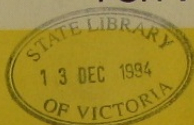


Labor MILITANT

VOLUME 3, NUMBERS 4-5,
AUGUST-SEPTEMBER 1983

FOR WORKERS' POWER AND SOCIALISM



Anti-worker budget exposes Accord

South East Asia

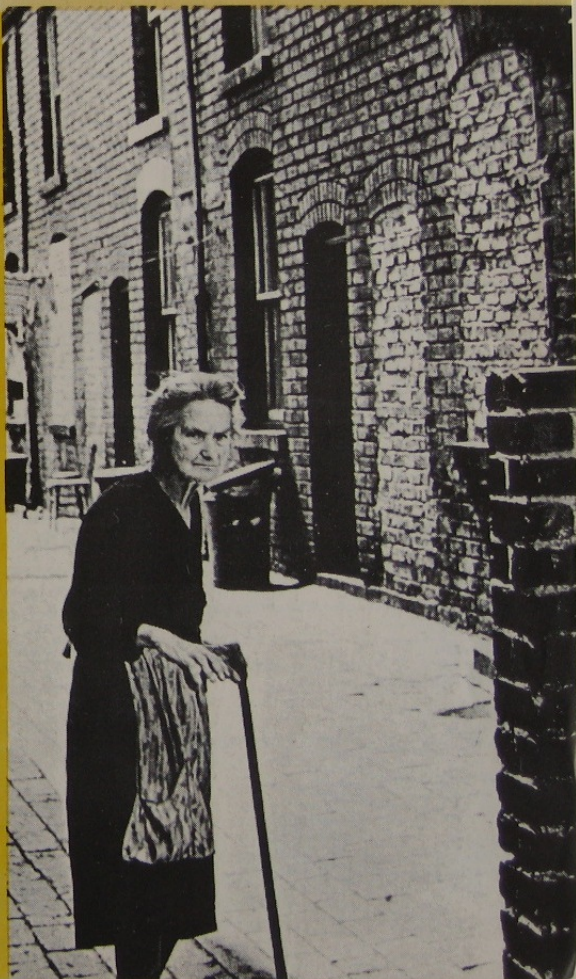
- Fretilin Interview
- Philippines
- Conference

Hope Commission

Party witchhunt or
"national security"

Franklin Dam

The Aftermath



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Labor MILITANT

Labor Militant is published by socialists in the Labor Party. We have been producing this internal publication since June 1981, and in that time have built it up as the only left internal publication with a national scope and distribution.

We published 4 issues in 1981 and 6 in 1982. We now plan to publish monthly. To accompany this step up in production *Labor Militant* has changed its format from a newspaper to a magazine. We think this change makes *Labor Militant* more attractive, more convenient, and easier to read.

Labor Militant promotes socialist policies for the Labor Party. Each issue carries news and analysis from a socialist viewpoint of events and issues of particular interest to Party members. We have devoted a lot of space to discussing the Prices and Incomes Policy over the past year. In our view the Accord signed with the ACTU last February is no different to the social contract that proved so disastrous for British workers under Labour Governments in the 1970s.

Labor Militant looks at the nature of the capitalist economic crisis and the socialist measures

needed to confront a crisis of this depth. This crisis is not caused by wage rises and wage cuts will not help resolve the crisis in the interests of the working class.

We also devote a lot of attention to the threat of war and the wars that are already going on. From Central America to the Middle East, the United States and its allies are determined to block progressive movements in order to protect their economic interests. This drive to war by Ronald Reagan increases the danger of nuclear war and Australia's participation as part of the US war machine must cease.

We also insist that progressive policies must be advanced by Labor on the liberation struggle in El Salvador, on Solidarity's fight for socialist democracy in Poland, on the Israeli aggression in the Middle East and the rights of the Palestinian people, on the Indonesian occupation of East Timor and on the need to make reparations to Vietnam.

Labor is in Government in four States and federally. Yet never before has there been a bigger gap between stated Labor policy and Government performance, let alone the gap between performance and working class in-

terests. This gap is reflected in the important debate and discussion within the Party Branches and at Conference. We seek to develop a broad coverage of this process.

We believe that the most free and open debate within the Party and affiliated unions on Party policy and practice is necessary to develop positions and actions that can represent working people from whom Labor draws its strength.

But the current structures of the Party and new undemocratic rules and practices prevent this. So we support moves to democratise these structures—in particular, to make the Parliamentarians and Party officers truly accountable to the ranks, unions and branches.

If you agree with these aims we encourage you to help finance and distribute *Labor Militant*. You can get each issue sent by mail at a cost of \$5 for 10 issues. We can also make arrangements to have a bundle of any size mailed or delivered for your branch or for you to sell. There are high costs involved in the production of a publication like *Labor Militant* so any financial contribution will help to ensure its continued regular appearance.

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Labor MILITANT

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Sir Jack Egerton peddling the road back into the Party.



Miniature bugs—part of ASIO's box of tricks.



SA Peter Duncan cuts through the witchhunt double talk.

Signed articles do not necessarily represent editorial opinion.

Printed and published by P. Brewer, PO Box 372, Broadway 2001.

The Demise of the Left

Only a little more than six months after the election of the Hawke Government, there is a profound change in the complexion of the different political line-ups within the Labor Party itself. Budget night only confirmed what has been apparent from the first days and the first reactionary statements of the Hawke Government: there are no significant and organised left-wing forces at the top levels of the Labor Party prepared to stand up and challenge the Hawke Leadership on fundamental questions of working class policy or even, in the final analysis, on the maintenance of Party Platform adopted at previous Conferences. This failure has certain consequences. It leads to the elimination of any real boundaries between the traditional left faction and the Right and Centre Unity factions within the Party.

We should understand what are the roots of this retreat, of this failure, of this complete abrogation of responsibility by those who call themselves socialists. The roots lie in the total failure of the Left wing of the Party to put forward any alternative proposals to the Hawke/Hayden line of the Prices and Incomes Accord, of the Social Contract. Without exception the higher echelons of the ALP—the officials and Federal Parliamentarians—have gone along with the whole project of tying the workers' living standards to whatever Hawke may be willing to grant, to whatever the Arbitration Commission is willing to concede. Of course this policy is not just that of the Party Leadership but is a policy of the top echelons of the trade union bureaucracy throughout the country. Even the so-called left leadership of the AMFSU played a central role in promoting the Prices and Incomes Accord within the working class by tying militant sections of the working class to the class-collaboratist policies of the Accord.

So what we see today and what we saw at the time of the February elections when, with the sole exception of Jenny Haines of the Nurses Association, we saw the 300 delegates to the Special Incomes Conference vote for Hawke's proposals (which were developed by Bill Hayden) is the most unanimous endorsement of extreme right-wing policies virtually in the history of the Labor Party.

We use the words "extreme right-wing policies" advisedly. The Hawke Budget is predicated on a further leap in unemployment. To think that a

Federal Labor Government with a massive majority, operating with Labor Governments in four out of six states, should put forward these policies in a period when the working class is crying out for solutions to the pressing economic and social needs, is beyond the gravest fears of those who said that a Hawke or a Hayden Government would make Whitlam look like a radical leftist. But this has come to pass.

Moreover, Hawke having scooped the pot on the economic policy level, found the road totally open to revise and repudiate many of the progressive foreign policy stances taken by the Party in the last period. To say that new circumstances, new information has led to a revised position, is simply to say that the new circumstances are that Hawke, Hayden and the Cabinet are now in Government. That the new information being fed to them is the information of the bureaucracies that run the country in the interests of the bosses, of the ASIO apparatus which seeks to protect the interests of private property, of all the big-business advisors that Hawke summoned to the Economic Summit. It's only this information that's new. It's only this circumstance that has changed.

And on some of these questions there has been some protest. Brian Howe has spoken out on the Party's policy on Central America against Hawke and Hayden's retreats. He was willing to speak out on East Timor but in the end accepted being muzzled by the Cabinet. Ken Fry has spoken out on many foreign policy areas where national liberation struggles are in progress or where there has been a clear retreat from the progressive foreign policy stances adopted by Labor before coming to power. Peter Duncan has spoken out against ASIO's frame-up activities and the Combe debacle. And there have been some protests registered, especially in the Victorian Branch, about the decision to resume the mining of uranium. But this is about the limit of it.

What we have not seen is any consistent development of a left-wing alternative platform, of left-wing alternative political positions which put forward a different strategy to the whole perspective of the Labor leaderships of the traditional Left and Right. There has been no consistent opposition to the way that the Hawke Government has begun to tail end the war drive of Ronald Reagan and the other imperialist powers. In fact the Left of the Party, particularly in NSW,

has led a hasty retreat on the question of US bases in this country. The Left is more than willing, along with the Right, to affirm the need for the continuing American Alliance—that is to affirm the need to defend the Australian ruling class's interests by aligning them the ruling class interests of the United States. And this in the framework of a world political situation that is increasingly critical for working class and progressive forces who are coming under the renewed threat of war—not only in one or two "hot spots" but in country after country in the Third World. This is in the framework of a massive nuclear armaments drive being pursued by Reagan.

To indicate what we mean by the demise of the Left, lets remember the role played in the past by the Cairnses of the Party who, whatever their faults, consistently stood against Australia's involvement in the Vietnam war and stood at the head of a mighty anti-war movement which changed the face of Australian politics. And Cairns was not a lone voice throughout the 60s and early 70s. He was simply the figure head of the left movement represented by Parliamentarians, trade union officials, people in the leadership bodies of the ALP at every level. The policies pursued by Cairns at that time were demonstrably of the Left. But in the end Cairns presided as Treasurer over the terrible retreats in 1974 of the Terrigal Conference which firmly pointed the Party away from the road of social reform. These led to the horror Budget of 1975, the imposition of austerity policies and the social contract of the Whitlam Government. And that is the traditional problem of the Left and the reason for its demise and collapse today. In the end progressive stands on foreign policy issues in one area of policy, while not backed by a total commitment to social change and a willingness to take those steps necessary to break with the needs of the capitalist class in this country, have led to ideological confusion, betrayal and demoralisation on the part of the Left.

After all it is Hawke who is being consistent. He is the one who is accepting that if our policy means that we must shore up capitalism here—run the economy so the bosses' profits improve even if this means higher unemployment and holding down workers' wages, then he commits the Labor Government to that process. He is the one who is consistent to say that on the foreign policy level we should do the same thing as well. What's the

Continued page 32

October 8—Protest US aggression in Central America

Submitted by the Committee in Solidarity with Central America and the Caribbean (CISCAC).

As dangerous United States' war "manoeuvres" get under way in Central America, international demonstrations against the US sponsored war in the region are being organised on or around October 10, the anniversary of the founding of the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front of El Salvador. The call for the protests has been issued by the World Front In Solidarity with the People of El Salvador.

In Australia, October 8 has been set as the date for national protests in all major centres. The protests are being organised in each city by a coalition of Latin American, peace, and solidarity organisations including CISCAC nationally and a variety of other groups in each city.

The US manoeuvres that opened in August were immediately expanded by the addition of more troops and the extension of the time for the duration of the exercises. Now at least 5600 ground troops and 19 warships carrying 16,000 military personnel and 140 combat aircraft will take part in the war games which include an amphibious landing by marines, training in war tactics for Honduran troops by 70 Green Berets, practice airstrikes by 100 US pilots, and bombardments with heavy artillery.

The manoeuvres, which are to be carried out in conjunction with Honduras, are a blatant intimidation directed against the Nicaraguan Government.

The US Administration claims that the Sandinista Government is supplying arms to the rebels of El Salvador, but in eighteen months it has not been able to produce a single shred of evidence to substantiate this claim.

The Salvadorean Government and armed forces are now tottering on the brink of collapse as the Democratic Revolutionary Front/Farabundo Liberation Front continues to increase its popular support and influence.

This, plus the continued social advances in Nicaragua, explain the dramatic escalation of the US-backed



Reagan rallying flagging public support for war drive.

war in Central America. Reagan vowed that he would "draw the line" in El Salvador against such social progress.

But Reagan's policy is failing to get support both at home and abroad. In early August, a *Washington Post/ABC television survey* in the United States showed only 21 per cent in support of Reagan. Sixty-two per cent said they disapproved of US efforts to overthrow the Nicaraguan Government.

Reagan faces opposition from the Contadora countries—Panama, Colombia, Venezuela, and Mexico—which support a negotiated solution and the withdrawal of all foreign forces from the region. Bolivia has also expressed its solidarity with Nicaragua against US aggression, and even in ruling circles in Guatemala, voices of concern have been raised against US policy.

Presiding over a situation of poverty and oppression, the Governments of these Central and Southern American countries are fearful that further US intervention will spark revolt among their own peoples. This has already occurred in Honduras, for example, where the revolutionary forces recently came together in a unified front against the Government and to resist the US-backed Honduran intervention in Nicaragua. In the Honduran capital, Tegucigalpa, almost every accessible wall is painted with pro-Sandinista graffiti, and thousands of workers marched through the city on May Day demanding "No war with Nicaragua."

The Cuban Government threw the Reagan administration off guard at the end of July with an offer to withdraw all 200 Cuban military advisors from Nicaragua if Reagan would withdraw US advisors from El Salvador and end support for counter-revolutionaries fighting to overthrow

the Nicaraguan Government.

Trying to regain their balance, US officials feigned a peace initiative of their own, sending diplomat Richard Stone to Central America to make contact with the Sandinistas and Salvadorean rebels. Stone made the unacceptable offer of intervention by the pro-US Organisation of Latin American States as a peace-keeping force between Nicaragua and Honduras, and tried to get the Salvadorean rebels into fake elections scheduled for December.

But the Salvadorean Junta has already indicated that there is no chance that elections—fake or otherwise—will be held before 1984.

Responding to these developments during a visit to Cuba, French Foreign Minister Claude Cheysson repeated his Government's position that a solution to the situation could be reached only through a process of negotiation, not war, and reaffirmed French support for the Contadora proposals.

Support for the October 8 demonstrations is growing. In New South Wales, an increasing number of Party branches and YLAs are indicating that they will participate in the protests. Following the successful Hiroshima Day march, many activists see October 8 as the next major date for the continuation of antiwar protests. This can be seen in Victoria too where, for example, the Bendigo People for Nuclear Disarmament Group has indicated that it will organise a protest on the day, and support has come in from as far away as Warramboul on the southern coast.

The themes for the October 8 demonstrations are US hands off Central America, Stop the war on Nicaragua, and US out of El Salvador. For further information about the October 8 preparations and activities, contact CISCAC. (See page 35).

Party members speak out on Central America

Concern about United States' war preparations in Central America continues to grow among Parliamentary members of the Party despite the refusal of the Federal Caucus and Government to take a firm stand in favour of peace in the region.

By Bruce Threlfo
Member of Annandale (NSW) branch and the Municipal Employees Union

In June the Victorian State Conference carried a resolution calling "on the Federal Government to dissociate itself from the Reagan Administration's policies in Central America . . ." The resolution also expressed support for the Nicaraguan Sandinista Government and for the Democratic Revolutionary Front of El Salvador.

Also from the Victorian Conference, eighteen prominent Party members sent a letter to Bob Hawke demanding that federal Party Policy for a negotiated solution in Central America be implemented. Among the signatories was Minister for Defence Support, Brian Howe.

Howe also spoke to a July 23 dinner in Melbourne organised by the Australia-Cuba Friendship Society to celebrate the anniversary of the Cuban revolution. In his speech, Howe called on the Government to pressure the US to stop interfering in Nicaragua's affairs.

In contrast to the comments made in Washington by Bob Hawke which put the Australian Government totally behind US policy in Central America, Howe's comments were an expression of ALP Federal Conference Policy. This, however, did not prevent a campaign against Howe designed to silence him.

Liberal Deputy-Leader John Howard began the campaign by claiming that Labor's foreign policy was "amateurish enough without being jeopardised by damaging remarks from Left-wing Ministers."

This was picked up by the Murdoch press on July 26 when *The Australian* quoted the letter to Hawke by the eighteen in Victoria from the July issue of *Labor Militant*. The statement had been circulated at the Victorian Conference by the Committee in



US advisors in El Salvador—part of the US military build up.

Solidarity with Central America and the Caribbean.

In response to these developments Hawke moved to put Howe under Cabinet discipline not to make further public comments on foreign policy matters.

Howe was also slated to speak at a public meeting for East Timorese representatives visiting Australia. Following the Cabinet move, he decided not to appear at the meeting, but to take up the fight for the implementation of policy on Central America and Timor within Party structures.

But this has not ended the public support by prominent Party members for a peaceful solution in Central America and for an end to US involvement in the region.

A further statement was released in Victoria on July 23 in response to joint US-Honduran manoeuvres announced by US President Reagan. The statement was signed by Victorian State President George Crawford, Theo Sidiropoulos MLA, Peter Milton MHR, and CISCAC. It labelled the manoeuvres directed against Nicaragua as a "blatant interference in the affairs of an independent country," and likened the current

situation there to the early days of the US intervention in Vietnam.

