called for the resignation of Council with particular emphasis placed on the Vice-Chancellor Glenn, who is director of ICI (therefore a profiteer from napalming and machine-gunning of the Vietnamese people- ICI also profits from the system of Apartheid in South Africa) and Kalinan who was one of the designers of the Westgate Bridge which collapsed killing 35 workers. Since this mass meeting practically nothing has been done to bring about the repeal of the exclusions clauses- neither Glenn or Kalinan had resigned not to mention the Council.

It was because of this state of affairs that a mass meeting was called recently which called for a blockade of the next Council meeting. When the Council refused to accept a delegation and refused to discuss the exclusions it was blockaded in its meeting room. The next delegation was received in a more friendly manner but still the council refused to consider the students demands. After this we presented our ultimatums to the Council: either rescind the exclusions clauses or remain blockaded. Eventually the Council called in the police, which led to their release.

Aftermath.

Since then the Proctorial Board has met to consider the evidence, and arising out of this, eight students have been expelled for varying periods (from one to three years each)

There is no question that the Administration has reacted in a rather hysterical manner. The eight students expelled are well-known campus leaders and in charging them the Administration seems to be expressing a desire to undermine the developing left-wing movement that is threatening its own control. With regard to the actual blockade, it may have been that we were confronting the wrong body (the Council is not the sole repository of decision-making in the university.) yet the facts are that approximately 200 students participated in the blockade of whom only eight were charged. The presentation of evidence leading up to the laying of charges was all held secretly by a body that is totally unrepresentative of the university. If discipline is to be enforced on students then it should be done by a body that is truly representative of the staff and students. It should be done quite openly instead of in secret, behind closed doors.

On Wednesday, 1st September a mass meeting of near 1000 students overwhelmingly condemned the Proctorial Board and decided that it considered the eight students who had been expelled, to be still part of the university. Various staff members have agreed to continue teaching the students and to assist them in every way in the gaining of their degrees.

A motion calling for an occupation of the Administration if the students were not reinstated was lost. The students still have the opportunity to appeal. As yet no concrete action is projected to reinstate the students if the administration refuses to respect the wishes of a very large section of the students.

Until the exclusions clauses are rescinded there will continue to be confrontation between the administration and the student left which has the backing of the vast majority of students.

Students are becoming increasingly disenchanted with the use that capitalism is making of the universities and this disenchantment is expressing itself more and more in radical politics. Obviously, the Administrators (many of whom have strong ties with industry) are feeling threatened and are attempting to suppress dissent. The exclusions clauses are witness to this. They are being fought and must continue to be fought by all students who believe that education means more than becoming a technician and a crutch for capitalism.

MELB. JIM McILROY

Fullly 3 months after the lock-in of the Administration building at the University of Melbourne on May 6, 4 students have been charged with offences relating to the building of barricades, painting of slogans etc. This event is notable initially for:

1. the long period of time before the charges were laid;
2. the fact that only 4 out of hundreds present were charged;
3. the fact that the people charged were well-known political activists on campus (mostly Students For a Democratic Society members.)
4. the fact that the charging occurred only 2 days before the end of 2nd term.

The belated pressing of these charges makes it clear that the university administration is extremely keen to bolster its declining authority, both inside and outside the university, whatever the consequences. Inside the campus it feels the need to enforce its own little law and order campaign and demonstrate clearly "Who Runs the University", as well as taking the opportunity to pick out known radicals for special attention, in an attempt to intimidate others from becoming too obviously active in their dissent. It also gave the appearance, at least, of choosing to do this at a time (end of term) when there was little chance of organising effective mass student opposition.

In the event, a meeting of several hundred students on the last day of term, deadlocked on what action should be taken, while expressing clear opposition to the charges. An assembly of about 200 took place in front of the administration building, and a delegation to the Registrar eventually obtained the concession that he would not, as prosecutor, oppose a move to postpone the hearings until 3rd term. This is what, in fact, happened, except that one student did stand trial and was severely reprimanded.

S.D.S. in their inimitable individualist style, held a mock court to try the Vice Chancellor. In personal confrontations with the Vice Chancellor and Registrar Harry Van Moorst was summarily fined \$20. Fine entertainment for all.

At the time of going to press, the most recent development was that the University Council, (in the absence of Vice Chancellor Denham at a conference overseas) offered to drop the charges on condition that the SRC, which had accepted full responsibility for the lock-in, paid up to \$500 for 'damages' caused.

(It is notable in passing, that the Vice Chancellor sent out a letter justifying his position to all University members at a cost of many hundreds of dollars.)

A mass meeting of students rejected this attempt at sidestepping the issue, and a meeting of the SRC agreed not to pay the money. The situation remains unresolved: the administration can now back down and lose face or go on and multiply

their troubles. The best they can hope for is to delay matters, and work their will during the exams when student resistance is low.

However, these events have exposed certain conflicts within the university community, and even inside the administration itself. It is claimed that there were disagreements between administration officials and in Council over whether changes should have been brought at all - and that the Vice-Chancellor insisted on his way in the matter. Essentially it was a victory of legalism over the "human relations" approach, and certainly it exemplifies the high degree of inflexibility characteristic of university administrations the world over - a factor which is undermining their authority amongst both staff and students. This point is underlined by the fact that Professor Howard of the Law Faculty refused to sit on the Disciplinary Committee because he regarded the laying of charges as a provocative act.

The Melbourne "Age" of August 11 quotes Professor Howard as saying that he thought the administrations reasons for the delay in laying the charges were "quite unconvincing". "The fact that they have charged only four, throws into greater relief the folly of the whole process"

"The blockade was sparked off by the desire of the great body of students for

consultation on the future of the university and its government", he said.

"This has now been set in motion with the inquiry into the university government, and all parties are working in a spirit of co-operation." This last statement is rather optimistic, certainly.

However, opposition by sections of staff and the great mass of students to administration bureaucracy and the Vice-Chancellor and Council in particular is growing steadily. Petitions have been signed by up to 100 students and a few staff claiming that they took part in the blockade in the same way as the 4 students charged. The administration is now faced with the embarrassing possibility of having to conduct mass disciplinings.

These latest happenings must be seen in the context of a continuing struggle against the infamous Regulation 3.3.18 or Admissions Statute, which in its various amended forms has the effect of providing a procedure for the black-listing of political activists. (The first exclusion from Melbourne was that of Albert Langer.) Regulations of this type are now being introduced, apparently by arrangement between Vice-Chancellors, in a number of Australian Universities.

These campaigns have developed into a questioning of the whole structure of

university government, in both administrative and academic spheres - focussing, on the one hand, on the centralisation of authority in the offices of Vice-Chancellor and University Council, and on the other, in the Professorial Board. Together these interlocked structures fuse the tops of the administrative and academic hierarchies - an irrevocably conservative executive for the preservation of the university as a class institution, designed to propagate bourgeois ideology in the abstract form of 'knowledge', and to train functionaries for other sectors of the capitalist system (i.e. "vocational training".)

Within this constricting framework some small start has been made in attacking the elitist, bureaucracy and ideology which permeates university structures. Movements for student power and control of courses (eg. at Sydney University) and so on, while initially reformist in themselves, are part of a process of political awakening amongst students and staff, a broad process of radicalization.

At Melbourne a group of radical staff members has set up a counter - "Staff News", which is having some effect in rousing interest in a re-interpretation of the nature of the university.

Of course, the Vice-Chancellor, Council and Professorial Board are only the most visible components of this educational bureaucracy - they must work within firm boundaries set by the Universities Commission and the various Government ministries. And this whole unwieldy superstructure is somehow co-ordinated with the secondary and primary sectors of a system designed overall to regulate and develop to its required degree that vital commodity - labour power - which Marx saw to be the source of all social production.

