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LEFT WING PERSPECTIVE

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The recent victory of the Liberal Government in the Victorian State Elections and the 3% increase in the D.L.P. vote is currently serving as a basis for an all-out capitalist press campaign to force on to the Labor Party a right-wing policy explicitly anti-socialist.

The continuing failure of the Menzies' Government to mitigate the economic decline marked by the still rising unemployment and generally reduced take-home pay cannot fail to reduce the electoral support for the Government.

This poses for the capitalist class the urgent need to do everything possible to ensure that the only feasible alternative government, that of the Labor Party, will be a "sane" one, wedded to the social status quo.

The assurances needed by capitalism that such a Government would be reliable are the definitive hegemony of a right wing party leadership oriented against all policies with a socialist implication, and with a foreign policy conforming to the requirements of the reactionary imperialist coalition led by U.S. Imperialism.

The modus operandi of the capitalist campaign is to harp daily on the 17% of votes recorded by the D.L.P. in Victoria as evidence that the Labor Party can only attain office by an accommodation with the D.L.P. - which latter would involve acceptance of the D.L.P.'s explicitly anti-socialist policy internally and its anti-Soviet external policy, which is to the right of that of the Menzies Government.

The press and D.L.P. campaign to assist the right wing of the Labor Party to establish its secure hegemony is concentrated today on the demand for drastic measures against party members who appear on "unity tickets" with members of the Communist Party in union elections.

But the real objective in their campaign concerns a far more important question, that of the Party's political policy. Their aim is a "Labor" Party functioning objectively as, and with no higher perspective than, an alternative capitalist party.

The Communist Party takes the view that it, and not the Labor Party, is the legitimate workers' party. If Labor Party militants, disgusted with D.L.P. or right wing union leadership, participate in unity tickets and are consequently expelled, the Communist Party leaders do not consider this a bad thing. They lead a rival party and point to such expulsions as evidence that the Labor Party is not a legitimate workers' party.

One obvious result is the weakening of the left wing in the Labor Party.

*Victoria Labor College
Collector*

approaching eclipse of the party.

On the other hand if the realistic perspective is that the next period will not see renunciation by the workers of their allegiance to the Labor Party, but rather that the party will be the arena for the struggle of conflicting tendencies in the workers' movement and that the minority Communist Party will not attract any significant added support, then any policy which involves divorcing left wingers from the Labor Party is to be condemned as objectively helping the right wing and, ipso facto, capitalist domination.

A realistic appraisal of the present position and of the history of the working class movement strongly urges the correctness of the second variant above.

The support for the Labor Party by the great majority of workers, as continues to be evidenced in parliamentary elections shows the tenacity with which they cling to a political organisation developed over many years.

In no European country that has an old tradition of political organisation of the working class and mass workers' parties incarnating this tradition, have socialist or communist groups been able to transform themselves into mass workers' parties by means of individual propaganda and recruiting and by the leading part played by some of their cadres in workers' struggles.

In four European countries mass Communist Parties arose shortly after the First World War. They were - Germany (after the Halle Congress), France (after the Tours Congress), Italy (after the Leghorn Congress) and Czechoslovakia.

In these cases the mass Communist Parties emerged from the gradual political differentiation within the mass social-democratic parties which, under favourable objective conditions (stepping-up of the class struggle, radicalisation of the working class and existence of a sufficiently politically educated vanguard) caused the established parties to break up and give birth to an alternative mass party.

This birth is obviously not automatic. It is impossible to bring socialist influence to bear from the outside, where an independent group or minority "party" is reduced to influencing those who can be influenced by means of individual propaganda. In order to influence the mass currents adequately, it is necessary to participate, side by side with them, in their own experience.

In Australia, the relatively impressive Communist Party strength in trade union affairs does not produce any significant shifting of political allegiance by the workers away from the Labor Party.

But the Communist Party leadership, ignorant or heedless of past experience as to the only way established mass workers' parties have yielded place to more progressive contending leaderships, pursues the illusion of one day winning over the allegiance of the majority of the working class to its independent and rival political formation.

