

# Labor MILITANT

VOLUME 3, NUMBER 3, JULY 1983

FOR WORKERS' POWER AND SOCIALISM

## Hawke backs Reagan's war in Central America

## Labour's loss in Britain

The bitter fruits of  
consensus politics

## Nationalisation

The way forward?

## Conference roundup

- The Party polarises
- Interview with Ken Fry



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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.

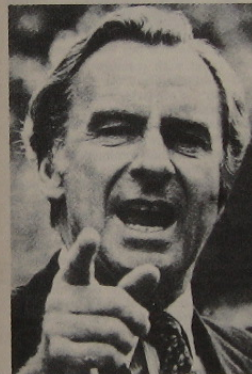
If you agree with these aims we encourage you to help finance and distribute *Labor Militant*. You can get each issue sent by mail at a cost of \$5 for 10 issues. We can also make arrangements to have a bundle of any size mailed or delivered for your branch or for you to sell. There are high costs involved 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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Thank you for your support.



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Signed articles do not necessarily represent editorial opinion.

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Any lingering doubts about Hawke's good intentions towards Party policy were shattered by his June 29 speech to the National Press Club luncheon in Canberra. More fundamentally, any waverings about where Hawke lines up in the class struggle were demolished at the same time.

In his first major speech since his return from abroad he committed the Government to economic and foreign policies based on "realism and relevance" rather than the "pursuit of doctrine". He went on to stress the need for Labor to ensure its program of reform was neither "disruptive nor counter productive".

This speech is just a more extensive rerun of what he'd already stated overseas. Party policy is "doctrine". He won't be bound by "ideological purity". "Realism is just another word for lack of hypocrisy and humbug".

But the real question is: Labor's program of reforms is disruptive and counter productive to whom?

The answer is crystal clear—to the capitalist class.

The Hawke Government is not just flouting Party policy, the policies they are actively pursuing are virtually indistinguishable from those of the Fraser Government. In fact nearly every statement Hawke made in the United States lined Australia up behind the Reagan Administration's reactionary positions—both on foreign policy and economic policy.

This was so blatant in the US that one reporter even asked Hawke how it was possible for him to have such close ideological affinity with a conservative like Reagan.

Hawke isn't defensive about these anti-working class policies. He promotes them in the same terms as Fraser—of looking to the needs of the majority, or interpreting the "aspirations of the people".

Hawke has set out his position on foreign policy. It's all the way with the USA. Foreign policy is to be "independent" within the framework of our position as an aligned nation. Party policy on Central America, East Timor, Vietnam etc. are all scuttled to accommodate the needs of US imperialism.

ASEAN needs to be built up. Indonesia is central to this, so East Timor policy is out.

ASEAN needs to be built up, Vietnam must be weakened, so our aid program is scuttled, we must pressure Vietnam to withdraw its support for Heng Samrin in Kampuchea and Kampuchea must be handed back to the butchers of millions—the shaky Pol Pot's Khmer Rouge.

The same thing happens with Central American policy and the position



Hawke refusing to be bound by "ideological purity".

of withdrawal of Australian troops from the Sinai. They are sacrificed to the US imperialist war drive in those regions.

On the economic front there's the same emphasis. While Hawke continues rhetorically about the twin thrust to fight unemployment and inflation simultaneously, Government action on unemployment is hard to find.

Election promises to maintain existing jobs in the steel industry melted away when BHP's next round of job cuts came up. GM-H's announced 4000 job cuts didn't provoke any flurry of activity.

As far as job creation is concerned the greatest publicity has been around the kibbutz proposal for youth—a proposal which is economically unviable and politically suspect. What are the kibbutz to be—forced labor camps?—character training camps to "improve the moral fibre"?

In real terms the Government is fighting inflation first using Fraser's policies. There's no capital gains tax or wealth tax. The Mini-budget was contractionary, aimed at reducing the welfare bill and putting an additional tax load predominantly on the working class. The State Premiers have even though they have made it clear that without increased Federal assistance they will impose even more severe cutbacks and unemployment will continue to rise.

And then there's the lynchpin in the fight against inflation—wage cutting through the Prices and Incomes Accord which has proved very successful to date. There has been an effective freeze on wage since the March 1982 quarter. The trade unions have been

kept quiet with constant negotiation and consultation for increasingly smaller amounts of catch-up. Meanwhile the Arbitration Commission knocked back claims to pass on the 1981 wage increases to rural workers and has reneged on the oil workers' agreement.

The response in the Party has been clear and strong on questions of foreign policy but weak on economic policy. Even the strongest left faction—the Socialist Left in Victoria has been very timid here. There have been criticisms about the need to have a more expansive economic approach, criticisms of the Mini-Budget, etc. But there is a failure to realise that the Accord is the lynchpin of an increasingly reactionary economic package.

Until this is clearly recognised the fight for even a defensive working class economic policy, let alone a socialist economic program, can't get off the ground.

Those who advocate the "little bit" approach to a fight back are doomed to failure. That there are progressive demands (little bits) contained within the Accord is irrelevant when the main thrust of the Accord and the way it is being implemented are reactionary.

Similarly those who see Hayden as a "little less reactionary" than Hawke and thus advocate supporting him, blind themselves to reality. Hayden is a central part of the rightward movement of the Parliamentary Party. He was one of the architects of the Accord, and because there are illusions in him he is able to play the role of chief apologist for Parliamentary policy betrayals within the Party itself.

# Hawke backs Reagan's war

Statement by the National Secretariat of the Committees in Solidarity with Central America and the Caribbean (CISCAC). (See ad page 31)

Prime Minister Bob Hawke has used his trip to Washington to put the Australian Labor Government firmly in support of US war policies in Central America.