To refer back to the original argument, strong external pressures from right-wing sections, particularly the D.L.P. to hand university administration over to the Public Service is seen as a definite threat by university authorities. This is one reason for their anxiety to press charges against student dissenters - in order to demonstrate their own power and ability to effectively control their domains. For outside interference is rightly seen as a threat to the rather unstable balance of forces which makes up a modern university. Outside interference would be virtually the only thing which could rouse closeted liberal academics to action, as they value their myths as much as any other group - i.e. that the university is an open, "value-free" intellectual community, a haven from the crude realities of power and ideology in the wider society. So, too, direct interference would rouse a storm of mass student protest, even greater than that against the disciplinings, which would probably threaten to tear away the present university structure completely.

So Vice-Chancellors have to tread a very narrow line indeed. In fact, as Dr. Matheson of Monash said on television, his is basically an impossible job to carry out. This is so because his position is that of attempting to reconcile fundamentally opposed pressures: on the one hand, increasing demands for universities to totally integrate themselves with the technocratic "needs" of advanced capitalism, and on the other, the combination of a residual desire by some academics to maintain the vestiges of a critical intellectual community, and more important still, the rising tide of youth radicalisation centred initially in the universities.

At Melbourne University, in that institutional tradition of liberal repressive tolerance, in response to overwhelming popular pressure, the Vice Chancellor (Professor Denham) and Council have had to agree to an open university inquiry, the terms of reference for which are now being decided by a representative planning group. It is difficult to see what significant changes could occur through this inquiry since nothing which will be of radical significance would be acceptable to Council. However, it does provide an opportunity to propagandise for the left, and particularly for Marxists to press a programme of transitional demands, such as the free, open, university emphasising general adult education for all citizens with student/staff control of courses and facilities, freedom of political work etc. Such popular demands would begin to open up a perspective on the role of the university in creating a socialist society, and hence transforming itself into a truly educational institution for the liberation of human intellect and spirit



WHY?

THE REPORT OF THE ROYAL COMMISSION INTO THE FAILURE OF THE WEST GATE BRIDGE.

In 1957 the "Western Industries Association" was formed of industries located in Melbourne's south-western suburbs. It was "most concerned that a crossing of some description should be built across the Lower Yarra." By 1965 the "Lower Yarra Crossing Authority" a company entirely comprised of representatives of private enterprise was formed. Subsequently the Government of Victoria passed Acts enabling the company to borrow money on debentures to finance the crossing and guaranteeing repayment of the funds borrowed.

So began a capitalist enterprise to build what would be one of the world's major bridges. The project came to a tragic halt on 15th October, 1970 when a steel box girder on the west side of the river collapsed killing 31 workers and 4 engineers.

The main parties engaged by the Authority for design and construction of the steel section of the bridge were: "Freeman, Fox and Partners" (FF & P), English consulting and civil engineers with much experience in steel bridge design. Until the Royal Commission this firm enjoyed a high reputation. "Maunsell and Partners" who acted as joint consultants with FF & P. "World Services and Constructors Co. Ltd." (W.S.C.) who carried out initial fabrication; and erection of the steelwork. However due to WSC falling behind schedule they were released from the erection stage of the contract and were replaced by "John Holland (Constructors) Pty. Ltd" (J.H.C.). JHC also successfully constructed the concrete bridge works and foundations.

Upon reading the report of the Royal Commission it becomes quite apparent that the design and construction of the Steelwork Stage of the project was completely disorganised and confused. Some aspects of this were as follows: In designing the steel bridge it appears that FF & P's design team lacked "proper leadership and direction" and checking procedures resulting in "a disorganised agglomeration of calculations which contained many errors both in fundamental engineering principles and in simple arithmetic". This led to dangerously low safety factors.

On site FF & P were in "constant disagreement" with all other parties involved. They refused to supply data and calculations when requested. Their men on site had little experience in the type of work carried out and even they had difficulty in obtaining information from their London superiors.

The Commission also found that there existed "an unhappy and uneasy relationship between the joint consultants" which "added to the climate of confusion which prevailed throughout the period of construction". This was possibly due to professional rivalry.

Maunsells were unwilling to have a senior member of FF & P on site to supervise work as was reasonably requested by

WEST GATE

IAN WALTERS

the Authority. The request was refused by FF & P.

The Commission found that WSC "fell far short of ordinary competence" in many respects. In adopting an unusual method for erecting the steel span they "failed to attain a sufficiently high standard of care". Their organisation of the activities of the workmen on the job was inadequate.

On the basis of a "labour and management" contract JHC took over the steelwork erection from WSC. Due to their inexperience in this field JHC were not supposed to make technical decisions but to seek advice from WSC personnel. However they became "over-confident" and failed to seek this advice. Also "constant bickering and argument" went on between JHC and FF & P engineers on site due to a lack of definition of their respective areas of responsibility. On site, the Commission states: "Morale was bad and the direction and organisation were largely ineffective." Also JHC were responsible for siting huts underneath the steelwork. Gaps in the steelwork which allowed objects to fall to the ground were not adequately covered.

After the collapse of the Milford-Haven bridge in Wales, a similar structure to Westgate also designed by FF & P, the unions, JHC and the Authority sought assurance of the safety of Westgate. Some strengthening was carried out and the joint consultants gave a categorical assurance of the safety of the structure "without any proper foundation". The Commission admits that this assurance was used "to pacify and allay the suspicions of the labour unions and their members."

The final events which led to the collapse of Westgate were also largely the responsibility of FF & P's site engineers. Construction inaccuracies resulting in camber differences between the two longitudinal half spans were not corrected before they were lifted to the top of the piers. An attempt to correct this by using kentledge (a load of concrete blocks) once the spans were in position caused a buckle.

Subsequently an attempt to remove the buckle by an unbolting operation was made. These last two operations were not supported by rational analysis - the bridge collapsed.

In an attempt to distribute the blame the Royal Commission accuses the unions of "industrial sabotage" and says that lost time led to increased urgency of the situation. However, given the lack of job safety, the obvious lack of organisation and direction and the downright infighting and confusion of the engineers who were supposed to give leadership to the men, one wonders if the Commission is not putting the cart before the horse. As the Commission admits, on the matter of industrial relations they only heard one side. As Mr. J. Roulston of the Boilermakers and Blacksmiths' Union said, "At a cost of between \$700 and \$1,000 per day for legal and expert representation it was impossible for the unions to take part in the inquiry". (Age 10-8-1971) These costs should have

been paid by the State Government if the Royal Commission was to be conducted fairly with respect to the unions of workers who built the bridge and died in the collapse.

The Royal Commission finds it astonishing "to find on this project the confusion, lack of co-operation and antagonism that developed not only between each of the parties and the Authority, but between the parties themselves."

This indicates the need for a more cohesive management with rational procedures for design and checking and with areas of responsibility and authority well defined; an organisation built of experienced, competent people which plans completely and properly before it acts, taking mens lives into its hands. Such an organisation for technical management and its methods and decisions should be open to scrutiny by workers' representatives. Only in this way can workers be expected to decide whether they should work on such a project.

The Commission states: "Fundamental... was the constant sense of urgency and pressure to complete the construction within specified times." This is the consequence of a capitalist project operating on borrowed funds. This sense of urgency was allowed to influence decisions when safety should have been the dominant consideration.

Engineering knowledge about this type of structure is far from thorough. However overconfidently low safety factors were used in the design, presumably to keep it economical. Again safety should have been the dominant consideration.

S.Y.A. supports all moves towards workers control of site activities. Workers should also control safety matters on sites. We believe workers should elect their own foremen who can transmit the leadership of the technical management to the men. However access here depends on the quality of leadership given by the engineers and on their competence in their particular field.

The Authority has terminated its agreement with FF & P and Maunsell & Partners and: "Supervision of the project is to be taken over by a directorate of engineering under the direct control of the authority." (Age 7-8-1971) The design will be checked and tests on existing components carried out.