Because of this false perspective, the C.P. leaders miseducate the militants, discourage their membership of the Labor Party, lead them into actions where by their expulsion by the right wing apparatus is facilitated, and thus inhibit the development of the left wing in the main arena of the contest and verification of political tendencies.

This central misconception of reality by the C.P. leadership can only objectively advantage the right wing in its struggle for political hegemony and consequently, can only buttress the continued domination of the capitalist class.

The A.L.P. left wing is quite correct in denying the importance of the unity ticket question in connection with parliamentary elections. The recent Victorian D.L.P. increase came largely from middle class voters moving away from Menzies. Failure by the Government to halt the economic depression, and its deepening will result in the movement of middle class strata away from the Government accelerating. Nor will it be possible for adequate political representation of divergent capitalist interests to be much longer served by a coalition government, itself an anachronism from more serene times.

If the early future offers a revitalisation of the economy, the trend away from the Government will be arrested and Labor will not succeed electorally.

If the recession continues and deepens, exasperated middle class strata will be

constrained to go past the ineffective D.L.P., to Labor. Economic pressure will weaken the potency of reactionary ideologies in the case of D.L.P. voters also.

To be effective when its day arrives, Labor will need a distinctive, realistic policy. Such a policy can be no other than anti-capitalist, anti-imperialist, socialist.

To win the party for this perspective is the task of the left wing. Its development will not be furthered by futile gestures that court expulsion from the main arena that the present relationship of forces makes more than likely.

To those militants and party sections who as yet do not agree with our analysis and who propose to face the likely alternative we can only urge the futility of any attempt, in the present political climate, to promote the secession of unions from the Party or a rival formation.

FIRST REPORT FROM THE WORLD YOUTH FORUM
JUST ENDED IN MOSCOW

Soviet Delegates opposed by "Leftists" - a kind of
Opposition of the "Trotskyist" Type.

Below we reprint extracts from a very interesting report in the main French bourgeois daily, "Le Monde" of 6-7th August, 1961. This report has been verified by reports in "L'Unita", the daily paper of the Italian Communist Party, which reported on August 4th, for instance, that African youths were questioning the doctrine of peaceful co-existence, asking "how can you talk of peaceful co-existence, while Africa is steeped in blood from north to south?", and that Latin American youth were asking questions such as, "how can you speak of peaceful co-existence which would mean a stabilisation of an impossible system?" Also the report on the intervention of the Belgium Socialist Youth is confirmed in a report in the Belgian Communist paper "The Red Flag".

The Fourth International was represented at the Forum by three representatives of the Lanka Samasamaja Party, Ceylonese Section of the Fourth International, and a number of other youth who were elected by the mass organisations to which they belong. All organisations represented were invited. The Mexican Revolutionary Workers Party (POR), Mexican Section of the F.I., was invited, and accepted, but we do not know whether they were able to raise the costs of the trip and were present.

Trotskyists welcome the discussion, and the way that our central thesis on peaceful co-existence has been so thoroughly verified at the Forum by youth representative of a wide strata of youth who had probably never in the main read any of our documents, but who through their own experiences became "sort of Trotskyists". In the very hall were so many Trotskyists and oppositionists, the very cream of the Bolshevik party, were condemned to death, including Trotsky himself, the youth of the world now have justified all that Trotsky and the Fourth International have fought for.

It is important to realise that this discussion was not something "out of the blue", our information being that the halls of Moscow's universities have heard many similar arguments from colonial students. The repercussions will be heard in the Soviet itself. The Soviet youth will soon demand the right to hold similar discussions, as will the Communist youth throughout the world - indeed there are just such signs of this in the Soviet now!

We await with interest the reports of our comrades who are still in Moscow as I write this. We are certain that they will bring more news that will be of great interest to all who wish to see the revolutionary renewal of the international Communist movement.

Bill Anderson,
Paris, 8th August.)

(From Le Monde's Special Correspondent, Michel Tatu)

Moscow, 5th August. The Hall of Columns in the House of the Unions which,