His comments in Washington demand a quick and firm response from all those who are opposed to US intervention in the region.

Hawke asked the Reagan Administration to "balance its legitimate security concerns about developments in the area of Central America with a real concern for the human rights of people involved."

"I believe they will make that balance," he affirmed.

Hawke's stance is especially alarming, coming as it did less than two weeks after the respected academic journal *Latin America Weekly Report* headlined its June 3 issue "Hard right wins control of US policy in Central America."

The Prime Minister's statements are more than just a whitewash for the US-sponsored war now raging in Central America, especially in Nicaragua and El Salvador.

Hawke has made an explicit attack on the most progressive and humane forces in the Central American region.

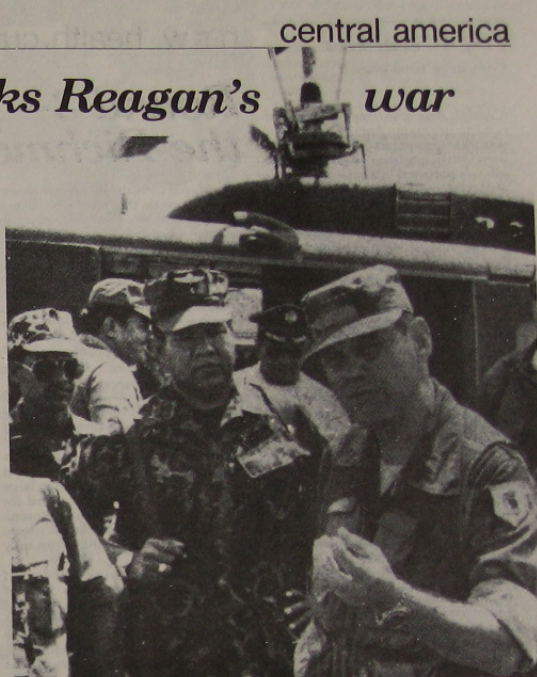
To establish clearly that he was not referring to the human rights of the hundreds of civilians killed each week by the Salvadoran military, or the rights of the overwhelming majority of the Nicaraguan people to defend their revolution against Reagan's *Somocista* terrorists, Hawke gratuitously offered the warning: "Don't let's fall into the trap that we often do of thinking there is only a violation of human rights in one part of the region."

Hawke, of course, was making a backhand reference to Nicaragua.

According to the June 17 *Australian*, "Mr Hawke said he was disturbed by commentators' predisposition to focus only on right-wing oppression and to exclude leftist deprivations. He lumped Sandinistas in with Somoza followers and will continue to refer to them as equally repressive."

To embellish his claims, Hawke adopted Reagan's own rhetoric holubolus. Developments in the region, he said, "threaten the intrusion of alien philosophies and communist-dominated regimes."

But the problem in Central America is not "alien philosophies." The



US trained counter-revolutionaries harrass Nicaragua from Honduras.

"problem" is that the people of Central America have rebelled against the poverty and degradation forced on them by brutal US-backed military dictatorships.

That was the character of the Somoza Regime in Nicaragua that was overthrown in 1979 by a popular movement led by the Sandinista National Liberation Front. It is the character of the Salvadoran Junta today.

Moreover, it is the most popular and beneficial social programs of the Sandinista Government that are now under attack by the US-backed counter-revolutionary forces operating from Honduras and Costa Rica.

For example, among the civilians killed by anti-Sandinista forces in Nicaragua last year were 58 technicians including many agricultural specialists, 34 teachers, 23 engineers, architects and other professionals, and two doctors.

These are the people who are working to bring education, technical skills and medical care to the Nicaraguan countryside—hardly an attempt by the

Sandinistas to deny "human rights"!

It is the US-backed terrorists committing the murders who are denying human rights in Nicaragua today.

Hawke claimed in the United States that he was not speaking simply on behalf of the Labor Party but on behalf of all the Australian people.

But how can he claim that the Australian people support US policy in Central America when even the American people themselves do not support it, as numerous recent surveys demonstrate?

The truth is that Hawke speaks neither for the Australian people nor for the whole of the Labor Party. To say what he did in Washington, Hawke had to completely overturn ALP policy on Central America!

If Hawke had gone to the US as a loyal representative of the ALP, he would have been campaigning for peace, not trying to cover for the warmakers.

Federal ALP Conference policy adopted in 1982 "reaffirms that the people in each of the countries of the

Continued page 6

[Central American] region have the right to determine democratically the political system under which they wish to live, and supports the political solution proposed by the Governments of Mexico and France in the case of El Salvador.

France and Mexico, like the FDR FMLN itself, have called for negotiations between the rebels and the Government to end the civil war.

Hawke stands in contrast to other social democratic leaders around the world. *Latin America Weekly Report* in its June 10 issue carries an item explaining that "Spanish Premier Felipe Gonzalez will act as a spokesman for the countries responsible for the Contadora peace initiative in Central America—Colombia, Mexico, Venezuela and Panama—on his next trip to the United States."

Hawke's statements also run directly counter to the policies of the Socialist International, to which the ALP is affiliated. At its April 1983 Conference in Lisbon, Portugal, the SI reaffirmed its support for a negotiated solution in El Salvador, and condemned US support for the Nicaraguan counter-revolution.

Hawke's support for Reagan's policies in Central America is part of the general commitment he made in Washington—of total backing for the US at home and abroad.

The Australian Prime Minister emphasised this by marrying his backing for US aggression in Central America to enthusiasm for the presence of US military bases in Australia, and for the ANZUS Treaty.