State MPs in New South Wales have also responded to the worsening situation in Central America by issuing a statement in August designed to capitalise on Bill Hayden's comments in Washington on the Central American situation. Signed by Maurie Keane, Anne Symonds, Ernie Page, George Petersen and Pat Rogan, the statement supports the six-point peace proposal issued by the Nicaraguan Government and the initiatives of the so-called Contadora group for a peaceful solution and the withdrawal of all foreign forces from the region.

Maurie Keane was also among a panel of speakers at a CISCAC public meeting in Sydney on August 21 to defend the people of Nicaragua. He spoke out strongly against US intervention in the region.

There is a similar groundswell of opinion among Labor members in other states who are not willing to see Labor policy trampled underfoot by the Federal Government while the people of Central America continue to face of the barbarities of another Vietnam-type war at the hands of the United States.

women

Prelude to ACTU Congress

In 1977 the Australian Council of Trade Unions adopted an historic document known as "The Charter for Working Women". This Charter was a milestone for working women because it was, on the one hand, a formal recognition of the specific problems which confront women as workers, and, on the other hand, it outlined a series of objectives aimed at facilitating women's increased participation in the paid workforce and ensuring that their rights be defended and maintained.

By Coral Channells
Member of Preston (Vic) branch and the Amalgamated Metal Foundry and Shipwrights' Union

After seven years of Fraser's austerity and with the onset and deepening of the recession, it is clear that many of the demands of the "Working Women's Charter" have never been realised. The objectives of the Charter which include the provision of low-cost, union-supervised child-care centres on the job, encouragement for women to enter "non-traditional" occupations and an end to discriminatory lay-offs based on sex or marital status, have never been seriously implemented.

As the recession bites more deeply the gains women have made in combatting discrimination are increasingly under attack. The Information Paper prepared by the Office of the Status of Women for the Economic Summit in Canberra earlier this year reveals some startling statistics.

As a result of discrimination against women in the education system, in training and employment, and because women bear the major burden of household duties, women are still concentrated in a narrow range of occupations. It is this narrow range which is being disproportionately hit by the recession. Unskilled jobs in the manufacturing sector have been slashed by the employers. In the clerical and service industries, the job range occupied by women is threatened by the introduction of new technology. A recent example of this is the threat to thousands of telephonists' jobs by Telecom.

The Information Paper also shows that most of the increase in women's employment over the past decade has been in the area of part-time work. At November 1982, 77.4 per cent of part-time workers were women. For most of

these women part-time wages mean living conditions well below the community norm.

Of the 25 per cent who work full-time, these women receive on average only 76 cents for every dollar earned by male workers.

Obviously the wage freeze which has been in place for the past ten months since December 1982 coupled with high inflation has had an even more adverse effect on women's living standards.

In 1981, 60 per cent of pensioners and beneficiaries were women yet there has been little increase in these benefits over the past seven years. Married women are denied independent status when claiming unemployment benefits. The unemployment rate for women in general is high and for young women aged 15-19 years is a staggering 25.9 per cent and increasing.

In the light of such statistics, the necessity for women to get together to assess the implementation of the Charter, the problems associated with part-time work, unemployment and an assessment of the ACTU/ALP Accord on women's living standards becomes more urgent.

Following the success of the July 2 "Women on the Tip" meeting in Sydney which saw some 200 women address issues such as wages and working conditions, union priorities and the social wage, a group of women unionists in Melbourne are planning a similar venture.

With the upcoming ACTU Congress beginning in Melbourne on September 12 as a focus, "Women and the Labour Movement—a one day meeting on Women and the Economy" has been organised for Saturday September 10 at the University High School, Parkville, Melbourne. The organisers believe it will be one of the largest gatherings of women from all sectors of the labour movement seen for some time.

The meeting is organised around two feature panels.

The first panel will deal with "Women and the Economy" and papers will be given by Jenny George from the NSW Teachers' Federation and Anna Pha, Victorian Trades Hall Council delegate.

The second panel will deal with the ACTU/ALP Accord and will feature three speakers: Judith Bornstein, Vic-



Women workers under attack.

torian Vice-President of the Trades Hall Council, Barbara Preston from the Australian Social Workers Union, and Meaghan Delahunt, a member of the Vehicle Builder's Union and the Women's Convener of the Coalition Against Poverty and Unemployment.

A series of six workshops will take up points raised in the feature sessions with a brief introduction by the convener. These are:

● The Working Women's Charter (Lyn Beaton, Working Women's Centre)

● Wages and Working Conditions (Gail Cotton, Organiser, Food Preservers' Union)

● Women and the ALP (Margaret Burden, Vice President, Australian Young Labor)

● Women, Technology and Unemployment (Alison McClelland, Brotherhood of St Laurence)

● The Accord (The three feature speakers)

● Affirmative Action/Union Priorities (Anne Sherry, ACOA, and women from the "Jobs for Women" Campaign in Wollongong)

The feature speakers and workshop convenors cover a broad spectrum of women in trade unions and in the ALP—both in official positions and from the rank-and-file.

This promises to be a very important event. For further information ring Melbourne 663 5804 (9 am - 12 noon only). To cover costs there is an entry fee of \$5.00 for paid workers and \$2.00 for unpaid workers. There will be childcare available as well as lunch facilities. Access for the disabled. Send cheques to:

"Women and the Labor Movement" c/o 17 Drummond St, Carlton Victoria. 3053.

n.s.w.

Wran's record education cuts

The future of democratic education in this country is under threat. This threat springs from the redirection of funds from public to private education.

By Val Edwards

Member of North Auburn (NSW) branch and the Australasian Society of Engineers

The years 1982 and 1983 have seen the reversal of a long-term trend of improvements to the systems of public education in most states of Australia. Nowhere is the regressive trend more obvious than in New South Wales.

The 1982-83 State Budget increased the level of subsidies to private schools by 19 per cent, \$9 million of which went to the wealthiest Category 1 private schools. State schools were left out in the cold with an increase in expenditure of only 6 per cent—a drop in real spending since it was substantially less than the rate of inflation.

Strict staffing guidelines have been set down which maintain pupil staff ratios at previous levels despite earlier promises that these ratios would be gradually reduced.

State schools are straitjacketed in their attempts to cater to the individual needs of students with specific learning difficulties, migrant students and handicapped children who have all been effectively ignored by the State Budget.

With capital expenditure cuts, schools have become increasingly run down physically and the waiting time for urgently needed repairs extended.

Funds for the employment of casual relief staff to cover teachers on leave for such things as curriculum development, were cut by \$18 million.

Teachers in NSW primary infant schools have no relief from face-to-face teaching in which to meet the needs of students from different backgrounds and an ever-changing curriculum. The NSW Wran Government promised in 1978 that improvements, including relief from face-to-face teaching, would be phased in for primary schools. The money for such improvements was to come from money saved due to falling enrolments.

This is no longer the case. 700 primary infants teaching positions were lost this year alone with a further 900 to go in 1984. Ninety per cent of libraries in primary schools are no longer open five days a week and primary librarians are forced to spend parts of their work week at different schools.



Dover Heights—a united anti-cuts fight by parents, teachers and students.

The State Labor Government of Victoria and South Australia on the other hand, faced with the same decreasing enrolments have agreed to maintain previous staffing levels in order to improve conditions for primary staff and students.

So severe have been the attacks on State education in NSW, that an unprecedented alliance has sprung up between teachers and parents of the students attending state schools, to oppose the Government's cost-cutting measures.

The two major issues which have aroused the wrath of parents and teachers are the closure of state schools to make more facilities available to wealthy private schools, and the downgrading of facilities at primary infant schools with the concurrent loss of hundreds of jobs.

In May of this year the Wran Government was finalizing a deal to hand over Dover Heights Boys High, situated on the finest of state school

sites, to Moriah War Memorial College (a Category one private school) for a give-away rental.

Boys from the school were to be transferred into over-crowded conditions at the nearby girls' high school.

Parents and teachers strenuously resisted these moves. Teachers set up a 24 hour picket to prevent temporary classrooms being moved into the second site and parents began a series of meetings with the Government and a media campaign to stop the hand-over.

Students at Dover Heights have won a reprieve as a result and can now occupy their school until the end of 1983 when the battle will be on once more.

When primary infant teachers decided on August 6 to protest declining conditions in their schools by calling a strike before the 1983/84 State Budget, the New South Wales Federation of Parents and Citizens Associations voted to support them by

keeping children home from school on the days of the strike.

These actions are merely to defend the status-quo in state schools. The immediate aim is simply to arrest the continuing diversion of public money from public schools.

The Wran Government on the other hand is actively cooperating with the business sector to bring about the privatization of schooling. Their aim is to shift the burden of education expenditure from public to private resources, that is, onto the individual family, while at the same time boosting private schools with Government subsidies.

This shift is being carried out under the banner of "freedom of choice"—a freedom available only to those with enough money to exercise it.

State education, in contrast offers the only real possibility of equality of opportunity to all students.

In the words of a NSW Teachers Federation Conference resolution: "only public education accepts all as equal human beings. . . . No one is excluded on the grounds of social status, race, sex, religion, economic circumstances, ethnicity, handicap or isolation."

The same resolution contrasted the public accountability of state schools to the sectional interests of private schools:

"Only public education is responsible to the society as a whole because it is owned by society as a whole," whereas:

"Non-government education is necessarily sectional in nature and caters for sectional interests."

The resolution went on to warn of the consequences of continuing state aid "Any strengthening of private schools helps to strengthen their traditional role, which is to divide society on social, economic and/or religious grounds."

One of the major points on the Educational Platform of the Federal Labor Party was the promise to cut the flow of Commonwealth funds to the very wealthy private schools which "operate above the community standard". Although this falls short of ending subsidies to all sectarian institutions, it at least begins to redress the trend set by the Fraser Government to massively transfer funding to private schools. (While Commonwealth aid to state schools from 1976 to 1983 fell by 11 per cent in real terms, funds to private schools rose by 77 per cent in the same period.)

The ALP also promised to inject \$222 million into state schools over three years. It appears however, that the \$9 million deficit and the early election may be used as excuses for the Hawke team to renege on yet another progressive commitment.

antiwar

US nuclear warships—out!

What does the coast of Nicaragua have in common with the coast of Australia? Unwelcome visits by US warships that's what? And, what's more, they are the same ships!

By Barry Healy
Member of Wanneroo (WA) branch and the Amalgamated Metal Foundry and Shipwrights' Union

The giant aircraft carrier Ranger graced the port of Fremantle with its awesome presence in September 1982. Its latest assignment is to lie off the coast of Nicaragua to intimidate that country.

The USS New Jersey, a battleship said to be capable of firing 32 cruise missiles at once has joined Reagan's intimidation flotilla. According to Perth's Campaign Against Nuclear Energy, the New Jersey was on its way to Perth but got redirected to its Central American battle station.

The menace of nuclear war has made these ships totally unwelcome to the WA ALP.

10,000 people marched in Fremantle on July 2 against the visit of the US flotilla led by the Carl Vinson. The rally was organised by People for Nuclear Disarmament and was strongly supported by the Labor-dominated Fremantle Council. Thousands of Party members participated. The two main speakers were Bill Latter, an ALP Fremantle Councillor, and Senator Ruth Coleman.

In the weeks following the rally the WA Branch State Executive unanimously passed a strongly worded motion to the National Executive and the Prime Minister against further visits. (see box)

The latest developments in Central America raise another aspect of the ships' visits beside the issue of nuclear war. By welcoming the ships we are also tied into the US conven-

tional war machine.

The Government Party in Nicaragua is part of the Socialist International. So Reagan is trying to overthrow a sister party of the ALP. Meanwhile the Federal Government is facilitating the operations of the very ships that threaten Nicaragua. In such circumstances the word "hypocrisy" takes on a new and sinister meaning.

WA State Executive resolution

"that the Federal Executive be asked to approach the Federal Government to secure a conclusion to the regular visits of nuclear powered and armed vessels to WA ports. The Federal Executive be asked to note that particular NATO powers (eg. Norway) do not permit such visits. The Executive also be asked to note the growing concern in the WA community of the visits. The State Executive notes with approval the Foreign Minister's progressing of a Conference on an Indian Ocean Zone of Peace and proposals for a South West Pacific Nuclear Free Zone. It expresses the view that the visits make more difficult the achievement of these policies. Such policies are essential to reducing tensions in the region. The Federal Executive be further asked to request the Defence Minister to rescind the rules on nuclear powered vessel port visits approved in Parliament last year and substitute the more comprehensive practices entailed in the previous rules governing movement."



Mental-health care unprofitable

Moves are underway in Victoria for large scale shifting of the mentally disabled from mental institutions into the community. Disaster can only follow unless this shift is preceded by the creation of a well-coordinated community based system with guaranteed long-term Government funding to maintain it.

By Les Taylor
Member of Nth Fitzroy (Vic)
branch and the Federated
Hospital Employers No 1.

A one day seminar on the issue was held on August 13, organised by the Victorian Federation for the Intellectually Disabled and attended by over 300 people.

The question being debated was whether the present institutions housing the intellectually disadvantaged should be scaled down and in many cases closed.

The Victorian Federation want to establish community based homes where small groups of intellectually disadvantaged persons could live and integrate into the community.

On the surface this would appear to be a progressive step where these people could be helped to lead a more normal and useful life. One can understand the frustration of parents where their handicapped children are cared for in institutions without any educational program, and are drugged to keep them passive.

However, the crux of the problem is this. There are 20,000 intellectually handicapped in Victoria and a possible 10,000 more who don't appear in the official statistics.

So far there are 34 community residential homes functioning which house 198 mentally disabled people with another 16 homes in the pipeline which, on the above figures, can cater for another 100.

What happens to the other 19,700 intellectually handicapped? They would be pushed back onto their families who just can't cope.

With the Western World undergoing an economic depression with little prospect of a sustained recovery, any guarantee of adequate funding for welfare reform can only be illusory. In fact the reverse trend of massive cutbacks to welfare spending is the norm.

Many welfare workers have visited the USA and been impressed by the progress mentally retarded people, 10 previously thought to be hopeless

cases, have made with proper care and training.

This is not at issue in the debate. The point made from the US experience is that this is only for the lucky few who can pay. The many thousands who had no where else to go when the large mental institutions were closed down virtually overnight in America, have ended up in poverty—sleeping in the streets, parks and bus shelters, covering themselves with old newspapers for warmth.

In NSW the Health Commission released the Richmond Report, which proposed the total treatment of the mentally disabled persons to take place in the community. Here in Victoria, we are hampered in coming to grips with the issues by the lack of any such report, although there is a lot of discussion within the ALP Health and Welfare Policy Committee.

The question of community based homes is being hotly debated without any concrete plans in relation to the financing, staffing and final accountability of the functioning of the homes.

It has been suggested that since the Government would provide only 50-80 per cent of the finance for staff, the rest would be made up by voluntary labor. This inevitably leads to poor working

Committee Against Exploitation of the Mentally Disabled Statement of Aims

1. To ensure increased funds be made available to existing institutions.
2. To monitor the de-institutionalisation/community based care to ensure that no mentally disabled person/persons are exploited socially, financially or in any other way.
3. Where evidence of exploitation is obtained, that the circumstances surrounding such exploitation be widely publicised.
4. To ensure that mentally disabled persons where appropriate be looked after by suitably qualified/trained staff, preferably employed by the Health Commission of Victoria.
5. To seek wide support in the community to ensure that the C.A.E.M.D. is effective as a body.

conditions, low wages and non union untrained labour. It also paves the way for private hospitals, when the system inevitably breaks down.

The Hospital Employees Federation No 215 opposed to the plans. They state it would also mean in the long run, the elimination of the union as trained staff would be replaced by voluntary labour.

The benefits to the Government of this scheme goes ahead are enormous. The huge cost of running the large mental hospitals would be eliminated at a stroke.

There is an additional incentive. These institutions in Melbourne are located on land that is worth millions of dollars in prime real estate. For example Larand overlooks the city and Mont Park is on beautiful park land in the very centre of the city.

Faced with a budget blow out the Cain Government can do the necessary sums.

A group of concerned individuals including workers in this field have come together to fight against a possible Victorian version of the Richmond Report and have formed the "Committee against Exploitation of the Mentally Disabled". They fear that "the ideals of psychiatric professionals plus cost-effective arrangements by Government for the implementation of de-institutionalisation will see large numbers of patients (some not properly assessed) discharged into community care by inflexible datelines".

In addition the Committee points out that there has been a slow deterioration of the present hospitals. Staff ratios are abysmally low, one nurse for 25 mentally retarded in some cases. The buildings have not been properly maintained.

Both the union and the Committee are demanding that the Cain Government increase its funding to the existing facilities to greatly improve the services as a first step to a commitment to decent health care for the mentally retarded.

But unless a vigorous campaign is begun to alert the public of the consequences, the cutbacks in health spending to one of the most vulnerable sections of the community will take place disguised as a progressive step forward.

All who are interested in the future of the mentally retarded are invited to contact the Convenor of the Committee: Ray Berling, 6 Ladd Street, Watsonia, 3087.

Industrial relations Burke-style

During July West Australian workers learnt how much support they can expect from the Burke Labor Government when they go out on strike.