However despite this the bridge workers should not be expected to and must not accept the assurances of the new management without question. The hollow assurances of the past are lesson enough on this point!

The "Age" on 14-8-1971 reported that "The unions were considering the possibility of appointing their own engineer to advise on the safety of the bridge."

S.Y.A. supports the unions in this action and we believe that they should not be expected to pay for this service but should demand payment by the Authority. Furthermore the expert appointed should be allowed access to the design calculations. Finally workers should demand control of site safety. Only these demands can ensure against repetition of the Westgate slaughter.



Brazil regime murders Trotskyist militant

The Socialist Youth Alliance denounces, a new crime of the Brazilian military dictatorship: the assassination of Luiz Eduardo Merlino, comrade "Nicolau", journalist and militant revolutionist, member of the Fourth International.

Comrade Luiz Eduardo Merlino had been arrested in Sao Paulo on 15th July last by soldiers of L'Operation Bandeirantes (the specialists in hunting revolutionists). On the 21st his body was handed over to his family. He had been tortured savagely to the point of death for having refused the information his murderers tried to extract from him by methods which can only be compared with those of nazism.

Numerous other persons have been arrested recently in Sao Paulo. Amongst them can be found Professor Rui Coelho, head of the Department of Social Sciences of the University of Sao Paulo.

Luiz Eduardo Merlino was 23 years old. He was born on 18th October 1947 at Santos (State of Sao Paulo). As a journalist, he worked especially on the *Jornal da Tarde* (State of Sao Paulo), the *Falha da Tarde* and the *Jornal da Bairro*. As a militant in the student movement, he had been a member of the executive committee of the Union of Students of the State of Sao Paulo (Clandestine U.F.E.) and had played an important role at the time of the rising of the masses in 1968. That same year he joined the Parti Ouvrier Communiste (P.O.C.), where he was known under the pseudonym of "Nicolau". As a militant oppositionist in that organisation, he had joined the Fourth International. Since his joining the Trotskyist movement, he led an intense political struggle in the heart of the P.O.C. to set a correct orientation, in the perspective of a prolonged revolutionary war.

Recently he had stayed for some months in France; he was present as an observer at the 2nd congress of the Ligue Communiste, at Rouen, in May 1971.

The assassination of Luiz Eduardo Merlino by the mercenaries of the military dictatorship once more reveals the true nature of a regime which has set up systematic torture. The savage repression is an urgent necessity in order to impose the unpopular politics of the government headed by General Medici. These politics of capitalist development only profit the ruling classes and imperialism, leaving the large majority of the Brazilian people in misery and oppression.

The S.Y.A. pays homage to comrade Luiz Eduardo Merlino, who has pursued courageously his struggle as far as the goals of the dictatorship. The S.Y.A. calls on the workers and students of Australia to support the struggle of the Brazilian people for their national and social liberation. It calls on all journalists to express their solidarity with their Brazilian comrades in shattering the wall of silence and giving the largest possible echo of all the cases of repression in Brazil.

Right-wing coup in Bolivia

On August 19th rightist army officers in Bolivia staged a successful coup against the ten months old regime of General Jose Torres. The UP dispatch in the "Australian" (24/8) stated that the revolt

was caused by "dissatisfaction with President Torres' socialist policies in the tin-rich country." In reality things are somewhat different - Torres was no socialist and fundamentally the coup is not directed at him but at the mobilising peasants and workers and students; and Bolivia might be tin-rich but the implication is false for the benefits of this wealth have never been used to improve the situation of the poverty stricken toiling masses, but have instead lined the pockets of the Bolivian capitalists and the US business men. To understand what is really going on we must look at Bolivia's recent history.

In 1952 the old army was smashed by a popular revolution and Paz Estenssoro, leader of the MNR (Revolutionary Nationalist Movement) was installed as president. The tin mines, the single most important source of wealth for Bolivia, were nationalised. The COB (Central Obrero Boliviano - the national trade union organisation) was able to win many concessions for the workers due to the armed power held by the popular militia. However, the revolution was not carried through to completion - elimination of the imperialist interests, turning the land over to the peasants, and setting up workers' councils to run the factories and mines. Estenssoro and the MNR proved to be tools of the capitalists and the American business interests.

Since the 1952 revolution American businessmen moved in to take over the oil industry and the gold deposit. The US government has sent dozens of spies, military experts, banking commissions, etc. into Bolivia to influence Bolivia's political life. After the revolution Estenssoro began to rebuild a regular army and sought to cut down the armed strength of the workers and to reverse the concessions won by the masses. This process has continued right up to the present.

In 1967 Che Guevara's guerrilla front opened in Bolivia. This followed on the severe repression that was making legal methods of struggle more and more difficult. To many, armed struggle seemed the only way to improve the appalling conditions of the masses. Che's band was smashed by ruthless suppression. Many of the officers who took a leading part in the campaign against the guerrillas are prominently involved in the present crisis. Colonel Andres Selich who captured Che is Minister of Government in the new regime ("Australian" 24/8). Torres, the ousted president, planned the US supported campaign against the guerrillas and was one of the senior army officers who approved the order to kill Guevara if he was captured ("New York Times" 8.10.70 in "Intercontinental Press" 19/10/70, p. 869). Thus Torres' "socialism" seems a little incredible.

On October 4th last year right wing army officers led by General Rogelio Miranda attempted a coup against the Ovando government. Ovando refused to get out and in an attempt to resolve the crisis within the army the officer corps met in La Paz and rejected both contenders. In the events that followed, the mobilisation of the workers, students and peasants against the attempted rightist coup threatened to overwhelm the military caste as a whole. It is in this context that "leftist" General Torres staged a "coup". In reality this "coup" was only a token gesture - Torres was pushed forward by the military to try and stem the popular mobilisation and save the capitalist system in Bolivia.

Torres had little success in harnessing the popular forces - it is this which led to his ousting this August (not his 'socialist policies' as UP dishonestly put it). The national police were virtually destroyed and armed students took over police headquarters throughout Bolivia burning files and forcing the resignation of high officials. The workers seized the tin mines and expelled the police guards and announced their intention to reorganize the state mining corporation.

Soon after the October crisis the Trotskyist POR (Revolutionary Workers Party, the Bolivian section of the Fourth International) called for the formation of an organ representing the masses, to serve as the forum of the revolutionary workers and peasants. This call was taken up by the COB and the united front leadership of the mass movement. On May Day 1971 an Asamblea Popular (Peoples' Assembly) was installed in the Bolivian Congress building, vacant since a military coup in 1969. In the preceding march through La Paz the organized workers, students and peasants shouted "Arms for the people" and "Death to imperialism" and

called for a socialist Bolivia. In the Assembly 60% of the seats were reserved for delegates from the country's working class sectors. The old MNR was excluded as being a bankrupt pro-imperialist formation.

Torres, needing working class support to maintain himself against the rightist officers, was forced to accept the Assembly, but he did so reluctantly. We can well understand the terror that the Assembly inspired in the Bolivian capitalists and its army and US business interests! The Asamblea Popular was a step on the road to establishing a workers and peasants government parallel to the official government, which would be a prelude to a socialist revolution. As the Assembly was installed the COB was organizing an armed workers' militia. In its first days the Assembly called for the expulsion from Bolivia of the US military and intelligence agents and for workers control of the mines as a start on the socialist organisation of the economy. The Assembly also demanded that the ruling faction of the army purge the officer corps of those responsible for crimes against the working masses and in particular, purge those responsible for the June 23rd 1965 St. John's Day massacre of mine workers by the army. Thus they had some claim on the truth who saw in the Asamblea Popular the first soviet on the American continent.