Together, Hawke's statements in Central America and the bases must sound an alarm bell for peace activists in this country. Central America is now the major front on which Reagan is applying his war strategies—and Australia, with its nuclear-related bases, is a vital support area for the wider war effort.

Since Hawke set off for the US, it has become even more clear that the Australian antiwar movement, as well as focusing on the question of the bases, must wage a hard-fought campaign to get the US out of Central America. It is impossible to argue that this issue is unimportant for Australians—Hawke has placed it squarely in the forefront of political debate.

One of the most telling blows Australians can now strike against the thrust of world war is to deliver a stinging rebuke to Hawke, informing him in no uncertain terms that the people of this country refuse to be put on record as supporting Reagan's Central American genocide.

## n.s.w. health cuts

# Round 3— the Richmond Report

In March 1983, the Richmond Report on services to the mentally ill and developmentally disabled (mentally retarded) was released. NSW Health Minister, Laurie Brereton, allowed a period of three months for public discussion of the Report's recommendations, in an attempt to distance himself somewhat from it, following

By Val Edwards

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

strong public reaction upon its release. State Cabinet is expected to consider adoption of the Report in July.

The principles upon which the Richmond Report is based, namely, that many people presently housed in large institutions could be better cared for with a mixture of expanded community support services and small decentralised residential facilities can only be fully supported.

The overwhelming body of progressive opinion in the field of psychiatric services would endorse these general principles, as well as the Richmond Report's proposal to separate the care of the developmentally disabled from the care of the mentally ill.

The Cuban government, noted for its progress in the health-care field, has a similar policy of maintaining the mentally ill in the community and allowing them to undertake socially-useful work.

The source of considerable concern about the Richmond Report and the Government's likely endorsement of its proposals is not its progressive "values and principles," but the likely use these will be put to—as a cover for massive cuts in mental health services and an attack on the wages and working conditions of some 9000 workers in psychiatric hospitals in NSW.

Skepticism about the likelihood of Brereton providing the actual resources that would be necessary to implement a proper program of de-institutionalisation—which would increase the quality of care and the quality of life of the persons concerned—is well-founded. One need only look at his track record so far.

**Round One:** Despite grand statements assuring all of his unwavering commitment to Community Health Services, all we have witnessed are more and more drastic cuts since

Brereton took office as Health Minister.

These cuts have taken the form of evermore restrictive staff freezes, (such that staffing levels in these services have been reduced by 30 per cent), and moves to reorganise the administration of these services. This reorganisation will shift employees out of the Public Service into the employ of hospitals, considerably reducing wages and conditions.

**Round Two:** Similarly with the so-called "redistribution" of hospital beds from the inner-city of Sydney to the outer western suburbs and Wollongong area: Despite constant reassurances from Brereton that absolutely no cuts to services were taking place, so far 549 beds have been closed but only 250 new beds opened!

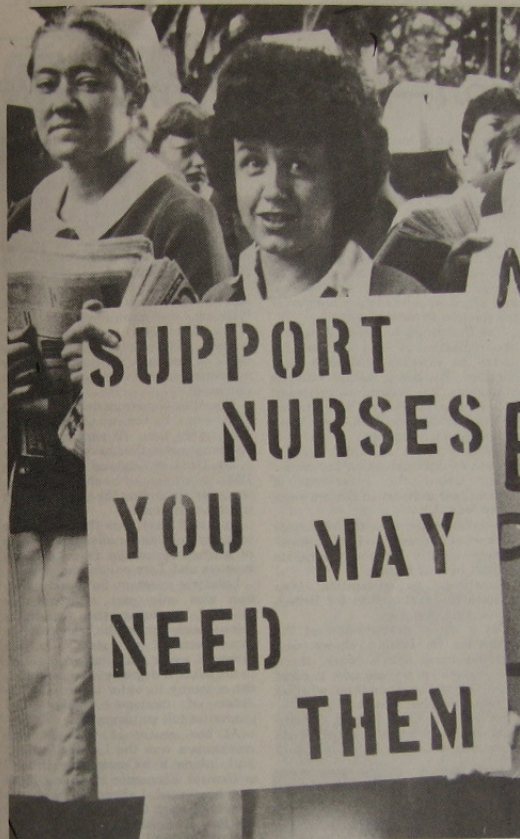
The combination of this record of cuts, and the grossly inadequate funding allocations allowed in the Richmond Report for the program of de-institutionalisation, can't help but lead even the most hopeful to the conclusion that the NSW Government is about to embark on *round three* of cuts in health services in NSW.

If Richmond were at all serious about his "values and principles," his recommendations on the resources needed to establish adequate Community Mental Health Services to substitute for the closing of a total of 2300 psychiatric beds, would have to be increased 500 per cent.

By Richmond's own reckoning, a community mental health service for a population of 250,000 would require a team of 29 people, costing \$820,000 per annum including operating costs. (Part 3, pp 59-61) Richmond allows an allocation of \$3.8 million per annum for three years for the establishment of such teams. However, \$3.8 million would only cover the cost of four-and-a-half teams of 29 people per year. This would provide services for a population of about 1.1 million. (Population of NSW on June 30, 1981 was 5,234,900—ABS).

This, of course, would barely be adequate to service the western suburbs of Sydney, not to mention the Wollongong and Newcastle districts—acknowledged by Richmond himself as grossly under-resourced—and the rest of the state.