None.
That is the lesson from the Perth City Council lock-out/strike. For near-

By Barry Healy
Member of Wanneroo (WA) branch
and the Amalgamated Metal Foundry
and Shipwrights' Union

ly six weeks the Council's outside workers battled hard over the issue of how to implement the 38 hour week.

At its peak the dispute drew in council workers state-wide who either struck or took other solidarity action.

There were dramatic scenes as police heavily-handedly moved pickets aside to let scabs drive garbage trucks for their rounds. The workers clamored for the Labor Government to restrain the police. But the Government stood by the police in their actions. It then made one of the most unique interventions ever seen in the Australian industrial

arena.

The Liberal-dominated City Council was claiming that it could not reinstate the workers it had sacked for striking. It had "responsibilities" for its newly hired scabs.

So Brian Burke offered Government money to the Council to keep on the scabs for a year as well as take back the strikers. "Natural wastage" would get the workforce back to normal after a year.

A Labor Government offered to pay scabs!

Moreover the offer was made to the City Council behind the back of the Trades and Labor Council. While the TLC continued negotiating the Government set a deadline for the expiry of its offer for noon on Friday July 8.

The Council and TLC hammered out an agreement on the Government's terms just seven minutes past the deadline. But the Government insisted that the deadline stood and refused to support a settlement that it had initiated.

TLC Secretary Ron Reid described

all this as "bizarre".

Days later the strikers were conned back to work by a particularly snakey piece of work by Industrial Commissioner Coleman. They failed to reach their strike objectives.

The word around Trade Union circles is that the Government performed its bizarre twists due to embarrassment. Minister for Industrial Relations Des Dans and his special adviser Tom Butler are said to have pointed out the dangers of a precedent of paying scabs' wages. The Government's actions can be said to have been merely stupid. But the issue cannot rest there. The Government should have used its power to sack the City Council as soon as it sacked the strikers. It should have reinstated the workers on the 38 hour week while investigating the widely-runoured corruption of the Perth City Council.

How can future strikers place faith in a Government which sought to appear "neutral" while undercutting the fundamentals of workers' solidarity with its support to scabs?



Angry council workers betrayed by Burke's support for scabs.

Cain cuts public transport

NSW railworkers have been under attack since last December by the State Rail Authority's drive to slash jobs. But in recent weeks it has become clear that the Cain Government intends to try to match the ferocity of Neville Wran in attacking public transport.

By Gary Walters
Member of Brunswick (Vic) branch and the Australian Railways Union

The first move was on July 14 when Transport Minister Steve Crabb told rail unions of his "cost-cutting" program for VicRail. The rail union leaders have so far agreed to Crabb's demand that exact details be kept secret at this stage, but railworkers know Crabb aims to "save" up to \$150 million per annum, threatening almost 5,000 jobs.

There are similar plans for other transport areas, with the large Melbourne tramway system targeted on the same scale as the railways.

Rationalisation efforts have intensified in recent years in rail networks nationwide. The intention of such rationalisation is not to provide a better service to the public but to cut back on Government expenditure and increasingly turn over, either directly or indirectly, more profitable sections to private enterprises. The cheap bulk freight rates given to companies like TNT is but one example of the public sector being used to subsidise the profits of private companies.

The whole notion of efficient profitability has been put forward as the criteria for running public services. Hence we are told and assume that passenger operations must "pay their own way" like private business supposedly does.

Rail freight workers are ordered to increase productivity, so as to compete on the "open market". Crabb constantly spouts such bosses' jargon when trying to justify cuts.

He is currently having the Ministry of Transport draw up a *Transport Development strategy* document for release this December.

The July *Discussion Paper* draft is full of strong hints that an anti-public transport strategy is being drawn up, in defiance of Victorian ALP Policy for major improvement and extension of public transport and for use of this socially useful area to generate jobs.

Besides betraying the Policy which was a central issue to the successful Cain election platform, Crabb's *Discussion Paper* ignores its own data about the serious problems caused by road domination of Victorian transport.

So far Crabb has avoided the confrontationism used by Wran, and tried a "carrot and stick" approach. Crabb hopes his insistence on secrecy and the resultant circulation of wild rumors will help panic workers and encourage their acceptance of "moderated" cuts. Thus Crabb later told the rail unions that the plans revealed on July 14 "are only suggestions for discussion".

A joint meeting of the three main rail

unions on July 21—with the ARU, drivers (AFULE), and metalworkers (AMFSU)—told Crabb that staff and services should not be cut at all.

According to ARU State Secretary Jim Frazer, the unions are eager to negotiate on the question of how to cut costs. But the unions want guidelines to include analysis of the total social costs and benefits of any changes, with union access to detailed data on all revenue and spending projections for every transport area.

The most immediate threat to job maintenance is a "sugar coating" early retirement deal Crabb offered as a trade-off for the cuts. If all the eligible workers in rail, tram and other transport areas accepted, more than ten per cent of the existing jobs may be at stake. But the unions are not satisfied that the deal, which applies to all workers over 50 years old, offers any real advantage. The rail and tram unions on August 4 presented a united front in a meeting with Crabb, Premier Cain and Treasurer Jolly. The unions insist that the early retirement scheme be kept separate from cost-cutting issues.

The next major development may come in the State Budget due late August, when economic austerity policies are highly likely to be expressed in drastic cuts to all public sector areas. But whenever these cutbacks occur, the NSW experience shows very clearly the need for a united and coordinated fight to preserve jobs, safety and decent public services.

Party witchhunt or "national security"

Only ten weeks after it was elected to office the Hawke Government has become embroiled in a major political scandal—the Combe-Ivanov affair.

When the Government expelled Valery Ivanov and blackballed David Combe it obviously hoped to prove its

By Debra Stewart
Member of Annandale (NSW) branch and the Australian Railways Union

ability to handle "national security" questions in a firm and "responsible" way.

The subsequent unravelling of the whole affair has revealed that it has nothing to do with "national security" and a lot to do with ASIO's manoeuvring to further legitimise its anti-democratic spying activities.

The Labor Government has become a willing accomplice to this exercise. According to Hawke, Ivanov was trying to "cultivate" Combe, supposedly for the purpose of making him a KGB agent.

Hawke's case rests on "evidence" supplied to the Cabinet's National and International Security Committee. Most of this "evidence" is based on a secretly taped conversation on March 4 between Combe and Ivanov.

The transcript of the conversation, released on July 6 by the Hope Royal Commission, revealed nothing to do with "national security."

At the meeting, which took place at Combe's home, the two discussed the possibility of Combe acting as a special trade lobbyist for the Soviet Union after the election of the Labor Government.

Combe also boasted to Ivanov that his past work as ALP National Secretary put him in a good position to demand future payment in the form of a lucrative and comfortable job. He joked about being appointed Ambassador to Moscow.

On the basis of this conversation ASIO concocted what can only be described as a 1950s McCarthy-style fantasy.

In ASIO's twisted view what the conversation revealed was an attempt by Ivanov to use Combe to channel Soviet funds into the Labor Party, with



Combe and Hawke—with a friend like that who needs enemies.

the ultimate aim of influencing—or blackmailing—the ALP.

ASIO presented this fantastic story to the Cabinet's NIS committee, which then decided on April 21 to expel Ivanov as a "KGB agent" and blackball Combe as a "security risk."

In the July 17 Sydney *Sunday Telegraph* columnist Laurie Oakes revealed the character of the "evidence" presented to the NISC by ASIO: "I have been told, for example, that the original ASIO report to the Government—after mentioning Mr Combe's ambassadorial ambitions—quoted the Russian ie Ivanov as saying something like: 'Being Ambassador to Moscow, David you'll get your hands on files.'"

"That sounds very sinister doesn't it?"

"The transcripts made public by Mr Justice Hope's Royal Commission show that Ivanov actually said 'Being Ambassador to Moscow, David, you'll keep your hand on the pulse.'"

There is little doubt that ASIO has doctored transcripts and invented things to make its "case" against Combe and Ivanov seem plausible.

For example, ASIO made up a story about Combe taking a cruise on the liner *Leonid Sobinov* on the Soviet Government's expense. This Government's expense was presumably showed favors from the KGB. Unfortunately for ASIO, the fact of the matter was that Combe paid for the cruise himself.

ASIO's case rests largely on its claim that Ivanov was a KGB agent. But its evidence for this is just as flimsy and laughable as its "evidence" against Combe.

According to testimony given to the Hope Commission by ASIO Director-General Harvey Barnett, ASIO based its judgement of Ivanov on such amazing "intelligence" work as observing that Ivanov ate at a restaurant while "facing the door." This, in ASIO's "expert" opinion, is standard procedure for KGB agents. Therefore, Ivanov was a KGB agent!

Reacting to the widespread amazement that the Government/ASIO case against Combe rests on such flimsy and fantastic material, Hawke claimed on July 7 that the tapes "were only part of the total context" in which the Government acted.

This "total context" included an international witch-hunt orchestrated by the US Government against Soviet diplomats who it asserted were "spies." The expulsion of Ivanov coincided with a wave of expulsions of Soviet diplomatic personnel from the US, Britain, and France.

Ivanov's expulsion was an early indicator of Hawke's desire to fall in line with the aggressive anti-Soviet foreign policy of US President Ronald Reagan. It heralded Hawke's scrapping of so much Party policy on foreign affairs—East Timor, Vietnam aid, Central military aid to Indonesia, Central America, etc—in favor of pro-US

imperialist policy.

Ivanov's expulsion also took place just after the *National Times* ran a series of articles exposing some of ASIO's illegal activities. Among the revelations were the following:

- In the late 1960s, ASIO snoops broke into the home of Liberal MP Billy MacMahon. Their aim was to uncover material that could be used to discredit his bid to become Prime Minister.

- ASIO had supplied material on Labor MPs to the right-wing National Civic Council and the right-wing MPs.

- ASIO passed similar information on to the CIA.

It is very likely that ASIO had got wind of this impending expose. If ASIO could "uncover" a Soviet "spy" seeking to "cultivate" a well-known public figure such a scandal would be useful in justifying its spying on Labor, and even Liberal, politicians.

The relationship between former ALP National Secretary David Combe and Soviet diplomat Valery Ivanov was tailor made for such a counterplay by ASIO's chiefs.

In executing this manoeuvre ASIO correctly counted on Hawke's desire to be seen as willing to get "tough" with the Soviets.

In his testimony to the Royal Commission Hawke admitted that he had decided on the dramatic expulsion of Ivanov because this would help ASIO's reputation. The dramatic expulsion, he said, had the advantage that "it would be suitable for ASIO because ASIO would have been seen to have achieved a fairly significant result in respect of Mr Ivanov."

There has been some press speculation that the Combe-Ivanov frame-up was originally set in motion by ASIO with the intention of discrediting the ALP prior to the Federal election. Recent statements by South Australian Labor MP Peter Duncan add weight to this idea.

In a speech to the SA Parliament on August 18 Duncan said he had been informed that Melbourne "businessman" Laurie Matheson who as head of the Australian/Soviet trading company, Commercial Bureau, had approached ASIO about Combe before Christmas.

"I wonder whether he (ie Matheson) was assigned to set up Combe when he first consulted Combe shortly before



Combe's departure for the Soviet Union in November," Duncan said.

"It is Matheson who consistently reported on Combe to ASIO.

"Matheson was one of those whom Combe informed about what Ivanov told him on April 3 concerning the bugging of his phones, and suggested that they not make telephonic contact with each other but visit each other's homes if contact was desired.

"It was Matheson's distorted version of this... which led ASIO to advance the clandestine nonsense against Combe which the Prime Minister and some other Federal Government Ministers swallowed.

"It was Matheson who gave Combe documents for the specific purpose of passing them on to Ivanov and yet when Combe did what he was asked by his client to do, he was accused of having taken a further step towards entrapment."

Certainly Matheson's background and his role in the Combe-Ivanov affair are extremely suspicious. Matheson is a former naval officer who speaks fluent Russian, and went straight from the Navy into Soviet-Australian trade. He spends much of his time travelling between Moscow and Australia.

Duncan openly accused Matheson of being "a nark and an informer for the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation."

"The performance of scum like

Laurie Matheson in pimping and informing on Australian citizens in a way which leads to them being convicted and sentenced without charge or trial is justification alone for the complete abolition of this incompetent organisation ASIO", he said.

That ASIO could have plotted to frame-up Combe with the intention of smearing the ALP prior to the Federal Election is not beyond the realms of possibility.

While ASIO was set up by the Chifley Labor Government in 1949 it has always been a notorious opponent of the Labor Party, and the labour movement in general. ASIO staged just such a spy scandal—the Petrov affair—to embarrass the ALP on the eve of the 1954 Federal election.

In the following years further evidence of ASIO's anti-labour operations became public. In 1974, for example, Labor Prime Minister Gough Whitlam released a list of 67 titles and dates of ASIO internal reports. Only two of these pretended to investigate the activities of right-wing organisations. Groups which *did* merit ASIO spying and disruption included campaigners against the Vietnam war, militant teachers, radical Christians, and Black activists.

When the Whitlam Government came to office in December 1972 ASIO refused to turn over its files to Attorney-General Lionel Murphy. It justified this by claiming he was a "security risk." To obtain the files

Murphy was forced to use Commonwealth Police to carry out a sensational raid of ASIO's headquarters in March 1973.

This incident demonstrated, as did the 1975 Kerr Coup, how the so-called Parliamentary control of key state institutions like ASIO is just a veneer. These institutions—the military hierarchy, the police, the secret police agencies, the top echelons of the public service, the judiciary, the Governor-General, and the State Governors—put themselves above control by the Government of the day. Their role is that of permanent, uncontrolled defenders of the capitalist status quo.

In his testimony to the Hope Commission ASIO Director-General Harvey Barnett admitted that he had refused to give Attorney-General Evans any of the original material relating to the Combe-Ivanov case because he thought it was inappropriate "that Ministers should have direct access to ASIO files." Unlike Murphy, however, Evans has accepted this position.

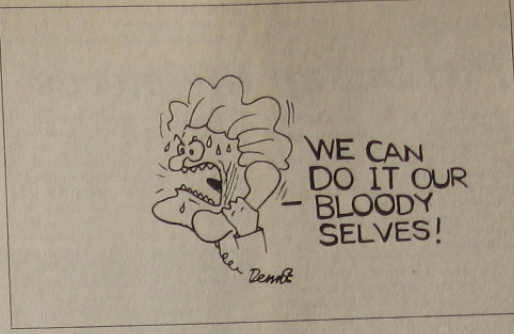
The source of Barnett's justification for ASIO's privilege is none other than the first Hope Royal Commission on Security. This was set up in 1977 by the Fraser Government.

In the report on ASIO issued in October 1977, Justice Hope stated that ASIO had operated "outside its statute, the law, and established standards of propriety." Nevertheless Hope's conclusion was to recommend that these activities be legalised.

In March 1979 the Liberals complied by passing legislation making it a crime to reveal the identity of ASIO employees or to obstruct them in carrying out their activities. Now Attorney-General Evans is even considering using these anti-democratic laws to prosecute Duncan for his statements in the SA Parliament.

Given his past performance, the appointment by the Labor Government of Hope to head up the Royal Commission bodes ill for its outcome. As SA Labor MHR John Scott has pointed out, while the Hope Commission's terms of reference include the activities of ASIO, there is a "great danger it will get off."

"There are so many names," he said, referring to the transcripts made public, "it's creating a smokescreen for the real villain, ASIO, to get away."



That certainly seems to be one of the key aims of Hawke and Evans.

When the *National Times* began its series of articles in early May exposing ASIO's illegal activities the Government responded by attempting to suppress publication of materials damaging to ASIO. Hawke claimed that the publication of the documents was harming "the national interest."

In early August Hawke launched a campaign attempting to muzzle public comment on the Combe-Ivanov affair and his role in it. This included suits for "defamation" against a number of media organisations including the ABC, and threats of law suits against other media groups.

In response to the Government's claims of "defamation" against the media and Liberal leader Andrew Peacock, Hope backed up Hawke's attack on freedom of speech by issuing a warning against anyone making statements that, "are intended to produce a prejudgement of any of the issues or conduct or credit of any witness."

Why is the Labor Government so concerned about public comment on the whole affair? Why is it so concerned to protect ASIO?

Hawke claims that he is acting to protect the "national interest" and "national security." But ASIO's actions, both in the past and in the Combe-Ivanov affair, have nothing to do with defending the interests or security of the great majority of those

who make up the nation.

ASIO has consistently acted against the interests of working people. Its major role has been to spy on and disrupt the labour movement. Its activities threaten our democratic freedoms—freedoms that have been won at great sacrifice and which are necessary for the defence of the security of our jobs and living standards. That is why it's impossible to reform ASIO. It must be abolished.

The only people who benefit from ASIO's operations are the bankers and businessmen who have real material interests to secure—interests sweated out of the labour of workers. As a tiny and privileged minority, this class needs a secret police agency like ASIO to protect their exploitative profit system against the political and industrial challenges of the working majority.

Because they are committed to the maintenance of the capitalist status quo the present Party Leadership turns a blind eye to the mountains of evidence pointing to the anti-democratic and anti-labour role of ASIO.