Rightist officers thought Torres' policy was disastrous, that "military reformism" was failing to halt the radicalisation of the masses. Although it is unclear exactly what has happened in Bolivia recently, it is clear that the doubts of the rightist army faction and the capitalists they represent have ripened into a revolt. The press reports mentioned that there had been fighting and that some workers and students were involved but the extent of the resistance is not yet known. If the army has not already smashed the workers' militia and dissolved and Asamblea Popular then we can say with certainty that this will be their foremost aim. However, the capitalist system in Bolivia is bankrupt. It has nothing to offer the toiling masses but misery and oppression. The masses will continue to struggle for a socialist Bolivia and we have no doubt that they will be ultimately successful.

The history of the struggle in Latin America has shown by negative example the cardinal importance of the revolutionary party. In Bolivia this is no less true. The indispensable condition of final victory is a mass revolutionary party. The POR, Bolivian section of the Fourth International is the essential nucleus of that party. It has proven itself in the recent struggles. We take this opportunity to express our solidarity with our comrades in Bolivia and the masses struggling there for an end to their oppression.



PAZ ESTENSSORO: Rides back with Bolivian fascists and generals.

C.P.A. wants you

Jim McLroy
On pillars and billboards around Melbourne University an intriguing new poster has appeared recently. It is the new Communist Party of Australia recruiting poster. Under the headline 'Join in the Real Revolution' we see the faces of nine well-known revolutionaries! Angela Davis, Lenin, Marx, Mao, Castro, Guevara, Ho,

Dubcek and Rosa Luxembourg.

Obviously a very strong team to be with. But, on reflection, two of the key figures of Communist Party history are missing: Trotsky and Stalin. Why? The Party still can't make up its mind? Waiting for more information perhaps?

But this reflects the basic dilemma from which the CPA is unable to free itself. Until the CPA can get to the roots of Stalinism, and basically analyse the history of the Trotsky/Stalin conflict, it will be unable to clearly see how its own development has been grossly affected by Stalinism, and how this deformation cannot be overturned merely by publicity gimmicks and conference resolutions (or even by eliminating the most grossly pro-Russian elements.)

Only when the CPA begins to understand what the 'Real Revolution' meant in Bolshevik Russia, what democratic centralism actually means, from where the danger of bureaucracy arises - in fact, all the problems which then turned a real revolution into real Stalinism. Can it develop a perspective on revolution in Australia and the world today.

The present, growing current of newly radicalised youth can only be won over to a serious revolutionary position by a Leninist party which articulates and practises a Marxist programme. This, the CPA clearly is not, and shows little sign of becoming.



Trotsky: still in doubt with the CPA.

Maxwell Newton's Gutter Press

Jill Jolliffe

Despite its left-liberalism, a fairly consistent anti-trade union emphasis could be discerned in Gordon Barton's plaything 'The Sunday Observer'. Indeed, right until the time it folded, labour on the production side of the publication was never effectively unionised, probably as the result of a deal made between Barton and the right-wing leadership of the relevant printing unions.

The anti-unionism of Barton's rich man's toy pales into insignificance, however, beside the outpourings of his successor's Maxwell Newton's gutter press, 'The Melbourne Observer'.

A quick glance at Newton's own columns gives a clue to the tone of the paper: in the edition of August 22 for example, he refers constantly to 'Bob Hawke and his communist mates' (sic). Hawke has taken on the role of Communist Bogey Number One for Newton, and his attacks on Hawke and the trade union movement are a constant feature of 'The Melbourne Observer'.

In recent weeks, however, its virulent anti-communism has given rise to a series of vicious attacks on local student groups, notably the Worker Student Alliance.

He opened on July 4th with an article headed 'Standover Tactics at University', which purported to uncover a dangerous communist conspiracy in the existence of the Worker Student Alliance at Latrobe University. The article spoke in terms of 'secret trips to China', 'criminal records' and 'terrorism and violence'.

The odious tone of the article as a whole was set by the passage: 'Three members of the group are foreign-born or are foreign nationals'. Anti-communism and racism have always been compatible; on Newton's paper they come naturally.

This 'expose' was followed on August 1st by an exceptionally vicious attack on one member of WSA - 'Terror Group Headed by ABC Man'. The tactics used are classically McCarthyist: the man's name, address, photo and a photo of his house are published, along with an outline of his personal history and his alleged links with the WSA. The article was clearly designed for one purpose: to have the person concerned sacked from his job. This was borne out by an article the following week: 'ABC Silent on Rebal', which made it evident that the 'Observer' had rung the ABC specifically to check whether or not the employee had been fired yet, and if not, to put the acid on to ensure that he was!

In the weeks following, further 'exposés' have been made, relating to the WSA, using the same tactics: publication of names and addresses, photographs of houses. Recent articles hint that there is a 'Mr. Big' at work in the ABC, who was responsible for the appointment of this supposed 'terrorist'.

For those who have read anything of the McCarthyite 'trials' in the U.S., the tactics are sickeningly familiar: the use of smear, with the subject having no immediate redress, the attempt to render 'reds' unemployable, the use of racist innuendo. The House Un-American Activities Committee operated (and still operates) like this - the accused are only called on to give evidence about their activities and beliefs, they are not 'on trial' in the sense that they can be found either guilty or not guilty. There is no possibility of acquittal, although appearance before HUAC, in the 50s at least, usually resulted in loss of employment and extreme social ostracism.

In the U.S., John Birchers and right-wingers believe that the Supreme Court is a communist conspiracy, ushering in a permissive, socialist society through anti-censorship legislation, etc.; in Australia, their particular target is the ABC - this is the basis for the campaign against 'This Day Tonight' conducted by the far right-wing. They believe the ABC to be pro-left and 'permissive'.

The continual publication of personal addresses and photographs of houses leaves those smeared wide open to the possibility of physical attack from fascist or other right-wing groups, no doubt an effect which would not upset Newton.

This series of attacks on the WSA by Newton's gutter press must be seen as an attack upon all of us on the left. As socialists, we must unequivocally defend the right of people to their political views wherever they are employed. It is socialists of course, who are particularly susceptible to persecution in employment: the use of ASIO reports and red-baiting publicity like Newton's against the employment of people with left-wing views is historical. The holders of right-wing views are invariably safe: Ustashi members are known to be safely employed in the State Public Service in Victoria.

The Socialist Youth Alliance has already raised in the anti-war movement the question of the 'Melbourne Observer's' McCarthyite attacks on WSA, with the

result that a Moratorium meeting in Melbourne overwhelmingly passed a motion of condemnation of the 'Melbourne Observer', with a recommendation that the motion be passed on to the Australian Journalists Association in defence of their taking action in defence of the ABC journalist smeared by Newton. It is imperative that the left-wing movement offers resistance to the use of such tactics. The whole Newton incident highlights the need for socialists to build firm links with the masses, which is the best possible protection the socialist movement can have against McCarthyism. Indeed, the effectiveness of the McCarthyite movement in the 50s lay largely in the isolation of communists in the community - albeit for historical as well as tactical reasons.

Newton is playing a role in relation to the left-wing movement in Australia - comparable to that played by the Springer press in West Germany. Perhaps he would do well to take note of the events that followed such attacks by the Springer press there.

Heberto Padilla

Dave Riley

Look at life-wide open spaces.
People walk
The recovered roads.
Those who bled
Now sing.

You stony-eyed dreamer,
Destroy that lair
Of cunning and terror.
For the love of your people
Wake up!
The just time of humanness
Is about to born!

While the First National Congress on Education and Culture was being held in Havana April 23 - 30, Heberto Padilla, poet and translator, was imprisoned, then only to proffer a 4,000 word "self criticism" of his "defamation" and "insult" of the Cuban Revolution.

"I know that my experience, comrades, is going to be an example, it must serve as an example to others."