The minimum allocation of funds required to establish an adequate Community Mental Health Service for NSW would be at least \$19 million per annum indexed for inflation. In addi-



NSW Health workers fight to retain their jobs and decent services.

tion, existing community health services, to which the de-institutionalised mentally ill and developmentally disabled would look, are seriously run down and in many areas have been forced to close. A restoration of full funding to these services is also essential if Richmond's ideas of community based care are implemented.

A similar gross underestimation of funds required to adequately de-institutionalise services, emerges with the allocations made available for services to the developmentally disabled; \$1.5 million for community support services for the whole state; and \$2 million for community residen-

tial units. Even if one accepts Richmond's ridiculous underestimation of the costs of running a community residential unit, (\$100,000 per annum for average of 5.1 servicing five to six residents—Part 2, p 73), his allocation of \$2 million would only provide places for 100 to 120 people. Yet Richmond proposes closing 1301 existing beds in institutions for the developmentally disabled by 1986. (Part 2, Recommendation 31, p 8)

Furthermore, Richmond allows no additional funds for the initial purchase of these community based homes, but proposes that they be taken

from existing Housing Commission stock. This places an even greater strain on the already overstretched supply of public housing in NSW. In many large regional centres in the state there is simply no Housing Commission stock available at all.

The most outrageous propositions put forward by Richmond, and almost certain to be endorsed by Brereton, is to shift 9000 workers currently employed in psychiatric hospitals under the Public Service Act to the employ of Hospital Boards or newly established Area Boards under the Hospital Employees Award.

This will result in a considerable reduction in both wages and conditions—an increase from a 35-to-40-hour week, less generous sick leave and recreation leave provisions, and loss of substantial superannuation entitlements.

Brereton has already laid the ground for a similar move with existing Community Health staff with the passage of Schedule 3 of the Health Administration Act late last year.

Such attempts to undermine the basic hard-won working conditions in an already relatively poorly paid sector of the workforce (mainly nurses) by a Labor Government, is an indication of just how far this Government has strayed from defending the interests of working people.

Moves also to abolish the category of "Mental Retardation Nurse" and substitute the new category "Residential Care Assistant" with lower training and wages, agains gives the lie to Richmond's talk of increasing quality of care.

One of the most insister, but nevertheless blatant, aspects of the report is its push for further privatisation of psychiatric services. Richmond recommends more use of private psychiatrists, subsidies to private boarding houses, and more extensive use of private psychiatric hospitals and private nursing homes—the latter particularly for elderly patients.

One hardly needs to remind *Labor Militant* readers of the reputation of some of these institutions. All such moves to force the most helpless members of our society into the greedy hands of the profiteers who run these private hospitals, nursing homes, and boarding houses, should be vehemently opposed.

The conclusion is thus unavoidable. Here is a report which, by the endorsement of the Health Minister and NSW Government, will constitute a major attack on industrial rights and public health services. One can only endorse the comments of Bronwyn Ridgeway, Assistant General Secretary of the NSW Nurses Association:

"The Australian Labor Party has always prided itself in the defence of industrial rights and social reform. The Richmond Report attacks both."

# Nationalisation—the way forward?

The term "nationalisation" is beginning to gain some currency again. It's being taken down from the dusty shelf labelled "Basic Principles and Objectives" and spruced up for re-examination. Before BHP started sacking thousands of steelworkers and coal miners and before General Motors-Holden threatened to shed another 4000 jobs, "nationalisation" was seen as one of the cherished demands to be

By Debra Stewart

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

fought for as a "matter of conscience and principle" by the Party left.

Back in 1974 when Labor Minister Kep Enderby was asked if he would nationalise Leyland in Australia to save jobs he replied with a terse "no."

But times have changed and the massive job-shedding by BHP has brought the question of nationalisation to the fore again, even in some unexpected quarters.

In an editorial on March 23, 1983, the Melbourne Age suggested that it might be necessary, if not desirable, for the Federal Government to nationalise BHP's ailing steel sector.

Having toyed with the idea though, the Age editors then dropped it in favour of further protection.

When BHP proposed on April 22 to retrench 611 miners, the Federal Secretary of the Miners' Federation, Barry Swan, suggested that the new Federal Labor Government should nationalise the coal industry. But as

yet Canberra hasn't taken up the suggestion.

The apparent easing of job losses at BHP has not however made the question any less important. Unemployment stands officially at 10.3 per cent, and shows no signs of abating.

So it is extremely timely to examine nationalisation in all its aspects to clarify just what exactly is involved and why it is such an important part of the solution to unemployment.

The first thing to establish is that nationalisation is legal and possible under the existing Australian Constitution. The power resides with the States not the Federal Government according to the Privy Council ruling in the late 1940s on Chifley's bank nationalisation attempt.

Secondly and invariably, any discussion of nationalisation becomes a debate about the experience of nationalised industry in Britain since World War II.

Socialists often hear the objection: "look what happened to British Steel" or more bluntly "it won't work, it's utopian, look at Britain."

Sometimes nationalisation even becomes the explanation for British capitalism's malaise!

But a closer examination of the experience in Britain shows why nationalisation didn't "work" there, and as well, it reveals how it could have. The real question is not whether to nationalise but *how* to do it.

In 1945 the Atlee Labor Government was swept into office on the basis of its radical *Let Us Face the Future*

Manifesto. Labour promised to create a "Socialist Commonwealth of Great Britain."

In the words of the Manifesto Labour intended to break from "the profiteering interests and the privileged rich," the "Czars of Big Business" who had "controlled the banks, the mines, the big industries, largely the press and the cinema."

The "profiteers and racketeers" who had brought about "great economic blizzards" and mass poverty.

The Manifesto specifically committed Labour to nationalising the Bank of England, the fuel and power industries, inland transport, and iron and steel.