In fact, the Hawkes, Evanses, and Haydens are legitimizing ASIO's spying and disruption. By their willingness to go along with ASIO's actions they are protecting the interests and security of the secret police and its big-business masters ahead of the interests and security of the labour movement, including the Labor Party itself.



tasmania

Picking up the pieces

Well it is over! The High Court has ruled against the Gordon below Franklin dam. The sigh of relief was almost deafening from the State Party Leadership. But they should have no cause for relief. The High Court ruling was against them too.

By our Tasmanian correspondent

The issue has finally been laid to rest. Now the Party must take stock of itself. Questions have to be asked and realistically answered. The Leadership must not be allowed to carry on as if nothing has occurred. Having caused the fight, the Leadership cannot be permitted to stand aside and piously admonish first the State, then the Federal Government.

Most progressive organisations in Australia opposed the construction of the dam. The Party Leadership is out on a limb. It climbed out there for its own ends, and joined, or rather was joined by the Liberals.

This whole sorry business was caused by the State Labor Government's intransigence. Over half the Party membership left because of the dams issue. The Party was trounced at the State Elections and again in the Federal Elections. In short, it has been the greatest disaster ever visited upon the Tasmanian Branch.

Franklin dam worker interview

John Tully was until recently the Australian Workers Union Site Delegate at the Crofty end of the Franklin hydro electric scheme, where he was employed by the HEC as a rigger. He is also a member of the Queenborough Branch of the Australian Labor Party.

Q. Firstly a somewhat thorny question. As a socialist, how could you countenance working on a project that was opposed by most progressive minded people in this country?

A. That's not such a thorny question! I am a worker and workers can only live by selling their labour power. Workers are forced, by the economic factors of the system, to accept all kinds of jobs that are not at all in the interests of humanity or the environment. Do you condemn workers who are forced to work, by economic

Tasmanian workers, especially on the West Coast, have been led blindfolded down a dark alley by the Leadership and abandoned to the mercies of the reactionary elements who prey upon ignorance, division and uncertainty; hence the recent ugly scenes of violence. There was no effective, politically progressive voice against the dam. In fact that situation prevails even today. Ken Wriedt's reaction to the High Court ruling—"personally disappointed."

But the dams issue was not the cause of the problem. It was just the issue which exposed the problem for all to see. Why was there a Federal intervention? The Party was already in disarray. Why? The entrenched dominance of the Party Leadership. This has been no minor error of judgement, but rather a major error in direction. The Leadership has acted against the will of the Party ranks and in the interest of big business and has been doing so for a long time.

It was relatively easy for the ALP to maintain Government in the years following World War II. Capitalism was in a post-war boom and living standards were rising. It was seemingly possible to please both workers and bosses, by and large. This boom is now over and has been since the early 1970s. There is a major crisis in one class or the other must pay for it. Political parties must choose who they will support in this ever-deepening

necessity, in the armaments industry? To do so is to direct the blame away from where it really lies—that is with the capitalists who run society in their interests.

Do we say to the workers, as individuals, make a lone protest? Obviously not—it'd be a two day wonder, at most. The real way to go about things is to be with the workers, explaining the need for, in this instance, alternative projects that are in line with job creation and the safeguarding of the environment.

The Franklin scheme is not the first time the question has come up in Australia, and it won't be the last time either. What we have to do is spread socialist consciousness to such a degree that the workers themselves ban socially and environmentally harmful projects—as was done in the early seventies by the NSW Branch of the Builders Labourers, for instance.

crisis. The State Parliamentary Labor Party made the wrong choice. They maintained their pro-big business stance at the expense of the workers' living standards.

But, to its credit, a small section of the Parliamentary Party could not go all the way with big business, hence the split over the dam. It was then that big business perceived the real weakness of the Party and decided to give the traditional, but hitherto weak and divided Liberal Party a run.

These facts must be faced. The Party must learn from these mistakes or they will inevitably be repeated at the expense of the working class yet again.

It is going to be a long road back to government, but with the present Leadership it will be uphill all the way.

In October Federal intervention comes to an end. The Tasmanian Branch will then be able to chart its own course again. But there is a desperate need for *new charts and new navigators*. At present the State Branch offers no alternative to the conservatives and workers know this. What is needed is a socialist alternative to the big business offensive.

With new, more democratic means at its disposal, the rank-and-file must fight for such policies and establish Leadership accountability to the ranks. It is time to re-establish the Party by getting rid of the old conservatism and parochialism and all those who represent these views.

Q. What was the feeling of the workers on the scheme to the High Court decision? We've seen in the media such scenes as angry workers pushing aside reporters, and violence being carried out against supporters of the Tasmanian Wilderness Society.

A. I'd say that the workers were confused and upset, definitely. They've been subjected to an intense propaganda campaign by the Liberals and the Hydro, telling them they would lose their jobs if the scheme was stopped. For many of them, this was the first job they'd had in a long time—and this applies to skilled as well as unskilled workers.

I was discussing the matter earlier today with an official of the Union, and he made the very valid point that the workers who are making the most noise about the closure are the people who've always been dyed-in-the-wool

Liberals anyway, but that generally they are more reticent in expressing their views. This business has allowed them to come out of their holes and to get to town with their anti-Labor views.

For instance there was one bloke who was on "Nationwide" at the time of the decision, crying into his beer in a Queenstown pub. That bloke is a really backward element who is now relling in the attention being paid to him—he thinks he's a media superstar.

He's always been a Liberal, and he has tried to physically intimidate a number of my members, and he was way behind in dues to the Carpenters' Union. The point I'm trying to make is that normally that bloke would keep his reactionary views to himself, but now the ALP supporters have gone into the woodwork, and there is a large middle ground that is susceptible to the strong Liberal pressures.

Q. What was the response of AWU members?

A. I tried to keep the AWU members informed about what was going on in the real world by holding stopwork meetings regularly. I hoped this to be able to counteract the continuous barrage of crap that was churned out by the Liberals about the workers losing their jobs.

The real fact of the matter is that the HEC workers now have more job security than other Tasmanian workers, and that Hawke had always stressed that he would provide alternative work. Thus I would say that the AWU members had a more rational approach than many members of other unions who were not kept as informed of developments.

My policy was to try to circumvent the political grandstanding of the Gray Government, and to approach the matter on a trade union basis—that is from an independent working class position. Our policy was that we wouldn't accept the sack, but that we would accept alternative work. We were prepared to stage a sit-in strike and appeal for support from the labour movement in the event of the HEC sacking any of our members.

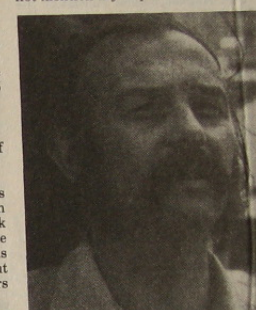
Q. How did the trade union and ALP leadership respond to the Liberal "jobs" propaganda?

A. That is a sore point with me. Some of the officials were good—for instance Des Hanlon of the AWU kept in pretty close contact with the workers through the delegates. Many others, though, didn't come near the workers, and as a result they left the running to Gray and his hysteria-mongers.

This was, in my opinion, a tremen-

dous failure by the ALP and union leaderships, and the lessons must be learned if we aren't to have a repeat performance.

Some time ago, months before the High Court decision, I wrote to Prime Minister Bob Hawke, urging him to come to the West Coast to speak to the workers, I said that I, as AWU delegate and as an ALP member, would be willing to organise and chair a meeting on the Franklin Scheme. When I did get a reply, on the very eve of the decision, it only waffled on in vague terms about ALP policy and did not mention my request.



John Tully.

Q. This was in contrast to Gray?

A. Yes, Gray, by contrast, was always hanging around, talking to the blokes on the job. He even brought that viciously anti-worker Bjelke Petersen down and touted him around as the worker's best friend. Gray was always putting on barrels of beer for the boys, that kind of thing.

Q. What effect do you think the dispute has had on the ALP and the unions?

A. Tasmania, as you will be aware, returned not one Labor member to the House of Reps. in the recent Federal elections. In contrast to everywhere else in Australia, there was a landslide to the Liberals. If the Liberals maintain those gains in Tasmania, and there is a swing in marginal seats on the mainland away from the ALP, that would mean a return to a Federal Liberal Government.

The statistics on the West Coast were pretty grim for Labor, particularly in Queenstown which, as an old-established mining town, was always in former times a Labor stronghold. It is even worse when you consider that

the West Coast was the cradle of the Tasmanian political and industrial labour movement. Elsewhere in Tasmania, back in the 1880s and 90s, the movement often had to be organised from the mainland.

There is presently afoot a move among reactionary elements—Liberals and the Organisation for Tasmanian Development (OTD)—to infiltrate the trade unions on the West Coast. That is a move which must be crushed.

However I believe that much of the ground may be cut from under Gray's feet when the effects of alternative job schemes begin to be felt, and when HEC workers realise that they have been taken for a ride. But it is a pretty bad situation when a right wing populist demagogue like Robin Gray can pose in the midst of a depression, as a saviour of jobs and workers' rights. And no doubt he will have made some real indentations into ALP support among West Coast workers for quite some time to come.

Yes, and the thing is that he's only been able to do these things because of the stupidity and incompetence of much of the leadership of the labour movement.

Q. What do you think the labour movement must do?

A. For a start, stop avoiding the workers—stop all the wheeling and dealing at the top—and get down to grass roots organisation of the workers. They don't bite, after all!

Well, alternative work has been provided for the HEC workforce—roads, bridges, a HEC maintenance program, etc, plus longer term alternative power development. This is all very well as far as it goes, but the broader question of jobs is going to reappear time and again. Really what is necessary for Tasmanian workers is a complete shakeup of the ALP and unions. By this I don't mean changing Ken Wriedt's face for someone else from the State Parliamentary circus. What I mean is a whole new program for Labor—a socialist program that will include a rational energy plan that has as its cornerstone respect for the environment and the production of energy for industry that functions for human needs, not private profits.

Really I can't see any solution to the energy problem and the wilderness problem within the framework of the capitalist system.

+ The OTD is a reactionary coalition of Liberals, businessmen and renegade trade union elements. It, along with the "Tasmanian Autonomy Society", was a frontrunner in the pro-dam, "State's Rights" lobby.

Anti-worker budget exposes the Accord

"Australian investors greeted the first Labor Federal Budget for eight years with elation."—*Sydney Morning Herald*, August 25.

And well they might! Behind all of Treasurer Paul Keating's rhetoric about "sharing the burden" and "fairness and equity," the Hawke Government's first budget has con-

By Pat Brewer

Member of Forest Lodge (NSW) branch and the Amalgamated Metal Foundry and Shipwrights' Union

tinued the Fraser tradition of making working people pay for the capitalist economic crisis.

Instead of the pre-election promise of tax cuts for low- and middle-income earners the Government, through a 4.3 per cent increase in excise taxes on petrol, beer, and tobacco, has increased the tax burden on precisely those least able to pay.

Instead of the pre-election promise to

index personal income tax, the Government has decided to index these excise taxes, pushing up prices even more.

To these new indirect taxes should be added the effects of the May "mini-budget" with its abolition of the health insurance rebate at least six months before the introduction of Medicare.

The August budget continues the May "mini-budget's" attacks on those who have retired or are about to retire.

In the May "mini-budget" the Government announced an increase from 5 per cent to 30 per cent in the tax on lump-sum superannuation payments up to \$125,000. In response to considerable opposition to this move from the labour movement, the Government has reduced the tax to 15 per cent on the first \$50,000 paid to workers retiring at 55 or later, and a 30 per cent tax, thereafter.

The Government announced in May the reintroduction of the means test on pensions abolished by Fraser in 1976. Now the Government is to introduce

an assets test for pensioners too.

Justifying this in Parliament on August 24 Hawke stated that, "It is unacceptable that retired people with large assets, estates and hundreds of thousands of dollars should be able to arrange their assets so that they can receive the full pension and fringe benefits."

However, as John Short, writing in the August 25 *Sydney Morning Herald* points out, the assets test will not really hit the wealthy:

"Under the test a pensioner's home and car, as well as personal effects such as furniture, house-hold effects, caravan, boat, jewellery and works of art, plus other assets to the value of \$1,500 for a single person and \$2,500 for a couple, are to be excluded.

"It will operate by taking the remaining assets and deeming that a rate of return of 10 per cent was received on them.

"This 'deemed' income would then be added to any other income, such as that from part-time work, and the total figure used to determine eligibility.

"The actual income earned by a person's non-exempt assets would be disregarded. Only the 'deemed' income—at the fixed rate of 10 per cent—would count.

"This means that a person getting a return of more than 10 per cent would be better off, while a person getting less than 10 per cent would be worse off."

For all its talk about "equity" the Government rejected the introduction of taxes that would hit the big rich, such as a wealth tax, or a capital gains tax to hit multi-millionaires such as Robert Holmes a Court, who speculate tax-free on the stock exchange.

The August 24 *Sydney Morning Herald* wasn't far off the mark when it featured a cartoon with Keating saying, "ALL AUSTRALIANS SHALL SHARE THE BURDEN . . . some though, get a bigger share than others . . ." In fact, while some—that is, working people—get a bigger share of the burden, others, namely, big business, get a reduced share.

While Pay-As-You-Earn (PAYE) income tax is to rise by 4.5 per cent to \$19.7 billion, or 40.8 per cent of total budget revenue, company tax will drop by 13.1 per cent to \$4.15 billion, or 8.6 per cent of total budget revenue.

While the rise in personal income tax is a few percentage points less than in last year's Fraser budget, the percentage drop in company tax is more than double what it was last year.

In addition, handouts to big business, euphemistically called "industry assistance," remain at over a billion dollars a year.

These subsidies, it is argued, are necessary to preserve jobs. However, the assistance program to BHP alone, this is not true.

While the Government is to pay BHP subsidised cash bounties of up to \$100 million a year over the next five years to guarantee the "Big Australian's" 80 per cent-plus monopoly of the domestic steel market, BHP management has made it clear it will take advantage of this "safety net" to continue its rationalisation program. Under this program BHP will seek to raise productivity in its steel mills to the equivalent of Japanese steel plants—i.e. 280 tonnes per employee. But BHP won't be doing this by a massive program of investment. Rather it will achieve this through reducing its workforce.

Over the last two years BHP has cut its workforce from 46,000 to 30,000 and in the process raised productivity from 180 tonnes to 230 tonnes per employee. On August 11, that is the same day Industry and Commerce Minister Senator John Button announced the Government's assistance plan for BHP, the company announced that it



THE AUSTRALIAN
FINANCIAL REVIEW
POST-BUDGET
DINNER



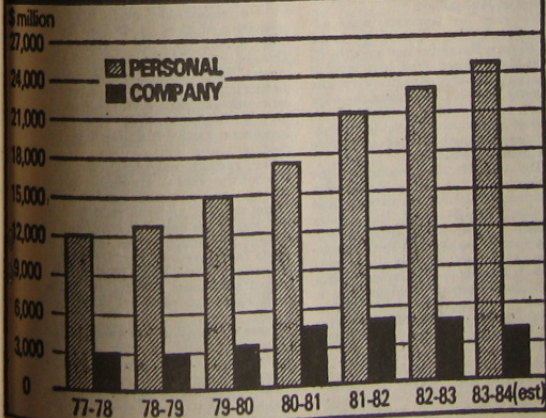
Bob Hawke, Treasurer of Australia
on Aug 24, 1983

Cocktails & Dinner
with Bob Hawke
Hear his
analysis of the
Budget.

Wednesday
August 24, 1983
The Regent
Sydney Hotel

Hawke sells his message to the chosen few at \$40 per head.

INCOME TAX GROWTH



would further cut its workforce to 26,000 or 24,000 by the end of this year.

Much of the Government's budgeted \$1,104 million for "industry assistance" will serve the same purpose—subsidising the purchase of job-cutting new technology.

While claiming that the budget would aid the economic recovery that has hesitatingly begun, Keating acknowledged that unemployment would "edge up" by another 0.5 per cent, or 35,000 people, in the financial year ahead.

In reality the budget does little to combat rising unemployment. Its "job creation" programs are all tailored to fit into a pre-set deficit limit of \$8.5 billion.

In his budget speech Keating stated that: "In 1983-84 we expect to spend \$958 million on employment and training schemes, 80 per cent more than in 1982-83, which, when fully operational, are expected to result in employment and/or training opportunities for about 300,000 people a year."

However, this figure is deceptive. The Government's \$300 million Community Employment Program, for example, will only provide about 40,000 full-time jobs a year, according

to the Government's own statements. And each individual employed in such schemes will only be provided for work for six-months. After that they'll be back on the dole.

An example of how woefully inadequate these "job-creation" programs will be is indicated by the Government's assistance plan for the steel-producing regions of Wollongong, Newcastle, and Whyalla.

On August 11 Button announced that the Government would allocate \$100 million a year for the next five years for employment creation and retraining in these three cities. Under this program, capital works spending is to create only 500 to 600 jobs spread through the three cities. This financial year, 1500 to 1800 workers will be retraining under the scheme. But as of March there were 20,000 people out of work in Newcastle, 18,000 in Wollongong, and 3000 in Whyalla.