Castro had told the audience on the final day of the congress that other intellectuals were implicated and that a petition of protest (April 9) signed by such people as Sartre, de Beauvoir, Marguerite Duras, Alberto Moravia and many others was nothing but the work of "some real tricksters and sharpies". A second protest petition (May 20) from the same source came out more strongly against the implications of the case - "The contents of this confession with its absurd accusations and delirious assertions... recall the most sordid moments of the era of Stalinism with its prefabricated verdicts and its witch hunts".

There seems much reason in this fear. In contrast to his 1961 speech to intellectuals -

"What are the rights of revolutionary writers and artists?
Within the revolution, everything;
against the revolution, no rights whatsoever."

Castro and his government have adopted a policy which veers toward a decided tightening of controls along the lines to be seen in the Soviet Union, the East European countries and the Peoples' Republic of China. This happens at a time, evident in Castro's April 30th speech, when the economic situation in Cuba places her in a position of greater dependency on the Soviet Union - circumstances whose implications may run deep into a revolution seen as the freest in history.

The jailing plus the public confession are acts with their own contradictions. Firstly, the Cuban government has produced no evidence that would show that Padilla was disillusioned with the revolution or that he did anything different in 1971 from what he has done in the past eleven years since his return to Cuba. Secondly, there is little credibility to a 'confession' written during imprisonment, and while Fidel dismisses the petitioners as 'bourgeois gentlemen' all the signatories have always firmly defended the Cuban revolution. The case must always be considered in the context of the attacks made at the Congress on the right of sexual preference, the right to dress as one pleases, and the right to freedom of thought.

WHY PADILLA?
Nothing in the reports from Cuba indicate that any one article or verse published by the poet this year warranted his arrest. Then why was he marked? It seems that Padilla's public criticisms of bureaucratic mismanagement and his constant opposition to those seeking to impose 'socialist realism' on Cuban art have contributed to him rather than some other writer being victimized first.

There is much of a show case about this, especially since Padilla won the national poetry award in 1968 for his anthology *Out of Bounds*, and enjoyed a high national and international reputation because of this. Even at that time, the executive of the Union of Cuban Artists and Writers had expressed reservations over the judges' decision, and the Army in its magazine, *Vende Olivo*, accused Padilla of being an adversary of the revolution. Soon after he was suspended from his trade job. In

his April 'confession' Padilla called *Out of Bounds* 'insidious and provocative'.

The self-abasement of a writer within a society leading the whole continent culturally as well as politically can only be viewed with grave concern by revolutionaries. And from a previous view of the Cuban artist as part of a situation where a nation is attempting to transcend itself and where the people are creating their own history, there is a new significance, a degeneration, and, to our mind, a blow to the Cuban revolution.

1. "The Just Time of Humanness." In Padilla's 1962 collection of poems of the same title, *El Justo Tiempo Humano*. Translation: Dolores Prida.



PADILLA: Prison helped him confess that his prize-winning poems were counterrevolutionary.

Free Niugini

Even with the little information available at present, and the inherent difficulties of trying to predict and understand a rising national consciousness, it seems that for the future, Niugini, like Vietnam today, will become the pre-eminent concern of the Australian Left - Australia's Algeria.

The juxtaposition of a few basic facts clarifies this. For half a century, the Australian government has colonised Niugini. During this time, and especially since the last war, Australian, American and more recently, Japanese capital has exploited the national resources of the Islands and recruited the indigenous population to the capitalist wage system. In Niugini, in its exploitation and practice of racism, Australia plays a classical imperialist role.

Where the developments are most concentrated, on Bougainville (Company - Conzinc Rio Tinto, Business - copper mining Return on investment 90%) there has been a corresponding radicalization of the local population. Initially more obvious during the land alienation events of last year, the struggle has coalesced around the demand for immediate independence.

Given the uneven economic developments throughout all sectors of the Territory, the Bougainville events not only have a local significance, but in themselves indicate future political trends for other areas of Niugini. The promises of staggered independence offered by the Australian administration and the imposition of a parliamentary system of rule are unlikely to forestall these trends.

For the self-determination of all the peoples of Niugini, SYA supports immediate independence for the whole of the territory.

MELBOURNE NIUGINI DEMOS.
RALLY: SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 18,
10.00am CITY SQUARE.
DEMO: SATURDAY OCTOBER 9,
10.00am CITY SQUARE.
ORGANIZED BY THE FREE NIUGINI ASSOCIATION.

Bolte in the Provinces

Keith Olerhead

Once a year, State Cabinet convenes in an up and coming provincial town, presumably to give the feeling of importance to the populace and to encourage the local businessmen to reach new and dazzling heights. This year the town was Wonthaggi, an ex-coal mining town of some 2000 people, 60 miles south east of Melbourne.

The 23 members of State Cabinet made their way there in chauffeur driven limousines. To give the indication that Sir Henry has a tight hand on the economy and the expenditure of his Cabinet members, it was decided that all the limousines should be parked at the local golf links, some miles from the centre of the town.

A guard of some 30 police was stationed at the golf course to protect the vehicles while the ministers made their way to town in five cars. Presumably 5 3/5ths persons per car (allowing for chauffeurs) was also a reduction of the ministers to a common standard of persons per car enjoyed by the bulk of Wonthaggi people.

The Cabinet meeting went for 1 1/2 hours until the ministers retired to lunch, where the real business usually takes place. In other words, the local officials get them booted in the shortest possible time to enable them to extract as many promises and grants as is possible. Large sums of money were granted, and much red tape was cut, to please local councillors and businessmen.

Meanwhile, the rumbling of stomachs among the diligent 30 police, indicated that it must be lunch time (and thus they returned to feast on morsels dropped under the lunch table?). At the same time, some of the locals who knew of the visit of Sir Henry and co., felt it was an opportune time to express their opinion of Liberal Party policy. So with paint and brushes in hand, these "rowdies" set about practising the gentle art of hand writing on vehicles present in the golf course car park.

It is rumoured that when Sir Henry returned he was visually told very bluntly where the Springboks could go.



D.A. HASSLE

For one year Direct Action has been sold in Sydney on the streets. But over the last few months City Council Inspectors in grey uniforms have been ordering the SYAs to sell, to move on, as a permit was required to sell on the streets.

One comrade investigated the procuring of a permit at the building where the inspector had told him to go, but with no result. The man behind the desk said that permits were not issued for the sale of literature, yet also said that the bourgeois dailies had their own inspectors. Quite obviously the importance of the civic authority obviously the power of civic authority declines in the face of the power of big business.

One inspector said that SYA would probably not receive a permit. When asked about a newspaper seller on the corner, he replied that an arrangement had been made between these papers and the Council. Are there two laws in force here? One for publications which uphold the status quo and one for left-wing papers. By insisting on this legal technicality, the Council hopes to force Direct Action off the streets. If this practice continues, SYA will campaign to defend its right to sell on the same basis as the pro-establishment papers.

HOMOSEXUAL LIBERATION

JENNY FERGUSON.

Very few subjects are as clouded with misconceptions and fears as that of homosexuality. Very few thorough studies of homosexuality have yet been done. The most authoritative studies so far have been carried out by Alfred Kinsey, and Associates which were based on the case histories of more than 8,000 males and more than 7,000 females over a period of 15 years. For the majority who turn a blind eye to the subject and regard these people as being only a sick minority will be somewhat jolted by the Kinsey findings as follows:

1. 50% of all males are conscious of erotic responses to other males.
2. 37% of the total male population (2 out of every 5 males) has at least one homosexual experience to the point of orgasm between adolescence and old-age.
3. 10% of married males between the ages of 16 and 25 are involved in some homosexual activity.
4. 4% are exclusively homosexual.
5. 28% of the female population is conscious of erotic responses to other females.
6. 6% of females are exclusively homosexual.

Despite the efforts of society to suppress homosexual activity it still continues on a broad scale. Kinsey states: "there seems some reason for believing that such activity would appear in the histories of a much larger portion of the population if there were no social restraints."