The Atlee Government was as good as its word. By the end of its office, in 1951, more than 20 per cent of the economy was in the hands of the state.

The Bank of England went first in 1946, to be followed by electricity, gas, transport (including the entire London transport system).

Iron and steel were the last major industry to be nationalised in the face of intense opposition from the steel masters and Tory politicians alike.

Labour's program for nationalisation was only part of a broader proposal to bring the remaining private sector under the "constructive supervision of the state." Labour proposed using war-time regulations to introduce a degree of planning into the economy in order to prevent the abuse of monopoly power and guarantee full employment.

At the centre of the planning mechanism was the Labour Cabinet and Cabinet Sub-Committees. In 1947 a Central Economic Planning Staff was appointed. Labour established a Capital Issues Committee to control the flow of capital investment.

Hand in hand with these measures went a vast expansion of the welfare state, covering social insurance, health, education and housing.

In 1945 Labour had boldly declared "we are the masters now"; and undoubtedly Evelyn Waugh was not alone in thinking that under Atlee "the kingdom seemed to be under enemy occupation." But Waugh was wrong. The capitalist "castle" Labour "servants" had trodden on a few toes.

None of Atlee's measures conflicted in any fundamental way with the needs of the British ruling class. In his *Let Us Face the Future* (1945, pp. 484-5, 553-5) Ernest Mandel points out that the extension of the activities of the capitalist state is a means of over-



State-subsidised British capitalists roughing it.

coming the problem of over-accumulation of monopoly. Nationalisation is one means of alleviating this crisis.

Nationalisation by the state of certain sectors of the economy can be a means of increasing the profits of other sectors.

In particular, the state picks up the tab for the least profitable basic sectors of the economy, effectively subsidising the capitalist class, which is left free to plough more bountiful fields.

The state thus provides cheaper power or raw materials such as steel, reducing production costs for the more profitable areas of heavy finished goods, such as machinery, electrical and transport equipment.

It is important to note that British Labour was not alone in carrying out such measures after World War II. European capitalism faced many of the same problems.

Thus coal and electricity were nationalised in France, oil and electricity in Italy, oil, iron mines and electricity in Austria and coal in the Netherlands.

British Labour's Manifesto admitted that the industries it was taking over were those that were "inefficient and falling down on the job" and as such were "overripe" for public ownership.

Labour thus left enormous amounts of "healthy" capital untouched. In the strategic arena of finance, only the Bank of England was nationalised; Insurance remained untouched.

Moreover nationalisation in Britain was accompanied by handsome compensation which enabled the "expropriated" capitalists to expand into other more profitable fields. For example £164 million was paid for a badly run-down coal industry.

The other element of the state acting as the guarantor of monopoly profits is the process of reprivatising nationalised industries once the state has met the burden of rationalising and modernising them and so bringing them up to scratch.

Margaret Thatcher is now proposing

selling the profitable chunks of nationalised industry like Telecom and Leyland to private concerns—the process of privatisation.

This is nothing new. In 1970 the Tories proposed hiving off the chemical and constructional engineering sectors of British Steel to private capital.

In the end the Government backed down, reverting nationalised steel to its previous role of providing cheap raw materials for private industry. The Tories limited themselves at that time to selling off a travel firm and a brickworks.

So it's not just what is nationalised and how it's taken over, but the way

the industry is run as well.

One of the most striking features of Labour's nationalisation was the way it left the old ruling class in command, even in the nationalised industries.

In 1956, of the total of 272 seats on the boards of British nationalised industries, 106 were occupied by directors of private firms. Of these 49 were directors of private insurance companies, while another 31 were bank directors.

The most glaring example of changing the names but not the faces, was the case of the National Coal Board.

The NCB head, Lord Lyndley, was on the board of Britain's largest colliery company, as well as a number of other companies.

On the NCB there were two trade union leaders, but these were outnumbered by five directors from collieries, banks, railways and insurance companies.

This pattern of retaining the old personnel—on extremely high salaries, giving them a further link with the capitalist class—was even repeated at the level of colliery managers.

In a similar vein, the very state machinery which was to "plan" the economy, as a step towards socialism, was top heavy with the capitalist class itself.

The Chief Planning Officer from

Continued page 10



British Labour Party 80th Conference votes to nationalise key industries.



British Coal—no workers' control of nationalisation.

## Nationalisation

Continued from page 9

1947-51 was a director of British Aluminimum and two other companies. The Capital Issues Committee, supposed to regulate investments, consisted of seven bankers, stockbrokers and industrialists. Even the head of the Steel Re-armament Panel in the Ministry of Supply was the Director of the Iron and Steel Federation.

Despite the occasional outcry, nationalisation of this kind never really threatened the capitalist class. Indeed, if anything it reinforced the economic and governmental power of the British ruling class.

Conspicuous by its absence in any of this process is the working class. Atlee deliberately excluded workers from any involvement in nationalisation whatsoever.

Advocates of workers' control lost out under Herbert Morrison's Nationalisation Bill.

There were trade union representatives on the nationalised industries' boards, but they were there as managers not workers' representatives.

Indeed, the Nationalisation Acts specifically excluded the trade unions encroaching on managerial prerogatives.

Instead, experts were appointed by the Government who were responsible not to the workers, but to the Minister.

In addition the salaries these technocrats received (in 1956 the Chairman of the National Coal Board was receiving £7,500 per annum) insured their loyalties and identification with the ruling class.