The whole axis of the Federal Government's approach to reducing unemployment is based on boosting company profits. The Government assumes that if the bosses' can be assured of higher returns on their investments then they'll end their capital strike.

Key to this strategy is the holding down of wage rises, or even cuts to real wages. This is at the heart of the Government's Prices and Incomes Accord with the ACTU.

Through this deal both parties are committed to the reintroduction of a wage indexation system that ensures that "wage increases do not give added impetus to inflation or unemployment." Under this system unions are to surrender their right to use industrial action to win wage increases outside indexation. The ACTU has committed itself to police the "no extra claims" provisions of the system. However, the Government, perhaps lacking confidence in the ACTU's ability to do this, has argued that the Arbitration Commission, which will administer the system, should penalise unions that don't knuckle under by withholding national wage rises from their awards.

While the Accord specifies that real wage levels should be "maintained over time" there is no guarantee that this will occur. Under the proposed indexation system it is up to the Arbitration Commission to decide whether workers will get full compensation, partial compensation, or no compensation for rises in the CPI.

Moreover, the CPI itself underestimates the real cost of living for most workers. And no account will be taken of cuts in living standards caused by increased Government taxes. For example, the introduction of Medicare will remove health insurance costs from the CPI. But workers will

still have to pay for health insurance through a 1 per cent tax levy.

In return for the unions' commitment to the wage indexation system, the Government was supposed to raise living standards through improvements in the social wage. However, as the budget makes clear, this is a con.

The Accord called for the Government to "restructure the income tax scale to ease the burden on low and middle income earners," to "regularly review the tax scale so that the tax burden will not rise automatically with inflation." But nothing was done about this in the budget.

Instead, Hawke and Keating have promised to do this next year. In the meantime, many workers will move from the 32-cents-in-the-dollar tax bracket to the 46-cents-in-the-dollar bracket. And judging from the number of promises already broken by this Government it's unlikely that this one will be fulfilled.

The Accord called for improvements in pensions, unemployment benefits, expenditure on social welfare, housing, education, etc. However, these have failed to materialise or been extremely limited.

For example, expenditure on social security and welfare has been increased by 19 per cent to \$16 billion. But most of this increase takes place to account for inflation and the continuing increase in the numbers of people who will need unemployment benefits. ABC TV political correspondent, Barry Cassidy, pointed out that the new initiatives of the Hawke Government in this area only amounted to an additional expenditure of \$107 million.

No rises in pensions were announced. And the dole, while increased by \$5 from November and again by \$2 next March, when it will be indexed to the CPI, is still \$12.40 below the poverty line. No real measures were taken to raise either pensions or the dole to 25 per cent of average weekly earnings as had been promised before the Federal election.

The Accord also committed the Government "to reduce the relative incidence of indirect taxation because of its regressive and inflationary nature." The increase in excise taxes in the August budget and their indexation every six months from next March, directly flies in the face of this.

It should now be obvious even to those who supported the Accord initially that it is a swindle designed to get the unions' cooperation in cutting real wages.

But it was a swindle right from the start because it was based on the false assumption that wage rises cause, or at least, contribute to, unemployment

and inflation. But experience itself disproves that.

The overwhelming majority of Australian workers have not had a wage rise for over a year now. Yet prices, as measured by the Consumer Price Index, are continuing to rise at an annual rate of 11.5 per cent. Unemployment, as Keating acknowledged, in his budget speech, will continue to grow. According to the Bureau of Statistics, it has been the lowest paid workers who have been hardest hit by lay-offs.

Examples from overseas also show that there is no direct relation between wage levels and unemployment. In New Zealand, for example, during the same period that the Muldoon Government's wage freeze has been in effect, unemployment has leapt by 60 per cent.

While wage cuts will increase corporate profits, this doesn't mean these will be invested in new production and therefore create more jobs.

Unless they can find new markets in which to sell their goods at a "sufficient" profit, then the bosses will invest their increased profits in stock-market speculation, company takeovers, or new job-cutting machinery. As Keating stated in his budget speech: "Employers may require firm evidence that improved profitability and demand are likely to be sustained before reversing the labour shedding that took place in 1982-83."

However, it was not a sudden decision by consumers that they no longer needed goods and services that caused the economic downturn. Rather it was the decision by the capitalists that they couldn't make what they regarded as a "reasonable" profit from the production of more goods than they're cutting back on investments. This, of course, led to a cutback in labour. This in turn led to an overall decline in purchasing power, a further contraction of the possibility of recouping "sufficient" profits from new investment, further cutbacks in investment and labor, etc.

The current recession has now reached the point where the decline in buying power of consumers caused by unemployment and the reduction in real wages has begun to get ahead of present production levels. Stocks of goods that were over-produced in the previous "boom" have largely been sold off or reduced in value due to the proliferation of company bankruptcies.

However, this does not mean, as the Government and the big business media have been claiming, that a "sustained" recovery is possible.

There will not be a return to the period of relative prosperity and low unemployment of previous decades.



the upturn that has begun will be shallow and short-lived. It will quickly lead to a new and deeper recession.

The present unemployment level of 10 per cent represents only a new plateau that will not be substantially reduced. In the next recession it will climb to a new plateau.

This process can be more fully seen by looking at the employment situation over the last decade in the advanced capitalist countries.

In 1970-71 there were 10-11 million people registered as unemployed in the US, Canada, Japan, Australia, New Zealand, and Western Europe. During the 1974-75 recession this grew to 16 million. By 1980 that is, before the present international recession began—it had climbed to 20 million. During the recent recession unemployment in these countries jumped to more than 33 million.

Thus the upturn will, at best, only produce a temporary slowing down of this process. This is because the "normal" 5 year boom-and-bust business cycles that have characterized capitalism since it came into being over 150 years ago, are now occurring in the context of a long-term decline of the world capitalist economy, marked by stagnation in domestic and foreign markets and a decline in the average rate of profit.

The bosses only solution to this problem is the same as the one they imposed on working people during the last long-term decline in their profit

system in the 30s—a long depression that substantially reduces wage levels and destroys uncompetitive capital through the closing down of whole industries. Such a solution will increase the necessity for the capitalists and their Governments to use military means to enforce their super-exploitation of the Third World, and to recover the fields of investment denied to them by the abolition of capitalism in Russia, China, Eastern Europe, Vietnam and Cuba.

This solution will require the drastic restriction of workers' democratic rights, so rights, particularly union rights, so rights, particularly union rights, so that they can't effectively fight back. In the end the bosses' solution will lead to the same outcome as that of the 1930s—fascism and war. But in today's world, with nuclear weapons, the price involved would be incalculably higher. Humanity's very survival as a species would be put in question.

The alternative to this is to do away with the system that has created this crisis. That is, to replace the "private enterprise" system with a system of economic production collectively owned and democratically managed by working people themselves, a system directed toward the satisfaction of the needs of the vast majority, not the needs of a tiny minority of private profits and businessmen. In short, to replace capitalism with socialism.

This is the stated goal of the Labor

Party. However, the pro-capitalist politicians who dominate the Party and the conservative union officials who support them have totally divorced this goal from the Party's day-to-day political practice. This is shown by the course taken by the Hawke Government, which has nothing to do with promoting socialism but everything to do with propping up the crisis-ridden capitalist system.

What the Party urgently needs to do is bring its political practice into accord with its professed socialist goal. And that means adopting and implementing policies here and now that serve the interests of the working class rather than the boss class.

It means carrying out policies like the introduction of shorter work hours with no cut in pay to spread the available work around, policies like national work-around companies that threaten or carry out sackings, policies like a massive program of socially-useful public works paid for by substantially increased taxes on the bosses.

It means adopting a course that relies on the organised strength and mobilised power of the working class rather than parliamentary talk-shops and pro-capitalist governmental bureaucracies.

In other words, it means implementing policies and using methods of action that make the bosses, not the workers, pay for the crisis of the capitalist system.

east timor

Fretilin leaders tour Australia

Reprinted from CARPA Bulletin No 14, August '83, published by the Committee Against Repression in the Pacific and Asia. (See ad page 35).

While in Indonesia in June, Prime Minister Hawke showed little restraint in his praise for the invasion of East Timor. At a banquet hosted by President Soeharto, Hawke declared that "Australia acknowledges and wishes to encourage the major effort that Indonesia has been making to improve the conditions of life for the people of East Timor after centuries of colonial misrule and the collapse of a colonial regime."

Especially in the light of much new information about Indonesia's genocidal occupation of East Timor from Fretilin representatives who recently toured Australia, Hawke's suggestion that Indonesia has somehow enriched the quality of life in East Timor must be dismissed as a ridiculous and deceitful claim. After 7½ years of brutal "integration" into the Indonesian Republic and a death toll exceeding 200,000, the people of East Timor have nothing to be thankful to the Jakarta generals for. The message from the two Fretilin officials is that the real gratitude of East Timorese is extended to those people abroad who have expressed solidarity with their struggle for an independent state of East Timor.

The two senior members of Fretilin's Central Committee completed a major tour of Australia in which they spoke in Brisbane, Sydney, Wollongong, Canberra, Melbourne, Adelaide and Perth. Abilio Araujo is the Minister for Economic and Social Affairs in the Democratic Republic of East Timor. Roque Rodrigues is the DRET Ambassador to Angola, which recognises the DRET as a sovereign nation declared on November 28, 1975 in Dili. Originally Araujo and Rodrigues had planned to visit Australia in May. However, their visas were delayed until Hawke had returned from overseas. It is safe to assume that efforts were made in Jakarta to persuade Hawke not to allow Fretilin entry into Australia. Even though the Labor Leadership has shown little inclination towards implementing ALP policy on East Timor, Hawke no doubt concluded that denying Fretilin permission to visit would create an uncontrollable furore within the ranks of the ALP. The Indonesian Govern-



Ken Fry addresses the Sydney public meeting

ment was clearly displeased with the decision, however. The Foreign Minister, Dr Mochtar, described the move as "bad news for Indonesia." He went on to say that "what is important is that the members of the Fretilin are not received as official guests of the Australian Government."

The Defence Support Minister, Brian Howe, was then gaged by a decision of the full Federal Ministry which prevented him from publicly expressing dissent from Government policy on East Timor. After the meeting Howe announced that he would not speak at a public meeting sponsored in Melbourne by the Australia-East Timor Association. Howe was to have appeared on the platform alongside Araujo and Rodrigues.

Shortly before the Ministry meeting the Indonesian Embassy expressed its concern that Howe's appearance at the AETA sponsored public meeting would "lend credibility to the cause of independence in East Timor," Com-Labor MHR Ken Fry noted that "There is now a wide gap between the leadership and the rank-and-file of the

Party" over East Timor.

During their stay in Australia, Araujo and Rodrigues did manage to speak to many members of the Parliamentary Labor Party. On July 26 the two Fretilin representatives attempted to deliver a letter to Prime Minister Hawke from Fretilin's commander-in-chief, Xa Na Na. Hawke pointedly refused to meet them. Instead, an assistant received the letter. Later on that day, 20 members of the Labor Caucus, including 4 Ministers, discussed the situation in East Timor with Araujo and Rodrigues at a meeting of the Foreign Affairs and Defence Committee.

Supporters of the East Timorese liberation movement are confident that these talks will influence some Caucus members when the issue of how Australia should vote on a possible U.N. resolution on East Timor is raised later this year. We must continue the campaign to implement the ALP policy and support the Maubere people in their struggle for independence. **Indonesian troops out now! Self-determination for East Timor!**

No military aid to Indonesia!

Interview with Abilio Araujo in Perth

Q How do you feel about the Government's official reaction to your visit?

A Our understanding is that the Australian Government will be in a very difficult position if it chooses to continue to stand against independence for East Timor.

That is because we think the Government will not want to lose credibility internationally if it took such a position.

In Australia there are many people who support East Timor. And internationally many countries are reconsidering their position.

They are reconsidering because we have presented evidence about the real situation in our country. Many countries can see now the falseness of the Indonesian propaganda.

Q What Pacific region countries support East Timor?

A Well just today in the newspaper there was a story about Mr Mochtar (Indonesian Foreign Minister). He said that after his visit to Fiji, New Zealand and the Solomon Islands they will vote for the Indonesian position when the United Nations votes on the question.

Western Samoa will support us. That means that Western Samoa has changed its position.

I got a telephone call from Roque Rodrigues. He is visiting all those countries to counter what Mr Mochtar has said.

He told me that in the Solomon Islands he was received by the Foreign Minister. He has met with the Cabinet and expects to meet with the Prime

Minister.

He said that the Solomon Islands will support us in the UN. So it looks like Mr Mochtar has failed.

Q. What has been the position of Vanuatu?

A. Vanuatu is very strong in supporting us. It is sponsoring the United Nations Resolution.

Q. What is the military position in East Timor now?

A. We know a new invasion is coming. This will be the end of the ceasefire.

The ceasefire occurred because many Indonesian companies refused to fight. Even top leaders contacted the Fretilin Commander in Chief and sought a ceasefire. So for many months there has been no fighting.

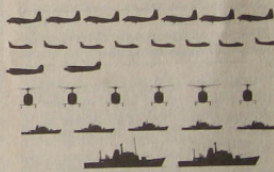
But the generals in Jakarta have not been happy with this.

For this reason they have threatened Fretilin. They have threatened that Fretilin must accept Indonesian rule or all the present soldiers will be replaced.

Australian Military Aid to Indonesia 1972-80

- 12 GAF Nomad 22B aircraft
 - 16 Avon Sabre fighter aircraft.
 - 2 Dakota DC3 aircraft
 - 12 Bell 47G Sioux helicopters
 - 6 Carpentaria class patrol boats
 - 2 Attack class patrol boats
- 1200 Armed Forces Officers trained
Mapping projects in Sumatra, Kalimantan, West Irian and the Moluccas.

- Other aspects of the "Defence Cooperation" Programme include:
- provision of 10 mobile workshops for roadside repair of military vehicles.
 - provision of at least 761 field radio transceivers.
 - provision of decentralised repair facilities for communications equipment.
 - participation in joint naval and military exercises.
 - exchange visits by high ranking officers including visits to Australia by the Indonesian Army, Air Force and Navy Chiefs of Staff.
 - study visits of cadets and officers between the Indonesian Armed Forces Academy and the Royal Military College, the RAN Colleges and the RAAF Academy.
 - Routine consultations both in Indonesia and Australia on defence matters.



Officer Training

Second Lieutenant Lessey, the 1000th trainee from Indonesia, uses a theodolite during a course in Australia. Around 1200 Indonesian servicemen have been trained in Australian military schools between 1971 and 1979. The training has covered a wide range of courses. It has included instruction given to intelligence officers in so-called interrogation techniques at the Army Intelligence Centre when it was at Woodside. Similar training is probably now given at the School of Military Intelligence at Canungra in Queensland.

Presumably the trainees resume duties with their units. Most of the trainees will have taken part in a two or three month (at least) tour of duty in East Timor or West Papua.

Clearly training is direct support for the Indonesian war in East Timor.

This information is taken from "East Timor Betrayed but not beaten"—a booklet published by the Australia-East Timor Association, PO Box 93, Fitzroy, Victoria. 3065.

GAF Nomad 22B

12 Nomads have been supplied to Indonesia. Another 6 are on the way. These aircraft are built by the Government Aircraft Factories (GAF) at Fisherman's Bend.

They are fitted with "hard points" for weapon attachment and with sophisticated radar and electronic equipment. Nomads have been used in East Timor in transport and possibly other roles.

Carpentaria Class Patrol Boat

6 of these modern 16 metre fast patrol boats were built for the Indonesian Navy by Hawker Havilland of Sydney for delivery in

1975/76. They have displacement of 21 tons, maximum speed of 36 knots, and are armed with 2 machine guns.

They are planning to send 80 battalions (96,000 troops) to crush Fretilin.

From our friends in Jakarta we have learned the name of this operation. It is Operation Unity.

We call on the Australian Government, all political forces, religious groups and all democratic movements to stop this new bloodbath.

Fretilin talks to Vic policy committee

In Melbourne the two Fretilin representatives Roque Rodrigues and Abilio Araujo spoke to a meeting of the Victorian Peace and Disarmament Committee on the current situation in East Timor.

By Doug Jordan

Member of Preston (Vic) branch and the Tramways Union

Roque said they had had an excellent response to their tour from politicians and the people of Australia. "After 8 years of armed struggle and a genocidal war, we are not demanding too much. We are not asking for Australian troops, simply for Australia to vote with us in the United Nations and keep the question of East Timor on the agenda of the U.N."

He added that Bill Hayden admitted in Jakarta that a true act of self determination never took place in East Timor.

Abilio stressed that it will be impossible to destroy the national identity and culture of the Timorese people, but that a military victory was very difficult to achieve. Only 10 per cent of the East Timorese were living in the liberated zones, the rest being herded into concentration camps which are controlled by the Indonesians.

"It was very realistic to say it was impossible to win only through military means when we do not have sophisticated weaponry."