Another misconception is that homosexuality is a product of decaying societies whether capitalist or otherwise. Homosexuality exists in non-capitalist societies during their prime (Greece) as well as periods of decline (Rome). A study by anthropologist Clellon S. Ford and the psychologist Frank A. Beach on sexual phenomena data on 190 human societies, subhuman, primates and lower mammals, (see *Patterns of Sexual Behaviour*, Harper & Brothers 1951) shows that one third of the existing cultures about which there is any specific knowledge in regard to homosexual activity attempt to suppress it. In societies that do not attempt to suppress it, it coexists with heterosexual behaviour. The Karaki of New Guinea and the Sivans in Africa regard a man as "abnormal" if he refrains from participating in homosexual relations.

It has been shown that sexual contacts between individuals of the same sex are known to occur in practically every species of mammals.

The assertion that homosexuality is a disease is held by some people who call themselves Marxists, these views are held in support of the Soviet bureaucracy's reactionary position on the rights of homosexuals. One of the first actions of the Bolshevik Government of the Soviet Union after the 1917 Revolution, along with enacting sweeping improvements in the legal status of women, was to scrap the old Czarist laws which penalized homosexuality with long-term imprisonment, and to eliminate all other legal discrimination against homosexuals. The Bolsheviks felt that it was quite simply the responsibility of the revolution to eliminate all forms of oppression and discrimination.

The position later adopted by Communist parties worldwide as the Soviet Union

came under the control of the Stalinist bureaucracy was the suppression of homosexuals. In 1934 a law appeared in the Soviet Union which prohibited and punished homosexual activity with up to eight years in jail. The Stalinized CPs began to describe homosexuality as a sick product of decaying capitalist society, and the liberation of gay people as diversionary and unimportant, a position which they still put forward today.

In Sydney there is a well established group fighting for the rights of homosexuals called Camp Incorporated. Recently Melbourne has seen the formation of a similar organization called Five. Its aims are:

1. To provide a means of communication between Heterosexuals and Homosexuals - and among Homosexuals themselves.
2. To provide a forum in the community for the exchange of ideas on Homosexuality.
3. To provide a number of services for Homosexuals - Counselling, Legal, etc.
4. To agitate for reform of existing discriminatory laws.
5. To organise social activities for all members of the organisation.

The Gay Liberation Movement has the potential to involve large numbers and in doing so it cuts into one of the deepest going prejudices society uses to divide and isolate people, to render them docile, fearful and subservient to those in power. The central issue being raised by the Gay Liberation Movement is also the central one for other movements: the right to control our own destiny. This involves a struggle to take control of the decisions that affect our lives from the hands of the ruling-class.

Society implements the oppression of homosexuals by three main institutions - the family, the schools and religion. The nuclear family is so designed that instead of allowing the free development of sexuality it distorts it because it is here that children are conditioned into stereotype roles; the male playing the dominant role and female the submissive; they cannot relate to each other on an equal basis as real human beings, but only as objects. In schools the pseudo-scientific quackery about homosexuality that is now passed on in certain fields such as psychology, medicine and sociology will have to go. Sex education in the schools must entail a sound and positive presentation of homosexuality. The Christian church has been one of the most damaging persecutors of homosexuality. There are still today millions of human beings whose lives are infused with profound guilt, because of the superstition and antihomosexuality of the church. The family, the schools and religion are not the only institutions in capitalist society that play a role in the oppression of homosexuals and which gay liberation will help to change. Others are the police, the courts, the mass media, marriage and psychiatry.

The struggle for gay liberation is revolutionary not only because it aims at the heart of the sex-repressive institutions of this society but is also revolutionary because it will break down one of the most effective barriers which society uses to foster in people a lack of confidence in their ability to control their lives. Revolutions are not made without such confidence and Gay Liberation can help restore it to millions.

Few political ideologies have generated more myths and misconceptions than Zionism. Zionism and the state of Israel have been passionately defended by conservatives and progressives, alternatively praised for being socialist, and praised for being a bastion of imperialism. Nevertheless, from this confusion of misplaced loyalties it is possible, and absolutely necessary, to separate the myths from reality, fact from fiction. The facts set out below, though necessarily brief, will hopefully dispel some illusions many people have about Zionism, the movement to establish a monocultural Jewish state in Palestine, and Israel, the state they established.

1) Zionism is the solution to anti-semitism.

Reality: Zionism is a retreat from the problem. Rather than fight anti-semitism and racism in all its forms, by attacking its economic, social, political and psychological roots in society, Zionism looks for an enclave to retreat to. Anti-semitism is independent of the existence or non-existence of a Jewish state (just as the existence of the Peoples' Republic of China, has not sufficed to protect the Chinese of Indonesia from the persecutions of local reaction) Anti-semitism is not as the Zionists maintain something rooted in human nature, but a specific result of the decay of feudalism and capitalism in Europe, and as such can only be fought by attacking its cause.

2) Zionism is a result of Nazi persecutions.

Reality: Although the Jewish migration to Palestine received a large impetus from Hitler's extermination program, primarily because the Western 'democracies' barred their borders to fleeing (mainly radical) Jewish refugees, the Zionist movement and Jewish migration to Palestine have a much longer history. The first wave of immigrants disembarked in 1882, while the Zionist political movement was founded by Theodore Herzl around the turn of the century.

3) The Jews have a historical right to Palestine.

Reality: Even before the Roman conquest of Judea (70 AD) three-quarters of the Jewish population lived outside Palestine. As for the indigenous Jewish community, it was gradually absorbed by neighbouring populations during the following centuries just as were the Philistines, the Phoenicians, the Nabateans, and other clans of the ancient Orient. A consequence of this is the fact that paradoxically today's Palestinians are to some extent (there was much intermarriage with other communities) descendants of the Hebrews! Moreover if the Jews have claims on Palestine, why don't the Arabs have claims on Spain or Sicily which were once upon a time integral parts of the Islamic Empire?

4) The new Jewish immigrants were merely settling on empty land.

Reality: Some of the early Zionists were honestly under the misapprehension that this was so. Max Nordau for example, one of Herzl's key aides, exclaimed after finding out that Arabs live in Palestine, "I did not know about this. We are doing an injustice." However, most Zionists were quite aware that to achieve their goal of a Jewish state it would be necessary to physically remove the overwhelmingly Arab population of Palestine. J. Weitz, director of the department of colonization of Israel, stated: (Dayar Sept. 29, 1967) "The only possible solution lies in creating a Palestine, or at least a Western Palestine, without Arabs... and there is no other way to do this than to transfer all the Arabs to neighbouring countries, to move all of them out of here. We should not leave a single village, a single tribe and those transferred should be sent to Syria and Iraq."

5) The Palestinian refugees abandoned their country on instructions from their leaders in 1948.

Reality: Although this myth contradicts the previous one, they are both still used in various forms. In fact, several methods were used to force the Palestinians off their lands. The first was quite "legal", though not very admirable. The Jewish Agency would buy up land from absentee Arab landlords, and then force the tenant farmer off his land. The land would then be sold or leased to Jewish settlers on the condition that it not be resold or leased to Arabs.

The second method was pure terrorism by the fascist-like Irgun, or the official armed forces, the Haganah. The most notorious act was the massacre of Deir Yassin, a village where 250 men, women and children were slaughtered. The main leader of the Irgun, Menachem Begin, now an Israeli cabinet minister, wrote of the role of massacres like Deir Yassin, in *The Revolt, Story of the Irgun (1951)*:

"The legend of Deir Yassin helped us in particular in the saving of Tiberias and the conquest of Haifa... All the Jewish forces proceeded to advance through Haifa like a knife through butter. The Arabs began fleeing in panic, shouting 'Deir Yassin'... Arabs throughout the country... were seized with limitless panic and started to flee for their lives. This mass flight soon developed into a maddened uncontrollable stampede." The fact is that the Palestinians paid little heed to reactionary "leaders" like the Mufti of Jerusalem anyway and subsequent Zionist stories about Arab broadcasts instructing the Palestinians to leave have not been substantiated. The refugees fled because of the fear of terrorist attacks, and such a flight was, after all Zionist policy.