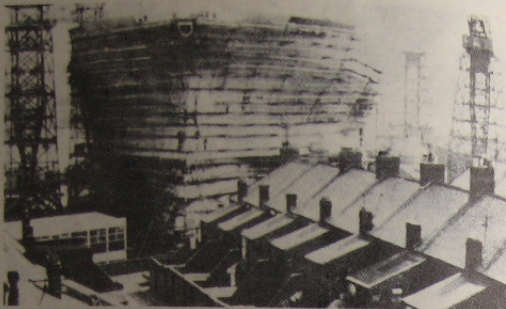
Nationalisation in Britain *not* advanced the interests of the working class. It is not a condemnation of nationalisation *per se* but is a negative example underlining the need to involve the working class itself in every facet of the process.

Any Government which undertook this would have to rely on a governmental apparatus that consisted of a democratically elected delegates of the working class.

They, and not the capitalist class, would have to staff the bodies that oversaw economic decision making, both on the level of the nationalised enterprise and of economic planning as a whole.

The management of individual firms would, at least initially, have to be subject to the elected control of the workers themselves.

Sooner or later the private capitalists would have to be removed from these boards, leaving them to be run by experts and workers elected democratically by committees of workers, consumers, and governmental representatives.



British ship building industry.

There would certainly be no lavish salaries that risked creating a privileged administrative elite. Nor would compensation be more than was absolutely necessary, if it was paid at all. Moreover, it would be essential to nationalise far more than just the lame-duck sectors of industry.

In the case of BHP, it would not be sufficient for Labor to nationalise merely steel. Its more lucrative investments, minerals and energy, would also have to be nationalised.

In order to tackle the problem of unemployment, which is a major justification for nationalisation in the first place, nationalisation of an industry would have to be coupled with a reduction in working time, with no loss in pay.

In this way nationalisation becomes a process of job creation and, when combined with overall economic planning, provides for the production of a profit that can be redirected back into the public sector in the form of socially useful production—extending services and public facilities—and at the same time creating more jobs.

So nationalisation can't be viewed as some sort of abstract concept to be evaluated objectively by some "neutral" expert. Instead it has to be evaluated in the reality of how it is to be applied in the living class context.

If it is administered as it was in Britain under Atlee it will become, despite all the good intentions involved, part of the mechanism to boost the profits of the capitalist class and fill the already overflowing coffers of a tiny minority.

If on the other hand nationalisation is organised and run in the public interest and for social need, directly involving those who will benefit from and work in the nationalised enterprise then nationalisation becomes part of the progress towards socialism. But central to this process is the direct involvement of the working class itself.

This is no utopian dream. There are many examples of this in the socialist

countries.

Even under British capitalism there have been examples of what potential there is when workers' skills and energies are harnessed democratically to serve the needs of society and not those of profits.

Lucas Aerospace is one such example. It was formed in the late 1960s from a number of company takeovers. It produced high-technology equipment for projects like Concorde. In the 1970s workers at Lucas discovered that the company proposed a rationalisation scheme that threatened thousands of jobs. These workers had already been engaged in sit-ins to prevent the transfer of work. Now they stepped up their resistance to job-cutting by forming a Combine Committee.

This committee linked the highest-level technologists to the workers on the shop floor.

Using the shop stewards, a questionnaire was sent to all the workers asking for suggestions for products Lucas Aerospace could make using the existing machinery and skills of the workers.

In a short time Lucas workers' Corporate Plan proposed 150 products to meet the needs of both Britain and the underdeveloped countries.

These included equipment for crippled children, a portable life-support system, energy-conserving fuel cells, a combined electrical/petrol engine for cars, a road-rail vehicle, and a new kidney machine.

The Lucas workers went out of their way to deliberately draw experts, other workers, and the trade-union movement into participating in and supporting their plan.

The Plan was not taken up by the bosses because it was "incompatible with their product range". But the Plan and the way it had been organised demonstrated that workers can both create and produce products that serve the real needs of society and not those of profits.

Former Brian Burke took off his suit jacket at the Trades and Labor Council on June 14, metaphorically rolled up his sleeves and told the delegates the bitter truth about Government finances.

Pointing to the economic mess left by the Liberals he told us that Government charges would be steeply raised to cover an estimated \$274 million Budget shortfall.

By Barry Healy

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

He said that since the Government has been in office it has not been able to get accurate information from the Public Service on the old Liberal spending programs. It also has not had time to implement any of Labor's spending programs.

So he said his intention is to ensure that the current programs are responsibly funded until they can be properly reviewed. In short, the Burke Government is slugging workers to "responsibly" carry out the Liberals' program.

And slugged we have been: electricity is up 15 per cent, fixed rates for water is up almost 8 per cent, hospital charges are up between 11½ per cent and 19 per cent and that is just the start.

While some measures have been taken to soften the blow for the very poor the rises will still hurt the vast majority.

To make the rises more palatable Burke has initiated a "Government sacrifice" program. This means pay cuts for all politicians and top public servants. Those on \$30,000 a year will lose 2 per cent of their salary. The cuts increase up to 10 per cent for those on \$35,000 or more.

While attacking the bureaucratic "tall poppies" is attractive, in this case it is being used to obscure a major attack on workers' living standards. Burke told the TLC that the Government is attempting to create a suitable atmosphere for investment to flourish and bring about economic recovery.

However, as just about everyone in Australia now knows from observing GMH and BHP, big corporations will only invest if their profits are ensured by crippling workers' wages and living standards.

Responding to questions from TLC delegates Burke said that wages in WA will remain frozen until August or September when the National Wage decision will be made. That will be about 4 per cent wage freeze so WA workers are looking down the barrel of real wage cuts in the near future.

western australia

## The attacks begin



Brian Burke exponent of the art of sweetly administering bitter pills.