Diplomatic pressure is therefore very important. He emphasised that if Fretilin doesn't succeed in the U.N. Assembly, affirming the rights of the East Timorese people, Indonesia will have their hands free to renew their attacks. And that is why it is so important for ALP members to continue the campaign in the Party on the East Timor issue.

the right wing

Industrial "Groupers" alive and kicking



NCC guru Santamaría.

"Two well-publicised campaigns in the Metal Workers Union were run by the NCC at enormous financial cost. . . . They succeeded only in placing one man . . . as a captive in the Left-wing controlled branch in South Australia. . . ."

By Chris Slec

Member of Springvale (Vic) branch and the Tramways Union

"The expenditure of \$140,000, and the mailing out of large volumes of propaganda supporting Carmichael's opponents, was no substitute for officers. . . ."

Life for the "Groupers", the hardened Right-wing faction who split the Labor Party in the 1950s, has had its frustrations lately. With unemployment over 10 per cent and real wages falling, few workers are listening to Right-wingers who tell them to trust in the boss to save them from capitalism's crisis.

But as is shown by the above quotations, taken from a fundraising brochure of the far right-wing Industrial Action Fund (IAF), the "Movement" has a great deal of money with which to back up its wrecking operations. Particularly in the NSW ALP, which never saw the mass exodus of right-wingers that followed the 1955 split in other states, the Groupers remain a serious obstacle to the construction of a Labor Leadership that will defend jobs and living standards.

Despite a general move to the left elsewhere, the ALP Right-wing in NSW has managed to consolidate its position at recent State Conferences.

This is widely believed to be due to the Movement organising work in Party Branches and affiliated unions.

For decades, the main organising vehicle for the Movement was the National Civic Council, headed by B.A. Santamaría. For a period from the late 1970s, the NCC suffered from debilitating internal feuds, which saw the central leaders around Santamaría ranged against the organisation's trade union wing. These divisions, and a relative downgrading of labour movement work by Santamaría's faction, helped ensure that the NCC's performance in the trade unions during this period would be regarded as lacklustre.

In mid-1982 came an acrimonious split, which saw the NCC's trade union cadres hive off to form the Industrial Action Fund. The past year has seen a revival of Movement activity in the ALP and the trade unions, as the IAF has set about vigorously reapplying Santamaría's ideas and practices of the past. This new "industrial group" has been aided in its work by the fact that it has inherited a considerable base among trade union officialdom.

An IAF fund-raising leaflet, copies of which were included in a dossier distributed to a recent Victorian ALP Conference, claims the IAF has among its activists "some 200 full-time union officers".

Like Santamaría in earlier years, the IAF argues that the union movement is a vital area of operations for the far right in this country. In this, it differs from the position the NCC majority now espouses.

Santamaría's present views can be gauged from his remarks to an NSS national seminar in March 1979:

"We could earlier say to business leaders that we were out to destroy communism in the unions. We're now one of unionism itself, not just communist unionism—for example, the Storemen and Packers.

While Santamaría now appears to believe that the defence of capitalist interests requires the outright smashing of the Labour Movement, the IAF argues that the NCC's failure to render the unions entirely comatose stems from poor organisation and mistaken tactics. As one of the IAF's brochures argues:

"It is not enough to run 'mail-order' campaigns against one or two leaders, supporting dissident Left-wingers

against them, on the principle of the lesser of two evils. . . ."

There are no short cuts to building responsible unionism. The Left have been entrenched and organised in the trade unions since the '30s.

"At different times, their influence has been diminished and contained—by organisation in the field.

"The opportunities exist now to build the anti-Left forces through organisation".

The IAF appears to have found many capitalists only too delighted to fund these attempts to undermine the trade unions from organisations fighting in the interests of workers, into tame-cat apologists, policing the working class on behalf of the bosses.

Whether or not the new Groupers are correct in believing they can subvert the Labor Movement, a big organising push is clearly essential for them if their present union officials are to hold on to their jobs.

Lest we forget

"It is understandable that the Liberal Government wanted to reward Sir John for his services" was how George Crawford, then the Victorian Secretary of the Plumbers and Gasfitters (presently, State President of the Victorian ALP), summed up the meaning of Sir John Egerton's knighthood in June 1976.

By Helen Russell

Member of Banyo-Northgate East branch

As a company director of Qantas, Mary Kathleen, Labor Broadcaster and the State Government Insurance Office, Egerton was also the State President of Queensland Trades and Labor Council at that time. Some would say a knighthood was the only fitting reward for a man who had struggled to fill such conflicting positions.

His Fraser Government rewarded his monumental efforts and recognised Egerton for the way he resolved the conflict—by consistently betraying the interests of working people. Whenever there was a conflict, he played his role as a businessman. He defended uranium mining at Mary Kathleen and opposed wage increases for Qantas employees.

Egerton was awarded his knighthood, a mere seven months after the Whitlam Government was sacked, by Sir John Kerr and "received it from his hands.

Some of the fruits of this return-to-basics by the industrial Groupers may have been appearing in recent struggles within the labour movement. Reports have suggested that former NCC stalwarts are behind attempts to have a number of NCC-controlled unions re-affiliated to the Victorian ALP.

Allegations have also been made that Shop, Distributive, and Allied Employees' Association Victorian State Secretary Jim Maher received extensive support from the IAF in his recent unsuccessful bid for the Presidency of the Victorian Trades Hall Council. Maher denies knowing anything about the IAF.

There have also been indications that the Movement would like to amalgamate two of its main blue-collar bastions, the Australasian Society of Engineers and the Federated Ironworkers' Association. Such a right-wing bloc would be an

important weapon for the Metal Industry bosses in fighting the AMFSU.

No one who has ever confronted the Groupers in the trade unions can have any doubts about their energy and ruthlessness.

So long as the terrain on which the internal battles of the labour movement are decided continues to be that of intrigue and manipulation, of personalities and the numbers game, the Movement will continue scoring victories out of all proportion to its real strength.

But the Groupers have a critical weakness. The interests they defend in the labour movement are those of the bosses, not the workers. Particularly at a time of sharpened class polarisation, when even politically backward workers are feeling the bosses' attacks, the IAF has little chance of winning positions of strength if the focus is kept clearly on the political issues of defending workers' rights.

way into such places as the Qantas boardroom.

Egerton has more recently addressed National Party Conferences been interviewed for the National Party newspaper and been seen at the races with National Minister, Russ Hinze. Egerton is currently Deputy Mayor of the Gold Coast.

In the last seven years Sir John has not changed his colours. Yet Peter Beattie, Secretary of the Queensland ALP recently commented "I have no desire to keep him out of the Party".

Perhaps Beattie has no such "desire" but the motions from local branches indicate a groundswell of opposition from the ranks of the Party who Egerton so often betrayed even before he took that symbolic step that expressed where his real loyalties lay—before he accepted his knighthood from the hands of Sir John Kerr.



Egerton and Kerr showing their true colors.

the philippines

Interview with Bob Muntz

Member of the Philippine Action Support Group

Q. What is the state of affairs in the Philippines at the moment?

A. You have got a situation of an extremely polarised society. The Marcos Regime remains in power through military force which has been very rapidly expanded over the past ten years and which is conducting a campaign of terror against many layers of the population. It relies very heavily on support from the United States.

On the other side you've got an illegal opposition centred around the National Democratic Front (NDF), which is waging a war of liberation based on the peasants in the countryside. The NDF has made very significant gains over the past two to three years.

The situation has become so polarised that there is really no middle ground left. There are politicians in the middle ground but they have really lost their support and they're almost at the stage where they would publicly admit that there is no place for them in the future of the Philippines.

The economic situation goes from one disaster to another fuelled by massive corruption at the highest

levels. 'Cronyism' or corruption reaches up to the Marcos family itself. Massive inefficiency economically means the Philippines is in a disastrous state. It has a foreign debt of about \$18 billion, which it has no hope of servicing and it's cited as one of the Third World countries most likely to default on its debts.

Q. The Philippines has a rudimentary Parliamentary system. Are there legal political parties in opposition?

A. There is a Parliament and there are so-called elections held. But they are entirely farcical. The elections aren't worthy of the name nor is the Parliament. The Parliament is stacked out with Marcos's cronies. He has what we call an opposition party but it's really just a pale shadow of Marcos himself. So at that level the Parliamentary Opposition isn't even worth talking about. There is a party called Unido which fairly could be said to constitute the middle ground. They're led by former Senator Salvador Laurel who intends standing as a presidential candidate against Marcos next year. But their support is scarcely significant.

The situation has been polarised so much that really there is Marcos or the National Democratic Front and there's not much else in between. There is also the Philippine Democratic Party (PDP), a social democratic party, but it has only a small following. The majority of people although they don't have any direct link to the NDF see it as the hope for the future and the only hope.

The New People's Army (NPA), the armed wing of the Communist Party, is one of the member organisations of the NDF. In the last few years, the NDF has grown at a very rapid rate and now embraces quite a range of the political spectrum. There are groups from the middle classes and others such as Christians for National Liberation who now play a role in the NDF.

Q. There are reports of guerrilla war taking place in the Philippines. Is any actual fighting taking place?

A. The area of intense fighting, actual civil war, is centred in the island of Mindanao, the largest island at the southern end of the Philippine archipelago. It would be fair to say that parts of the island are presently experiencing a low grade civil war, as

the NPA gathers its strength. Marcos has rushed ten battalions to that region this year to try to quell dissent from the NPA.

Overall throughout the countryside the National Democratic Front claims the allegiance of 10 million peasants in a total population of 50 million. Something like 30 per cent of the land area would be controlled on a day-to-day basis by the NDF although they wouldn't be in a strong enough position militarily to defend that area if the Marcos forces moved in strength.

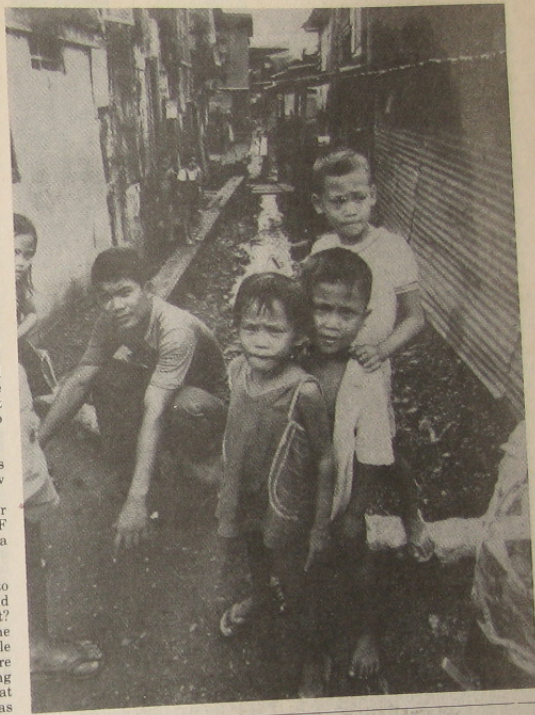
In day-to-day terms the local administration is provided by the NDF. They administer justice, the beginnings of a health care system and an education system in some areas. They conduct progressive reforms such as forcing local landlords to reduce unreasonably high rents and redistributing lands, extending the area of cultivated ground in areas that are not so heavily populated, and so on.

Q. So you see it as developing as another Vietnam situation in a few years time?

A. It looks very much like another Vietnam or El Salvador but the NDF at the present time do not pose a serious threat to the rule by Marcos.

Q. Have the workers been able to organise inside the Trade Unions and defend living standards to any extent?

A. The union movement is the weakest area of opposition to the rule by Marcos. But having said that, there is some very impressive organising going on there. Figures suggest that the numbers of organised workers has



Vic ALP State Conference Resolution on the Philippines

Passed 17th April, 1983

Motion adopted at the Victorian State Conference of the A.L.P. on 13th April, 1983, to be referred to the National Conference National Executive.

1. Human Rights

(a) A.L.P. calls for full restoration of human rights as enunciated by the United Nations Charter on Human Rights.

(b) Calls for cessation of various human rights violations and abuses of human rights as outlined in Amnesty International report of the Philippines.

(c) Raise Australian concern over violation of human rights with Philippine Government at government level and through international bodies such as A.S.E.A.N. and the U.N.

2. Aid

That until such time as the above human rights are fully restored we will:

(a) Immediately end all military assistance to the

Philippine Government.

(b) Cease all government-to-government development aid to the Philippines.

(c) Direct all development aid through non-government agencies so as to ensure that the aid assists the poorest sections of the community.

3. Australian Investment and Trade with the Philippines

That the A.L.P.:

(a) Support a joint Senate enquiry into Australian investment and trade with the Philippines and its effect within the Philippines and on Australian industry.

(b) Ensure that the Department of Foreign Affairs and the Trade Commission monitor the operation of Australian companies in the Philippines, and ensure that these companies comply with Philippine Labor Laws and with the I.L.O.'s standards, particularly to ensure that Australian companies are not involved in the frustration of independent Trade Unions in their factories.

increased enormously in the past two to three years. And there have been a number of quite impressive strikes particularly in factories owned by the multinationals.

The Philippine economy is absolutely dominated by multinationals in a way that is almost unbelievable even to Australians accustomed to such things. So the union movement has waged a lot of struggles in the past few years.

Q. Has the union struggle ebbed and flowed in response to major developments over the last ten years?

A. Martial law was declared in 1972 because Marcos saw himself coming under increasing threat from a number of areas. There was a very volatile student movement who were staging numerous demonstrations mostly directed against the U.S. domination of the country, a deteriorating economic situation and an active union movement with quite a lot of strikes. But at that time there was not any resistance from the NDF which had not even been formed.

However, the declaration of martial law was able to put the lid on dissent for three to four years. It wasn't until 1976-77 that people began to recover from the shock and repression of martial law and began to organise again in a visible way. For example there were no strikes at all between 1972 and 1975.

But since the middle 70's, the NDF has gradually gathered in strength particularly since 1980 and other sectors such as the union movement have built up strength and confidence again. Over the last couple of years there has been very rapidly developing opposition to Marcos on a whole range of fronts.

For example school teachers who previously had been a very conservative sector of the population staged wide-spread and spontaneous strikes in Manila and many other cities in January this year. That sort of thing had previously been unheard of.

Until the crack down on unions last September, strikes had been growing at a very impressive rate over the previous two years. There was a four fold increase in 1981 and the total working hours lost due to strikes in 1982 was a 60 per cent increase over 1981. Also in the rural areas probably a majority of peasants are now alienated from Marcos. And there the NPA has made very substantial gains in the last two or three years.

Q. Does Australia have close economic links with the Philippines?

A. The overall figures of trade



Child labour is widespread.

between Australia and the Philippines are not all that substantial. The area that is very important is that of Australian investment in the Philippines. There are 97 Australian companies that have investments there and these aren't all in the manufacturing industry.

However there are some very important Australian companies that do have substantial operations there. For example Dunlop has three very large subsidies—Grosby Shoes; Berlei Hestia, making clothes; and International Sports making sporting goods. And they used to have another one which closed down only 12 months ago.

Other Australian companies are A.C.I. with a fibreglass company and Saffcol, a fish canning company that makes absolutely fantastic profits. BHP has some operations there in manufacturing and also Comalco. ANI has a steel forge plant and have recently opened up a plant producing rolling stock. There's AWI and CIG both in the manufacturing field. Consolidated Gold Fields are engaged in mineral exploration. Kinnears of Melbourne in rope and cordage, Monier in concrete, Tubemakers of Australia and Wiltshire Tools, etc.

Q. Is there any way Australian workers can help Filipino workers improve their working conditions?

A. Well, there is quite a developed international perspective amongst people in the Philippines particularly industrial workers. They recognise it's very difficult to change things on their own. They have made direct appeals to Australian workers for support in a number of instances.

We have an example where this has been very successful in the case of Saffcol. Saffcol workers in Manila made a direct appeal to Australian workers during award negotiations early this year. And they got support in the form of black bans from the Storeman & Packers Union on Saffcol products in

Australia and a consumer boycott which was organised by Australia-Asian Worker Links.

These two factors forced the Saffcol Co. to seriously negotiate with the union over a wide range of conditions. They agreed to a very moderate pay increase and more importantly they reinstated 20 workers who had been sacked as an act of intimidation just before the union elections last year. So this is a very concrete example of what can be done. We're hopeful that in the future there can be more of these actions.

Q. Won't that type of workers' internationalism be undercut by protectionism. The idea that protectionism can save Australian jobs and prevent industries going overseas is very strong here. Do you think changing tariff barriers can save jobs here?

A. I think the response to the present crisis of unemployment which suggests that simply throwing up tariff barriers will solve everything is really a bit like the ostrich burying its head in the sand. It might do something to save jobs in the very short term and I wouldn't advocate lowering tariffs at this stage.

But I think we have to recognise that in the long term with the growing internationalism of capital we are not dealing with a national economy anymore. We're dealing with a world economy; 50 per cent of trade between countries is within companies. We are not going to be in a position in the future to resist demands that tariffs be lowered.

We have to look at responding to this movement of Australian capital offshore to Asia by developing much stronger union links with Asia to counteract this. The Philippines is a very good place to start. They already have a relatively strong union movement which is very active and which is very much looking to Australia for support. Its by far the strongest union movement in S.E. Asia. I think it's in our own interests to foster those links and assist them in their struggle. It's going to help the Australian working class in the long run.