This whole Zionist argument becomes rather absurd when placed beside their claim to the right of return to Palestine after thousands of years! Palestinian Arabs who left their farm the day before are not allowed back, yet Jews, whose ancestors may have lived there 2,000 years ago have an automatic legal right.

6) Israel plays a progressive role in world affairs.

Reality: The direct opposite is the case. From its inception, Zionism has attempted to achieve its aims by making deals with Imperialism. Herzl petitioned the Turkish Sultan, the czar, the Kaiser, the British King, even the pope, to obtain support for a Jewish homeland in Palestine. (At one time, Herzl was willing to accept a temporary allotment of Uganda but was opposed by other sections of the Zionist organization). In return for support, Herzl promised the potentates Jewish backing for their imperial aims in the Middle East. With Plehve, the infamous czarist minister who had organised the Kishinov programs in 1902, Herzl went so far as to conclude a secret agreement to Jewish socialists in return for Plehve's good influence with the sultan.

In 1917 Britain issued the Balfour declaration, announcing support for a Jewish homeland in Palestine, with the intention of winning Jewish support for the war (It was later revealed, when the Bolsheviks published the secret treaties in the czar's vaults, that Britain had made similar agreements regarding Palestine with both the Arabs and the French). The Zionists insisted that they were better friends of British imperialism than the Arabs. Menachem Usseskin, late head of the Jewish National Fund, wrote in 1936: "A Palestine which is wholly Arab means that sooner or later Great Britain will be forced to leave just as it is gradually leaving Egypt. A Palestine which is largely Jewish means a political alliance cordiale... between the Jewish people and the English."

After World War II, the Zionists hitched themselves to the star of American imperialism. A short listing of Israel's actions since then is enough to indicate which side they're on: support of the U.S. in the Korean War; invasion of Egypt with Britain and France in 1956; support of France in Algeria; military training and assistance for General Mobutu in the Congo (accomplice in Patrice Lumumba's murder); for South Africa and other reactionary regimes in Africa and Asia; opposition to the admission of China into the UN; support of Jordan's King Hussein against the Palestinian refugees' attempt to overthrow him; support of the Anglo-American intervention of troops in Lebanon and Jordan during the Iraqi revolution of 1958, and of course, tacit support for the US aggression in Vietnam.

7) Israel is a socialist country.

Reality: Israel is the strongest bastion of capitalism in the Middle East. The top 10% of Israelis receive as much of the national income as the bottom 50%. The much vaunted kibbutzim - collective colonies involving only 3% of the population - are heavily dependent on the banking sector and rest economically on the exploitation of wage labour - frequently of Arabs. They play a key role in defending the occupation of the conquered territories. The Histadrut trade-union federation is a nationalist organisation formed in the 1920's to fight against the employment of Arab labour. The biggest employer of labour in the country, it ruthlessly fights any form of autonomous organisation of the working-class. All important strikes have been organised in spite of it and it has sabotaged them and their leaderships.

8) Israel has made the desert bloom.

Reality: The so-called "Israeli miracle" (like the "Taiwan miracle") can be better

Continued next column.

ZIONISM AND ISRAEL MYTH AND REALITY

JOHN PERCY

Continued from previous column.

er understood when one realises that Israel has been able to maintain itself thanks only to an influx of capital that in 1968, amounted to 10% of world foreign aid to all the underdeveloped countries, or, in proportion to its population, 20 times as much as any state of the Third World received. One of the objectives of the permanent subsidy to the western showcase in the Near East is to contain the contradictions within Israel which place social classes in opposition to one another and place the disadvantaged Sephardic Jews in opposition to the relatively privileged Ashkenazim (those of Western origin). The recent demonstrations by the Black Panthers, an organisation of Oriental Jews, and their vicious repression by the Israeli state, underlines the fact that this subsidy merely patches over these contradictions without solving them.

9) Israel is peaceful and peace-loving.

Reality: The Israeli community was constituted by a colonial process of forcefully displacing the indigenous population: "Without iron helmets and cannon, we would never have been able to plant a tree or build a house", said Moshe Dayan. From the terrorist raids of 1947-

48, to the invasion of Egypt in 1956, to futile raids into neighbouring countries, to the six day war of 1967, Israel has been consistently aggressive, militaristic and expansionist. In 1967, it succeeded in convincing world opinion that it was conducting a defensive war, while we know today that "the Egyptian military deployment in the Sinai on the eve of the war had a defensive character" (Levi Eshkol, Yediot Akharonot, Oct 18, 1967). Israel is abundantly supplied with arms ammunition and funds by the U.S., West Germany, France.

10) Zionism is the movement for Jewish national liberation.

Reality: Zionism is not a nationalist movement based on an oppressed population in their own land fighting an oppressor, but a minority movement even among Jews, seeking to form a nation at the expense of the Palestinians. It's our duty to support the struggles of oppressed nations for self-determination, but our attitude to oppressing nations is rather different. This particular myth is current amongst the "radical" Zionists - would they also support the struggle that the white South Africans or Rhodesians are waging for "national liberation"? A people oppressing another can never be free itself, and radicals should certainly never lend their support to such oppression.

"A people oppressing another can't be free." Marx



Photo of a demonstration taken from the newspaper of the Black Panthers.

RECENT STRUGGLES

SOL SALBY

When Karl Marx said that "A people oppressing another people can't be free" he didn't mean it as a moral judgement; he meant it literally. The current experience of the Israeli working class confirms his view. The oppression that the Zionist movement caused the Palestinian people is now being reflected in the Israeli masses. Over the last few months the country

has seen the re-emergence of the class struggle with massive strikes in the Post Office, the waterfront, the public hospitals and in almost every part of the economy. Using its vastly oppressive structure, previously reserved for Arabs only the government used administrative regulations to break the strikes and conscription instrumentalities to confine workers to their jobs.

The police even used violence to break some of the strikes in the Ashdod port. Now, once again, the government is forcing the workers to pay for its military expenditure by the use of another devaluation, the 7th in the last 23 years, which already increased quite a few prices and which aims to reduce the workers standard of living even further. The workers militancy is increasing while they see new defence contractors making huge profits when the Israeli working class is already the most heavily taxed in the world. Further strike action is certain to continue.

The rise of the class struggle in the economic sphere has been just one aspect of the upsurge. Another has been the rise of the Black Panther movement. The Black Panther movement is a movement of Young Oriental Jews, ie. Jews from North Africa, Iraq, the Yemen etc, who form the bulk of the Israeli working class. The vast majority of the half a million people who live below the poverty line in Israel are oriental Jews. While Oriental Jews compose 65% of the population, only one cabinet Minister (out of 12) is an Oriental Jew. Only 89 of the top 200 public servants are oriental Jews (In all these statistics one does not bother to look for Arabs in any high position: there aren't any). According to Mordechai Ben Porat, a delegate to the Israeli Labor Party conference, 9.3% of youth between the ages of 14 and 17 were not working or studying - the vast majority of these are oriental Jews.

There is also cultural discrimination against oriental Jews. Almost all members of the Bourgeoisie are European Jews and the Zionist labor bureaucracy is even more dominated by European Jews. They keep on emphasizing the danger of Levantinization of Israel. An example of their racist concept was given when Prime Minister Golda Meir declared that a Jew who does not speak Yiddish (a German Jewish dialect spoken exclusively by European Jews) is not a proper Jew. (Yiddish might be spoken in New York but not in Israel.)