## How Burke governs

Brian Burke's appearance at the West Australian Trades and Labor Council on June 14 to explain his financial proposals not just before they were publicly announced but before they even went to Cabinet, is an indication of how intelligently he is selling his policies inside the labour movement.

Even before he appeared at the TLC certain union leaders had been invited to private conferences and softened up for the blow.

As a consequence no serious murmurs of discontent emerged at the TLC. So Burke has headed off any resistance around wages.

In preparing the ground Burke was assisted by two moderate union officials, Tom Butler and Jim McGinty, who have been appointed as advisers within the Government. Both are experienced numbers gamesmen and can help steer contentious issues through in both the Party and TLC.

So the Hawke/Wran consultation/consensus method of administering bitter pills to the working class is being used to advantage by the Burke Government.

By this method and by the rapid implementation of issues dear to the heart of the Party, the Burke leadership after four months in Government is still in its "honeymoon" phase.

For instance, the Fremantle

Railway service is to get going again and moves to protect the Shannon River Basin as a national park are under way.

The notorious Section 54B of the Police Act has been redrafted (but not quite in line with the Party policy) and anti-discrimination legislation is being prepared for women.

But all is not rosy as far as women's policy is concerned.

Burke has publicly opposed the Party policy on abortion (free abortion on demand and no conscience vote for politicians) so we had better not hold our breath on that one. And apart from rumblings inside Labor Women the leadership can't seriously be said to be under pressure on abortion — yet.

Inside the State Parliamentary Labor Party Burke runs a tight ship. In Caucus meetings back bench members can't add items to the agenda presented by Cabinet. This effectively prevents back bench control of Cabinet.

The first months of the Burke leadership have shown him to be very shrewd in conducting himself. But the pressure of the economic crisis will provide the litmus test for Burke. Will the Burke leadership defend those who brought them to power as a Government that protects the interests of workers before the attacks of the bosses? The indications to date are not so good.

## Bitter fruits of consensus politics

In the recent British general election the Tory Party achieved a 144-seat majority in the House of Commons. Yet the fact is that this majority was gained on the basis of a 2 percent fall in the percentage polled by the Tories in the 1979 election, and in a much greater fall in the actual proportion of the electorate voting Tory.

Thatcher was elected by a mere 43 per cent of those voting (31 per cent of the electorate).

The pro-Tory mass media presented the Tory vote as a "landslide" and an overwhelming endorsement of Thatcher's policies. But the reality is that a clear majority—57 per cent—voted against the Thatcher Government.

Moreover, Thatcher was unable to win any serious section of the Labour Party vote. The British working class remain deeply hostile to Thatcher and everything she stands for. The Labour Party maintained its support in the working-class areas of England's cities, in the industrial towns to the north, and in Scotland and Wales.

Nevertheless, Labour's defeat was severe and should not be minimised. Thatcher's victory is a bitter blow to British workers and will embolden the employers' attacks on jobs, wages, and conditions.

Thatcher did not fight the election on her record, which has been disastrous. Nor did she

campaign on her proposals for the next five years, which amount to a dramatic attack on the workers.

Instead she concentrated on exposing the contradictions in the Labour leadership and its program, and on a campaign of redabating.

Thatcher's actual program over the coming years includes:

- \* Increasing unemployment beyond the present real 4.5 million to 6 million;

- \* Privatising large sectors of the nationalised industries, including British Telecom and parts of British Leyland;

- \* Pushing ahead with the destruction of welfare services and introducing a two-tier health system, with decent medical care only for those who can pay;

- \* Introducing further draconian anti-union legislation, including provisions to weaken the links between the unions and the Labour Party;

- \* Dramatically increasing police powers and stepping up repression of Black people;

- \* Installing Cruise missiles, strengthening Britain's ties with NATO, and backing US President Reagan's war plans, especially in Central America.

The following is an interview with Chris MacDonald, a former member of the British Labour Party, and currently a member of Kotara ALP branch in the Newcastle region.

nation forward.

She also used a lot of jingoistic rhetoric which unfortunately, still strikes a chord among sections of the population, including some of the unemployed.

No doubt some unemployed, who have got very depressed about being unemployed, saw the idea of the nation being made great by a truly great leader, as something very attractive.

I think the whole thing really is that Labour itself, in a sense, didn't want to win the elections. The leadership felt the country was in such a mess, and yet really hadn't worked out anything specific to do about the crisis.

Q. What do you think are the main issues facing people today in Britain?

A. One issue I think is a very high priority is unemployment. I think this is something feared by everybody. Unfortunately, many of the people who have jobs today in Britain probably voted for the Tory Government thinking they would be able to keep their jobs. But I don't think this is the case for many.

Secondly, I think along with unemployment is the whole economic crisis that goes with it. The fact that prices will continue to go up—oil prices, even for recreational things. The price of petrol has risen so much that people now can't just get in their cars and go off where ever they like.

Or the price of going to something like a sports centre has gone up so much many people can't go and play their favorite sport anymore.

How are people going to react if the price of electricity goes up and they find they can't run their television sets, or if the cost of the license goes up? Televisions have to have licenses in Britain, and they are quite expensive. When I was there it was £60 a year for a color television license.

And of course, in real terms, wages are not going to keep up with inflation. They are going to be fixed at a lower rate of inflation.

People such as pensioners will find their payments being reduced in real terms.

Another thing that is very worrying in Britain today is that the health services are going to disintegrate and the education service is going to disintegrate. If you have a lot of money, which very few people do have in Britain, then obviously you will be able to afford private medicine, you will be able to afford private education.