Q. What is the present ALP policy on the Philippines and how could it be improved?

A. Well nationally the ALP doesn't have any specific policy on the Philippines which I think represents a real lack of knowledge about what is happening there. We are sitting on a powder keg and it could be another Vietnam within the next two or three years.

However the Victorian ALP passed

what is quite a progressive policy on the Philippines which has three elements to it. (See box page 27)

1. That the Australian Government should take some action over the massive violation of human rights by making demands in international forums like the United Nations and in regional Government to Government meetings and make its concern very clearly known to the Philippine Government.

2. It should immediately cease all military assistance. At the moment there's about \$1 million a year of Australian military aid goes to the Philippines. This doesn't sound much but the political impact of that is very important. Marcos wants that to give some legitimacy to his regime in the eyes of the world.

In addition quite a number of Philippine Army officers are trained in Australia, something in excess of 100 last year. In fact Australia trains as many Philippine army officers as the United States. This again is very important politically.

Further there is so called developmental aid. The Australian Government is engaged in two such programs which is supposed to assist the poor of the Philippines. But it's merely being used to provide the infrastructure for the Marcos military forces to further repress human rights and commit gross violations against the peasants in those areas.

The State ALP policy calls for the cessation of all that Government aid should be channelled through non-government aid programs so that at least it would not be assisting the military and may be able to help the poor.

3. The policy looks at the question of Australian investment and trade and calls on the ALP at the national level to support a joint Senate Enquiry into Australian trade with the Philippines and its effects within the country and on Australian industry. It further calls on the Department of Foreign Affairs and the Trade Commission to monitor the operations of Australian companies over there to ensure that they comply with international labour standards and in particular that they are not involved with breaking down independent unions in their factories.

I think this is the first step towards putting pressure on Australian companies so that they cease their vicious anti-union policies which seem to be very much the rule over there.

Q. What can Labor Party members do to get State Policy adopted nationally?

A. I think that within Victoria, since the policy has already been adopted, it's a question of getting that policy well known and of getting the Philippine situation well known so that there is a some sort of mass base to put pressure of the Federal Government.

We can see that Hawke is very loathe to implement any progressive policy at all and clearly he is not going to do so even if it's passed at National Conference without a massive ground swell of support for that policy. I think the rank and file of the Labour Party has to actually mobilise around this question, if we are to get action.

People in other states can as a first step get similar sorts of policy through their State Branches to ensure that



Hayden supports the status quo

there is truly national support when it comes before National Conference next year.

Q. What has been the role of the Church in supporting the NDP? Would you care to comment on the case of Father Brian Gore?

A. I think the role of the Church is particularly interesting. Almost the only news we have in Australia of opposition to the Marcos Regime concerns that of the progressive clergy such as that of Father Gore who had been arrested.

Traditionally the Church has played a repressive role. It was the major instrument by which the Spanish asserted their colonial domination for centuries. But in the past ten years, particularly since martial law the Church has taken on a very different character. This is by no means the whole Church but very substantial elements of it particularly at the local levels of the village—the local village church and the nuns.

A lot of human rights organisations are based on the Church and people face incredible risks to prevent human rights violations by the military. They try to defend the local people as best they can through these sort of human rights institutions against the campaign conducted by the military in so many areas.

So the Church is playing a progressive role although it should be differentiated from the NDF. There have been a few celebrated cases where former priests have defected and joined the NDF. But as a whole I think that the progressive church people would maintain an independent stand.

Q. There are several U.S. bases in the Philippines and we face a common problem in Australia. How do the bases differ there?

A. There are 14 major military U.S. bases in the Philippines. But by far the most important are the Clark Air Base and Subic Naval Base. They're very different to the U.S. bases in Australia which are basically there for communications and surveillance.

The bases in the Philippines store the largest arsenal of nuclear weapons in the Asian region. They employ in excess of 16,000 US military personnel and a much larger number of Philippine civilian personnel to service them. They really are the linch pin of the U.S. strategy in the India and Pacific Oceans. They pack a massive military might which is there to serve the U.S. interests in the whole region. They do represent a very significant nuclear target and the Philippines are very worried about it.

In February this year I attended the inaugural meeting of the Anti-Bases Coalition in Manila which was attended by 2,500 people and this was one of the major concerns which was expressed. These 2 bases alone are a gross offence to Philippine sovereignty.

Q. So finally do you have a contact address for people to get more information?

A. You can contact the Philippines Action Support Group at P.O. Box 266 Fitzroy, Victoria 3065 or phone the group on (03) 419 5045. We'd be happy to accept donations to forward to the Philippines. We have undertaken to raise \$5,000 during the rest of the year to send it to support the human rights project in the Philippines and we also supply an extensive range of literature on all aspects of the political situation in the Philippines and also provide speakers. We're very keen to speak at ALP branches.

south-east asia

Conference on Aust-Asia relations

Australia's role in South-east Asia under a Labor Government was the theme of a Conference on Australia-Asia relations held in Sydney on August 13 and 14.

Sponsored by the Committee Against Repression in the Pacific and Asia it took up the issue in the context of the independence struggles in the region. It also looked at other struggles for social justice and development.

By Lou-anne Barker

Member of the Port Kembla (NSW) branch and the Federated Ironworkers Union

Saturday night saw the start of the Conference with a public meeting in solidarity with Vietnam. Ken Fry, Labor MHR for Fraser (ACT), was the keynote speaker at this meeting. Other speakers included Jim Percy from the Socialist Workers Party, Jim Henderson from the Socialist Party of Australia and Allen Myers, a former United States GI who was part of a group of GIs who opposed the Vietnam war.

The Conference continued all day Sunday, with sessions on a number of flashpoints in Asia and areas of struggle and solidarity.

Goh Siong Hoe introduced the day with a discussion of "Indochina and ASEAN: what role for Australia?" in which he drew attention to ASEAN as an instrument fashioned by US imperialism to provide a bulwark against Indochina.

This was followed by a session on East Timor, with Ken Fry speaking again. He concentrated on the need for implementation of ALP policy on East Timor, and warned that the Government should not assume that the present Governments of Southeast Asia will remain in power indefinitely. "History has a way of catching up with repressive regimes".

Denis Freney, from the Campaign for an Independent East Timor (CIET) traced the history of the Fretilin-led resistance since the Indonesian invasion in 1975. Clearly, in the past year this resistance has strengthened considerably.

The session "Philippines in revolt" provided a graphic account of exploitation and repression in that country for centuries past and, in an acute manner today. Al McCoy from the University of New South Wales drew the historical account, and Peter Jennings of the Philippine Action Support

Group spoke of today's large-scale resistance by the New People's Army and the New Democratic Front.

The afternoon opened with workshops on trade union organising, women in the workforce and the politics of aid, convened by John Birch, National President of Community Aid Abroad, and member of the Administrative Committee of the NSW Branch of the ALP.

The Conference concluded with a plenary session on Sri Lanka, held in response to the emergency situation in that country. Speakers from the Eelam Tamil Association, the Tamil Association of Victoria and the Sri Lanka Solidarity Group spoke of the background to the current crisis.

In summary the Conference called upon the Australian Government to carry out the following policies:

Vietnam—to implement ALP policy for the immediate restoration of aid.

Kampuchea—to recognise the People's Republic of Kampuchea as the legitimate Government of Kampuchea, and to support its admission to the United Nations. To direct all aid to Kampuchea through that Government.

East Timor—to implement ALP policy, specifically:

To halt all military aid to Indonesia until its troops are withdrawn from East Timor.

To support motions for East Timor in the United Nations.

To assist in all efforts to advance self-determination in East Timor.

Sri Lanka—to bring pressure on the Sri Lankan Government to:

Cease anti-Tamil measures; to lift all bans on political parties and other repressive legislation; and to lift all restrictions on freedom of expression, including the expression of support for a separate Tamil state.

Nuclear Free Pacific—to take concrete action in support of the concept by withdrawing from ANZUS, revoking agreements for US bases in Australia, refusing US nuclear warships right of entry, and stopping all uranium mining.

Aid—to halt all military aid to repressive regimes, specifically Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines and Thailand.

To direct Australian aid to projects benefiting the people especially the poorest of the poor and minority groups.

To provide for specific aid directed towards women.



ASIO attacks

Surely, those members who, in the past, have been skeptical of claims that ASIO is a sinister outfit acting against the interests of working people and their organisations, must now be convinced.

Is the Party really so masochistic that it intends to sit idly by while ASIO subverts the Party and another Federal Labor Government?

Rank and file members must demand, at once, extraordinary State Conferences followed by a Federal Conference to fully debate the whole issue.

That this issue has from start to finish been engineered and stage-managed by ASIO is beyond all reasonable doubt. The whole affair revolves around the fabricated lies presented to the inner-Cabinet by ASIO.

In all the transcripts released so far, has there emerged any evidence, or even any suggestion that David Combe is or was ever a "security" risk? No! Likewise has the Russian diplomat, Valery Ivanov, been proved to be a spy? No!

This is what Laurie Oakes, an Establishment journalist had to say in the July 17th Sydney *Sunday Telegraph*:

"I have a nagging fear that this whole Valery Ivanov—David Combe affair, which has now destroyed the careers of two prominent ALP identities, may have started with an incompetent ASIO report.

"According to information I received after the full transcripts of the bugged Combe-Ivanov conversations were made public, they do not match in several respects the brief extracts provided to Federal Cabinet" (my emphasis).

If we had no reason to doubt ASIO's impartiality and integrity, perhaps we could, naively, put this down to "sloppy work" as Laurie Oakes would have us believe. But the fact is we do know better.

We know of the involvement of ASIO and its mentor, the CIA, in the coup that ousted the Whitlam Government. We know how it willfully obstructed the then Labor Attorney-General, Lionel Murphy. We know from the damning *National Times* revelations that ASIO regularly passes on information to Labor's arch enemy the National Civic Council (NCC). We know also that it is likely that ASIO planted the "Hilton Bomb".

Those members that are wavering or actually opposed to the abolition of political police forces should read Joan

letters

Coxsedge's book *Rooted in Secrecy* before voting at any Party forum. A vote against abolition is a vote to sell out all workers' organisations including the Labor Party.

Remember, at the last Federal Conference where the vote for abolition was narrowly defeated, had a few more delegates shown courage this crisis could have been avoided.

If Party organs are going to formulate and adopt resolutions on this issue as they all should, let's make sure they demand positive actions. Resolutions such as that moved by former Federal Minister Clyde Cameron which deplored the "current campaign by ASIO agents and Opposition Parties to use the expulsion of a Russian spy as a cynical excuse for waging a phoney, cheap, political points-scoring campaign against the Hawke Labor Government", are feeble. They demand and get no action.

This particular motion erroneously accepts ASIO's unsubstantiated claim that Ivanov was a spy. Worse, by characterising the events as "a phoney, cheap political points-scoring campaign", it seriously underestimates the stakes.

Frank Noakes (Tas) Branch and Unemployed Workers Union

Lilydale (US) Branch and Unemployed Workers Union

Central America tactics debate

I write in reply to a letter by Joan Baxter (*Labor Militant*, no. 3, July '83). She claims that my article "Revolution or repression" in the June '83 *Socialist Fight* is politically in line with the Hawke-Centre Unity Group which is paving the way for Federal policy to fall in behind US policy on Central America. The charge is incoherent on 2 counts.

Firstly, my article does take an explicit position against Reagan. *Socialist Fight* has always defended the Central American revolution from imperialism. When CISCAC split and RACLA was formed *Socialist Fight* opposed this as a shortsighted bureaucratic manoeuvre by the SWP and the CPA, each wanting control of a separate solidarity group. What was and is needed most is a united front of party and non-party activists. The creation of second editions of the respective SWP and CPA ideologies in the guise of solidarity groups was clearly harmful. Ironically enough (over a year later) we now find that CISCAC and RACLA have to work together in a united front in the

October 8 Mobilising Committee for the defence of the Salvadoran revolution. *Socialist Fight* is actively involved in that committee and helped secure the promise of a Federal Minister to speak at the rally later this year.

Secondly, Baxter tries to link my article with the Hawke/Reagan crocodile tears shed over "lack of human rights in Nicaragua". This is dishonest to say the least. I was more concerned about a fundamental issue for socialists—the loss of workers' rights. I wrote:

"[Workers and peasants] have been stopped from taking over factories and land owned by those bosses who share the Sandinistas' political power. Strikes are outlawed and socialists of various hues have been goaled for advocating even these elementary steps towards socialism."

The struggle of an anti-imperialist rebel force against the might of a US-backed war machine will not be assisted by stalling debate about the way forward. In the anti-Vietnam War movement it was never a condition of involvement that activists uncritically support the Vietnamese C.P. Today we are faced with another Vietnam war in the making. In the past political debate was seen as healthy, but for some reason or other, now we find that the opposite view is being put forward by people like Baxter.

The world suddenly becomes divided hard and fast into the anti-imperialist camp (Nicaragua, Cuba, USSR) or the imperialist camp (US and allies). The workers and peasants of Central America cannot rely on the Stalinists of Moscow or Havana. They need to develop an independent working class solution to the twin problems of poverty and civil war in that region. Building the October 8 rally is our small contribution to helping the anti-imperialist struggle. On the other hand, wavering in politically to these (at best) covering leaderships will not aid the cause.

Baxter says that the Nicaraguans and Cubans call for a negotiated settlement only to keep US forces out of the region. On the contrary, the Nicaraguan leader Daniel Ortega Saavedra made public a 6 point plan for the negotiations (*SMH* 21-22 July), which openly included the possibility of stopping military support to the Salvadoran rebels. While the White House is interested in this offer, it clearly puts more faith in the US navy battle group now preparing to steam south with 4-5,000 marines on board. In this context, Ortega's offer is at best utterly demoralising for all the rebel

anti-discrimination

Women take on BHP

Thirty two women steelworkers are challenging BHP over sex discrimination. They have lodged complaints with the NSW Anti-Discrimination Board alleging that BHP's Port Kembla subsidiary, Australian Iron and Steel (A&S) not only breached the law by refusing to hire women for many years but also that this prejudice continued to work against the women even after they were hired by the company.

All 32 women are among over 300 who won jobs at the Port Kembla steelworks as a result of a campaign which was launched in 1980.

Less than three years later many of them are again out of work, retrenched in BHP's massive job slashing. The women claim that they are suffering the effects of past discriminatory action by the company.

If the company had employed the

By **Robynne Murphy**
Member of Wollongong (NSW) branch and the Federated Ironworkers' Association.

women when they first applied for jobs, in some cases nine years ago, most would have had enough seniority to avoid retrenchment which was determined on a last-on, first-off basis.

The women claim that 2,300 women applied for jobs at A&S during the 1970s and had been refused jobs on the basis of their sex.

The case will go before a full hearing of the Anti-Discrimination Tribunal at a date yet to be set. But the implications of such a case are of far-reaching importance to all women who have only recently won jobs in traditionally male dominated areas

Editorial

Continued from page 4

point of defending bosses' profits here if you're not prepared to defend their markets abroad.

And so he's thrown down a challenge to the Left. He's thrown down the gauntlet. But no one will pick it up and so each week with each move he takes more and more. He took everything at the Summit and promised nothing. Still the Left insist that there will be some social wage gains from the Accord. He and Keating gave nothing in the Budget. They promise simply austerity, the loss of more jobs. And still the Left doesn't pick up the gauntlet. Where are the Steering Committee figures that raised a cry of protest about the Budget? Where are the leaders of the Socialist Left that

said this Budget must be rejected and revised? Where are the trade union officials who said this Budget totally breaches any concept of an Accord? They don't exist because by giving an inch they had no way of preventing Hawke from taking the mile. All the more this is the case when they gave the half mile to begin with. Hawke quickly, in the first six months, took the other half.

So what's left then? Whatever the disgraceful policies of the official Left, it's not the end of the line. There have been the beginnings of victories, whether it's Comeng or the Heinz workers. The mood of demoralisation won't last. The anger as it becomes clear what the Accord really meant, can mount rapidly. The ranks of the Party won't accept this forever and the fight will be joined with greater and

away a postal note for \$5 to Victorian ALP Head Office 25 Drummond Street, Carlton South, for the book "Pattern of Deceit" which was extensively reviewed in Volume 3 number 1 May 1983 of *Labor Militant*, but to date had not received the book.

I volunteered to phone and see what had happened to his money etc.

I uncovered the following:

Victorian ALP Head Office—correct address is 21-23 Drummond Street.

They said they did not have such a book and had not received any postal note. I was advised that No. 25 was the Labor Resource Centre and given their phone number.

I phoned 662 3844 Labor Resource Centre and was told they do not handle



Non traditional break throughs suffer present effects of past discrimination.

and whose lack of seniority is due to the prior prejudice of their employers.

greater vigour in the months and years ahead. The fight will be for socialist policies, for a line that accepts there is a class struggle, that national reconciliation is a propaganda weapon of the bosses' side in the class struggle and that the working class must accept there is no solution to the current economic, social and political crisis short of asserting its own total program and needs. This struggle will begin sometimes with small things such as the victories at Heinz and Comeng. But sometimes it will be joined on the big issues such as the question of war and the question of US bases. But it will be joined and its the perspective of *Labor Militant* to fight this through. We urge those who see the need for a revived and strong Left in the Labor Party and the labour movement to join us in this task.

the book and had not received any postal note.