At the beginning of 1971 a militant group of young Oriental Jews decided to form an organisation to fight for the rights of Oriental Jews. They called themselves the Black Panthers. Oriental Jews have been called Black in a derogatory fashion before. One of the founders explained the choice of the name:

"We decided to set up some organisation, and we knew that an organisation like that existed abroad, in the United States, that is called the 'Black Panthers', and is struggling for rights. There the discrimination is between negroes and whites, and we felt we are almost like them". The fact that the name was chosen despite the smear campaign against the American Black Panthers for their anti-Zionist position indicates their level of radicalization but the Israeli Black Panthers haven't adopted an anti-Zionist position as yet. The Black Panther's first demonstration was attacked in advance by the cops who, acting on orders from the Prime Minister herself, arrested the Panther leaders (An unprecedented attack as far as the Jewish political activities are concerned.) Despite the arrests the demonstration still took place. Another demonstration took place on May 18 during which 800 police attacked the demonstration and a five hour battle ensued with scores of arrests and many people attacked and brutalised.

Another demonstration took place after the devaluation of the Israeli pound. According to the *Sydney Jewish News* at least 2000 people demonstrated in Jerusalem and the police arrested another 20 Panthers.

To add to it all the Israeli government faces a third type of radicalization: Youth radicalization against the military system. For the first time in history there are groups of young Israelis refusing to serve in the army. Anyone who has been educated in Israeli schools and has heard about the military tradition of the country will understand the significance of their action.

On August 2nd, four young Israelis (three boys and one girl) who are about to be drafted into the Israeli Army shortly, sent the following letter to M. Dayan, Minister of Defence:

"Dear Sir,
We are a group of young people on the eve of being drafted into the Army. After prolonged deliberations we were forced to conclude that we are unwilling to serve in the Army.

Since young people are dying in this country because of internal politics (see a recently published research by Dr. Shlomo Aronson and Mr. Dan Horowitz) and not for noble values. It was recently stated by a journalist who participated in the last three (Israeli) wars: "For each soldier who dies in Suez - there is someone who becomes rich in Tel-Aviv". We are unwilling to serve in an occupation army. It has been demonstrated in history that occupation means foreign rule; foreign rule begets resistance; resistance begets oppression; oppression begets terror and counter terror.

We were not born free in order to become oppressors. Oppression is a bad reason to die for. The cynical attitude of the government to the lives of young people strengthened our refusal to become candidates for death notices. We do not wish to be commemorated in some literary memorial volume. We have not intent of hurting the government but we do not want the government to bring us to a state where we shall be beyond all pain. We are firmly determined to refuse to participate in the oppression of another nation. We refuse to inflict upon another nation what has been inflicted on our parents and grandparents.

We are fully aware that all the mass media are under government control and we are only four people who refuse to accept orders from a regime that means nothing to them.

We enclose herewith our draft orders.

Name: Dov Gal, Reuven Lassman, Gilyora Neumann, Irith Yacobi (Miss)
Identity card No's: 5173790, 6452580, 6494474, 5173715.

Two out of the above four are members of the "MATZPEN" group. On August 7th "MATZPEN" published the following statement on this matter:

Exploitation begets strikes and working class struggles. Discrimination begets the 'Black Panthers'. The oppression and expropriation of the Palestinians beget their resistance, and the refusal to serve in the army. The Israeli Socialist Organization ("MATZPEN") struggles against exploitation, discrimination, oppression. Therefore it supports the struggle of workers against exploitation, the struggle of the 'Panthers' against discrimination, it recognizes the right of an oppressed nation to struggle for its liberation and it defends the right of Israeli youth to refuse to serve in an oppressive military system.

If the imperialists thought that by arranging a cease fire and the physical destruction of a section of the Palestinian Revolution they would solve their problems, then they were clearly mistaken. The temporary ending of tension on Israel's borders has allowed the reemergence of the class struggle and the radicalization of youth and Oriental Jews. Prior to the cease fire, the Zionist establishment managed to achieve some unity by promoting the outside threat. They are no longer able to do so. The radicalization in Israel which hasn't reached an Anti-Zionist position so far, can only express itself eventually in an Anti-Zionist phase when the oppressed people in Israel see the common source of their oppression and unite with the Palestinian people against the common enemies: Zionism, Imperialism and Arab Reaction.

OF HOPE
You may say
"I wish I was
A retailer of bread in Algeria
To revel with the rebels
A shepherd in Yemen
To witness rebells
A waiter in a Havana bar
To toast the victory of the poor
A stone-carrier in Arian
To sing to the stones!"

Don't say that my friend
Don't say that

The Nile will not pour into the Volga
The Congo and Jordan Rivers
Will not serve the Euphrates
Each river has its own

Our land is not impotent
Each land has its own rebells
Each dawn has an appointment
With a revolutionary

- Mahmoud Darwish



14 Gay liberation demonstration in Albany, N.Y., March 14 demanded repeal of anti-gay laws and passage of fair employment and housing acts to protect gays.

ORGANISE FOR A SOCIALIST AUSTRALIA



JOIN THE SYA!

The Socialist Youth Alliance sees the present period in Australia as one of widening and deepening opposition to the capitalist system.

This is most strikingly shown by the growth of the anti-war movement. In the middle of the imperialist war in Southeast Asia a majority of the people challenge the right of the Australian government to wage that war. Huge street demonstrations unprecedented in recent Australian history have been organised around the demand for the immediate withdrawal of Australian and US forces from Southeast Asia.

More and more people recognise that Australia's involvement in the war in Southeast Asia is not in the interests of freedom and democracy abroad but in the interests of a small profit hungry minority here at home. Vietnam is not an isolated mistake, but the logical extension of capitalism, a system which places profit above human need.

We live in a system which perpetuates wars of aggression like the one in Vietnam while here at home it produces poverty, exploitation, racism, the oppression of women, the poisoning of our environment, and the distortion of all human relationships.

We are now in a period of radicalisation, of growing opposition to all the oppressive aspects of the capitalist system. Tens of thousands of people demand that the government get out of Vietnam immediately, a women's liberation movement has emerged and is putting forth the demand for the right of women to control their own bodies and rejecting the degrading and inferior status to which women are subjected by capitalism's male dominated institutions, high school students are rebelling against the repressive conditions in the schools, more and more people, especially the youth are rejecting the stultifying morality of the bourgeoisie, and the labor movement has shown its unwillingness to sacrifice for the war and the bosses profits by the increased number of strikes in the present period.

We support all movements for social change realising that they must develop in a revolutionary direction if they are to win their demands. We participate in these movements to try to build them into organised mass movements that can win their demand.

We believe that it is only through the direct action of masses of people--challenging the right of the ruling class to control their lives--demanding an end to their oppression--saying there can be a better way, a system based on human needs rather than profit--that the Australian socialist revolution will be made.

The Socialist Youth Alliance is a revolutionary socialist youth organization dedicated to the elimination of this capitalist society and the creation of a new socialist society based on human need rather than profit. We are dedicated to the construction of a socialist Australia and a socialist world. We see socialism as the only alternative to the total annihilation of humankind by the capitalist system - whether through thermonuclear holocaust or the destruction of the environment.

If you agree with us that the capitalist system promotes wars of aggression like that in Southeast Asia, that it means poverty, oppression of women, racism and the destruction of the environment, then you should also agree with us on the need for an organization to fight all aspects of capitalism for the only solution to the crisis of our epoch - socialism.

The Socialist Youth Alliance seeks to unite men and women, students and workers in the struggle against capitalism. If you want to end capitalism, if you want a socialist Australia then join us in the most urgent task facing youth in this country - building an organization which can help lead the Australian socialist revolution.

If you oppose the Vietnam war and conscription, if you want a socialist Australia, if you support the struggle for women's liberation, the struggle for socialist democracy in Eastern Europe, China and USSR and the struggle for national liberation throughout the world- join the SOCIALIST YOUTH ALLIANCE.

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