Naturally I shall advise the member that he can trace his money through the post office, but I am writing to acquaint you with this apparent anomaly as advertised in *Labor Militant* in May 1983 page 22/23. Something is obviously amiss and needs looking into.

Yours sincerely
Beris Cundall
Secretary

Thank you for drawing attention to this misinformation which we had printed in good faith. We apologise for any inconvenience it may have caused.

Qantas lockout

At 6pm the office is boarded up until morning. The company executives are escorted home by bodyguards fearful of their lives as shots have already been fired into the building. Managerial staff have their telephones unlisted and changed three or four times as obscene and threatening calls continue to be made. Food is checked to make sure it hasn't been poisoned. All security has been tightened.

This is not Belfast or Brixton but the offices of Australia's overseas airline in San Francisco under siege since the decision by Qantas early this year to industrial sack 230 airline workers. An industry dispute has raged since February 1982 when the management sought to cut costs by reducing its workforce and subcontracting services.

By **Ted Lord**
Member of Penrith North (NSW) branch and the Air Traffic Officers Association.

Qantas, like most major airlines, has been operating at a loss over the past three years. In 1982 International Air Transport Association (IATA) carriers lost \$2000 million and the previous year US\$1600 million, this has resulted in the bankruptcy of some carriers notably Laker and Braniff with close calls by Pan Am and government operators, such as British Airways. Most airlines have sought traditional methods of reducing costs by cutting staff and services.

However, this method of cost saving by blaming workers was shown to be false by the ACTU in their submission of 18th November 1982. Qantas wages as a percentage of total costs have actually fallen by 7% per cent from 1976 to 1982. And since this date there has been a wage freeze for the past year. However fuel costs, Government charges for navigation and airport costs have risen noticeably.

Qantas is still under-capitalized compared to most other comparable industries. The debt to equity ratio is 3.35:1 or \$568 million debt to \$165 million equity. The Government has injected a total of \$89 million into the company but has received from dividends and taxes almost \$196 million. In 1982 the Government injected an amount of \$25 million into Qantas to cover the losses incurred over the disastrously mismanaged flight stewards' dispute of 1981. The

industrial policy of the company has been tied closely with the industrial policy of the Government. Frazer's get-tough line produced losses of nearly \$30 million as the company severely reduced services on all routes rather than to ground the newly acquired SP Boeing jet until the manning issue could be resolved.

Steps were taken early in 1981 to get workers to accept job losses. Company meetings of union delegates and floor meetings by management of all staff spelled out the same line—the company had suffered severe losses on trading and after trying everything could only save a reduced workforce as the way to save the airline. Some 1000 jobs would have to go and some operations would be curtailed and

Protest telegram

April 8, 1983

The Right Honorable Robert Hawke
Prime Minister
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600
Australia

We are deeply disturbed over the action taken by Qantas Airways, Ltd. in terminating over 200 employees at Honolulu and San Francisco Airports through the device of unilaterally contracting out work covered by collective bargaining with the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers to non-union firms. We urgently request that Australian government intervene on this crucial matter with a view towards restoration of dismissed workforce and resumption of meaningful collective bargaining with certified bargaining agent. Understand that representatives of International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers scheduled to meet with Australian Minister for Aviation April 7 in pursuit of that purpose.

Sen. Daniel Inouye
Sen. Alan Cranston
Sen. Spark Matsunaga
Rep. Daniel Akaka
Rep. Barbara Boxer
Rep. Phillip Burton
Rep. Don Edwards
Rep. Cecil Hefelt
Rep. Tom Lantos
Rep. George Miller
Rep. Norman Mineta
Rep. Pete Stark

industrial

offices closed. At this time staff learnt of the plan to subcontract the handling and ticketing in the U.S. which would extinguish 230 jobs. The balance would be achieved by voluntary means it was hoped, though this could not be guaranteed nor could the figure of 1000 be taken for certain.

The figure of 1000 jobs didn't seem to relate to any predesigned plan for overall reduction but only to the saving in wage costs which would coincidentally equal the \$25 million which the Government had given to the company.

Qantas has maintained that severance pay to all its redundant workers is above the industry standard, and for the few who were due to retire, these payments have been quite high. But before long most face the reality of unemployment—of being a have-not in a society geared to consumerism.

Similar problems occurred in Britain with the closures in the steel industry. While redundancy payments seem high, workers are finding it a trap. While some have been able to pay off debts or take a short holiday there is no long term benefit. The interest received on the lump sum is not high enough to live on but too high for assistance. Since debt payments cannot be received workers are forced to eat into the lump sum until it is exhausted.

There is no substitution for a regular job and a steady income. But labour leaders have been unwilling to lead any campaign in the fight for jobs.

The US workers appealed to Hawke directly and through political lobbying (see box) in the hope that the newly elected Labor Government would be more sympathetic and reverse the decision. The union had offered to bargain to save jobs. They planned to give back conditions which would lead to a saving of \$3 million. Qantas's rejection of this offer led to the sackings in February.

Hawke responded by refusing to intervene because of Qantas's "autonomy in all operational matters" even though it is government owned.

Disillusioned by this response by a well known Labor leader the workers organised a reception for Hawke as he passed through Honolulu as a part of his famous world trip—a "Let's squawk at Hawke!" rally.

Qantas has used the US workers as an excuse not to confront the real problems in the industry. The Federal Government as the shareholder and appointee of the Board of Directors cannot lay the blame on anyone else. The increases in costs for navigation and airport charges lie with the Government.

n.s.w.—south coast

Right-wing manoeuvres

The factional situation inside the Illawarra Region (South Coast NSW) of the Labor Party continues to develop with Municipal Elections to be held in September and pre-selection for State seats expected at about the same time.

Both the Wollongong and Shellharbour Councils are Labor run, though it takes a very close look to actually realise this.

By Phil Walker
Member of Warrawong (NSW)
branch and Delegate, Federated
Ironworkers' Union

But Wollongong's Lord Mayor, Frank Arkell, is an "independent", so he runs on the "Independent Team" ticket. You don't have to look too hard to find out what "independent" means. For example, Arkell, a multi-millionaire estate agent, recently distinguished himself by suggesting that council employees should take a wage cut. Of course this was staunchly opposed by the Labor candidates, some of whom work for the Council.

This year there has been an attempt to inject new life and policies into the Labor campaign for the Council Elections. During pre-selection one sitting Alderman, Bill Mowbray, who displayed a consistent tendency to cross the floor and vote with the "independents", was dropped. Mowbray displayed his loyalty to the Party by resigning and organising his own "independent" team.

Another of the more conservative ALP alderman, John French, was placed number 3 on the ticket in a ward where Labor traditionally wins only two of the three vacancies. French responded by sending a letter to members of his branch recalling the time, in a previous election, when a candidate in a number 3 position was elected because many people reversed their voting order.

The implications of French's letter were not too subtle. Since French's letter a group called the Lake Heights Area Progress Committee has sprung into action urging voters to reverse the ALP How-to-Vote slate.

The Labor Party's Lord Mayor candidate for Wollongong is Norma Wilson. Wilson, the first woman ALP mayoral candidate in the region, has been running an effective campaign with policies, while by no means socialist, well in advance of previous

council policy. The Platform includes job generation schemes, initiatives such as an entertainment centre and sporting institute, and creating a rates differential between commercial, industrial and domestic properties.

To many it would seem that Labor has its best chance in years to at least run close, if not win, the Lord Mayor election. The danger is that ALP control of the Council could be lost at the same time, largely due to the consistent inadequacies in the incumbent administration.

Also expected soon are the pre-selection for State seats.

The Illawarra region has for many years been the left-wing haven in a right-controlled State Branch. But with the increasing right wing attacks in NSW even this stronghold of the Left is now being probed.

In the Illawarra, sitting member George Petersen has achieved the unique honour of being challenged in pre-selection three times in the last 15 years. This time Petersen's opponent is Terry Rumble, a staunch right-winger with links to the Catholic church machine.

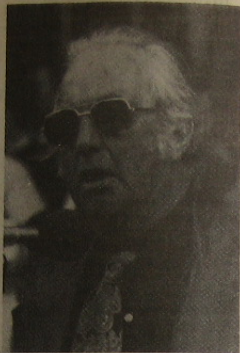
Apart from pushing "kerb and gutter" issues Rumble is opposed to abortion, gay liberation, national liberation struggles and, apparently, anything humane. By all indications, Petersen will retain his seat comfortably.

The seat of Wollongong is rather more interesting with sitting member, Eric Ramsey, retiring. Ramsey must take credit for turning Wollongong from a safe Labor seat into one he held by only 51 votes in the last election. His opponent then was that "independent" Lord Mayor, Frank Arkell, who received great backing from Wollongong's daily newspaper, that champion of independence, the *Illawarra Mercury*. Arkell has already indicated that he is standing again.

A new comer running in this pre-selection is Rex Connor, the son of the late R.F.X. Connor, and a someone apparently willing to take advantage of any likely opportunity.

Young Rex is a very serious candidate and has even had "Rex Connor, candidate for ALP pre-selection for the seat of Wollongong" calling cards printed in several languages. This has led many people to believe he is already the endorsed candidate.

Rex is very strong on "national destiny" and "making Australia great



George Petersen.

again" and high levels of protectionism for Australian capitalism.

At last year's Regional Assembly young Rex moved profoundly that "the Labor Party embraces the concept of macro-economics." The motion was lost because everyone did anyway.

Since Rex bobbed up about 18 months ago a lot of people have been won to his idealistic stance and have rushed to join the Party. Some are so committed that they even manage to stay at branch meetings long enough to sign the attendance book.

But whilst Rex is at present busy lining up for state seat it is generally accepted that his eventual aim is his father's old seat, the Federal seat of Cunningham, currently held by Steward West—the only left Minister on the Kitchen Cabinet.

Whilst no organised opposition to the current right-wing infiltration exists, a loose coalition of forces has developed that wants to retain democracy in the Party irrelevant of political ideology. Two candidates are definite to run in the Wollongong pre-selection, with others being possible. One is Colin Markham, representing the Left-wing and the other is Gerry Sullivan, best described as being in the centre. Both however, retain a commitment to the democratic principles of the Party.

At this stage no-one is sure just what the result of the pre-selection will be.

The forces that want to retain the basic goals of the Labor Party face the task of countering the simplistic and fantasy-like solutions being posed by the right-wing. One major job for this coalition is to draw in staunch Labor supporters that are not active in order to mount a united attack on those wishing to subvert Party democracy in any way.

Committee Against Repression in the Pacific and Asia

Statement of Aims

1. To aid in defending victims of political persecution and injustice in the countries of Asia and the Pacific, regardless of their particular beliefs, affiliations or associations, and to provide whatever assistance is possible for their families.

2. To organise such actions as may be possible within Australia to put pressure on reactionary Asian and Pacific governments to stop restrictions on the rights of free speech and free association, to respect the role of law in all political cases, to ameliorate the harsh conditions under which political prisoners are held, and to work for their amnesty and release.

3. To inform and arouse public opinion in Australia on the repressive policies pursued by military, authoritarian and even constitutional regimes in Asia and the Pacific which trample on elementary civil and political liberties, and to call attention to any complicity of the Australian Government and its open and secret agencies in aiding such violations of democratic rights.

4. To co-operate with organisations in Asia and the Pacific and other countries which have similar purposes.

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ADDRESS _____

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The peoples of Central America and the Caribbean need your support



You can help by contributing to the work of the Committees In Solidarity with Central America and the Caribbean.

Aims of CISCAC

1. To promote an understanding among the Australian people of the struggles of the peoples of Central America and the Caribbean against exploitation and repression, and to build solidarity with these struggles.

2. To oppose all imperialist intervention in Central America and the Caribbean and to champion the right of self determination for the peoples of the region.

3. To support the revolutionary governments of Cuba, Nicaragua, and Grenada and to defend the gains already made by the popular victories in these countries.

If you want to be active in this campaign, just contact the addresses below.

ADELAIDE: PO Box 428, Unley 5061.

BRISBANE: PO Box 141, Ashgrove 4060.

CANBERRA: Central America Solidarity Group,

PO Box 606, Dickson 2602.

HOBART: PO Box 532, Sandy Bay 7005.

MELBOURNE: GPO Box 5421CC, Melbourne 3001.

NEWCASTLE: PO Box 253, Newcastle 2300.

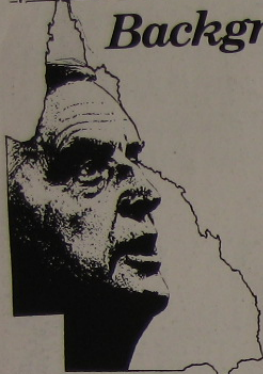
PARRAMATTA: PO Box A431, Sydney South 2000.

PERTH: PO Box 118, Victoria Park 6100.

SYDNEY: PO Box A431, Sydney South 2000.

WOLLONGONG: PO Box 1976, Wollongong 2500.

Background on State elections



The crisis in the anti-Labor forces has laid bare the weaknesses of the Bjelke-Petersen Government. Bjelke-Petersen claims the issue is Cabinet solidarity and that newly elected Liberal leader Terry White had broken the Coalition agreement by voting with Liberal backbenchers and the ALP to try and bring about debate on the Public Accounts Committee.

The Liberals have responded that it is their right to choose their own leader. But behind this recent fight are broader political issues. Nor is this the first time these differences have arisen.

By David Matters
Member of Kurilpa (Qld) branch
and the AT&MOEA

In late 1980, the differences between the National and Liberal Parties split wide open when the Liberals announced they would stand candidates against senior members of the National Party.

The Liberal Party is trying to wrest the leadership of the anti-Labor forces away from the discredited National Party. Not only do they see this as important if they are to maintain government in Queensland, but this is important from a federal point of view to bring the relationship between the two Parties into line with the rest of Australia.

In an interview with the Brisbane newspaper *Courier-Mail* on the day of his election to the Liberal leadership, White pointed to political issues like civil liberties, parliamentary reform, "all of which have been regarded as anathema by the National Party in 36 recent times."

Issues such as the infamous gerrymander of electoral boundaries which gives a minority National Party with 27 per cent of the vote in the last State election, 47 per cent of the seats, are an obvious democratic violation.

But as well during this year the Coalition has staggered from one set of allegations of corruption to another. One of the most recent has been a loan guarantee involving millions of dollars to a businessman who has left a trail of bankruptcies throughout the world. As well, over the years, most of the National Party Ministers have faced serious allegations of mining deals, land scandals, standover tactics.

Not surprisingly with the Coalition vote down, the Liberals want to take their distance from some of the more blatant charges against the Government.

There is a difference over the best tactics needed to defend bosses' profits. The Bjelke-Petersen Government has gained a well-deserved reputation for wielding the big stick. Such legislation as banning street marches, wider powers of arrest to police and the Essential Services Act have made the Government notorious. The racist policies carried out by the Government against Blacks in this State have drawn protests world-wide, and the openly racist statements by Ministers have merely fuelled this crisis.

Last year the Government almost came unstuck with its Essential Services legislation when the union movement responded to standdowns of railworkers by calling a general strike. Though the strike didn't achieve its main aims it did force the Government to back off on the Essential Services Act, showing that behind the Government's strong arm tactics lay a real weakness.

Of course, the Liberals have been quite happy to co-operate in using the big stick, but now they recognise that somewhat more flexibility in tactics is going to be needed if they are to keep in government on October 22.

This course has received important backing from an influential source of opinion for the bosses—the *Courier-Mail*. On the day of the election of the Liberal leader, the paper was filled with letters of praise for Terry White.

Coinciding with the crisis in the Coalition, Prime Minister Bob Hawke was to make a tour of Queensland. Both Hawke and State leader Keith



Keith Wright runs an image not a policy campaign.

Wright indicated through their comments that they were not prepared to take on the Coalition on the key issues facing working people in the coming election.

Speaking to the Queensland Press Club, Hawke leveled some charges at Bjelke-Petersen—defying consensus, opposition to the Economic Summit and refusal to be represented on the Economic Planning Advisory Council. "Queenslanders must make a choice whether they want to be part of the mainstream of Australian politics."

The real choice for Queenslanders is not this. The National Party dominance is due to the gerrymander. The choice is much more real and fundamental. It is a choice between two classes, between workers and bosses. Attempts to blur over this with states' rights rhetoric can only divide those under attack.

What is needed now are policies which defend and unify the working class against these attacks. The policies of consensus and accord do exactly the opposite. The real needs of working people will not be reached by a consensus with the bosses.

Winning reforms such as electoral redistribution, abolition of draconian street march legislation, right of assembly and so forth must be seen as the beginning steps for a Queensland Labor Government. But the fundamental questions of unemployment, erosion of wages and living standards as well as the ever-increasing threat of war due to US escalation are the lynchpin policies for a working class party.