But if you haven't got much money, and the majority of people haven't, then you won't be able to afford these things. So instead of having to wait a couple of months say for a major operation, as you might have to do now, you might have to wait six months, even longer.

The school where your children go won't be able to afford text books; perhaps won't be able to afford an extra teacher. This is the sort of thing that is going to happen.

Another important issue, of course, is the peace issue; the fact that Cruise and Trident missiles are going to come to Britain.

The sacrifice that the women made by staging an 18-month-long protest outside the airbase at Greenham Common may have been in vain, if the missiles are finally sent there.

And it is a real worry because [US

President Ronald] Reagan has surely got a policy of limited nuclear war. Everybody in the peace movement knows that whole concept is ridiculous. Everybody knows that there is no such thing as a limited nuclear war except, apparently, the nuclear war they really seem to think this will happen—that there will be a limited nuclear war.

Then there is the whole housing problem. If you want a house and you can't afford a mortgage you may go to your local council. But you may then find that you are homeless because they can't build houses. I know that when I was in Britain last year they had stopped building council houses for a whole length of time. This meant that more and more people were homeless, particularly young people. Not being able to find anywhere to live, they were out on the streets. In the British climate that's really grim.

Overall it is a very depressing picture. It shows a future, unfortunately, of people becoming increasingly disturbed by what is happening. Hopefully, people will tend to get together and try and do something about it all. Hopefully, the people who are in jobs will realise what is happening and do something about fighting back. It's really important for the unions to reach out and organise the unemployed too, and begin to stop the rot which has set in in Britain.

Q. What did you think of the Labour Party's campaign during these elections?

A. I think, unfortunately, that the Labour Party's campaign was pretty disastrous in the sense that certainly as far as the unilateral disarmament policy concerned, the leadership didn't keep to Conference policy. There seem-

ed to be almost total disagreement among the Leadership, whom the majority of people listen to anyway, such as Foot and Healey, with this policy.

Healey said during the election campaign that he wouldn't serve under a Labour Government that had a unilateralist policy. Foot seemed to have a very wishy-washy attitude to the whole affair and everybody else seemed to be, as I would call it, pussyfooting around, and pretending that CND Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament didn't really exist. Conference policy didn't exist, and that the peace movement was just something in the distance.

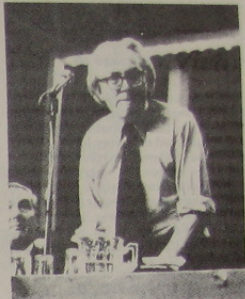
The Labour Leadership said they would create jobs. But they didn't really go into details about how they would create jobs.

I know that the local candidates had to work very hard to get people out to vote for them because there seemed to be a general apathy about the Labour Party.

Basically I think it was the Party Leadership's fault that Labour lost. This is because so many of Conference policies were deliberately undermined. The right-wing of the Party was obviously determined to fight on what they considered were the issues, regardless of what had actually been agreed upon at Conference. No wonder there seemed to be little confidence in the Labour Party itself.

It also probably seemed to be a Party that shall we say, was throwing everybody out. So people thought, well we are not going to vote for these people because they can't even support their own people.

I feel people had no confidence in the Labour Party because of what the right-wing have been doing to undermine left-wing candidates. The biggest



Michael Foot leading the defeat.

social result by-election, one that we will all remember with horror, was Bermondsey, 60 years a Labour seat, which suddenly goes to the SDP (Socialist Democratic Party). And I blame this fully on the Leadership of the Labour Party because I think they deliberately undermined the candidate himself, Peter Hatchell.

I noticed in Coventry where I lived that the right wing within the branch would undermine left-wing candidates who were put up for local elections.

And I think people became aware of what the right-wing and the Leadership of the Labour Party were doing and therefore had no confidence in them.

And of course I know the SDP has been blamed as well for the poor Labour result. I guess some people looked to the SDP as something new. Some people may have given their votes to the SDP because of the "newness of their policies."

Continued page 14



British unemployed protest against Thatcher's policies.

## British Labour loss

Continued from page 13

But basically, I think the main reasons were lack of confidence in the Leadership, the fact that the campaign was conducted on a very low key level, that the Labour Party Leadership didn't even seem to be trying, didn't even really want to win.

Also the fact that people saw Maggie Thatcher as a strong person and Michael Foot as a bit of a wet—something that the media encouraged of course.

And the fact that the media encouraged the idea that if Labour got in, Britain would be over-run by the "reds," people would have to pay a heck of a lot of taxes, jobs would be taken off people, people who had money would have to give their money away to other people, etc, etc.

Q. What is happening in the left wing of the Labour Party?

A. I think that it is important now for the left-wing to get together. I think that the basic problem has been that many people have got similar ideas, maybe from a different standpoint, but haven't got together and formed a strong enough section of the Labour Party. With Tony Benn gone it is going to be necessary to find a new leader or a

new group of leaders.

I think it is important that everybody tries to find a common policy, tries to get together and say, well, these are the sorts of things we want for Britain, these are the sort of issues on which we want to fight.

There will be disagreements, of course, but once the left becomes the strong force within the Labour Party, they can more easily force the Parliamentary Labour Party to carry out these policies.

The problem today is that policies are formulated at branch level, resolutions are passed at branch level, then at Conference but once they get to the Parliamentary level, then they are just ignored.

I think that it is important that MPs are made to feel uncomfortable by the left-wing in the Labour Party. I think that it is important that the left-wing in the Labour Party gets into any position in the Labour Party that it possibly can, so as to make the MPs feel uncomfortable, to make them accountable to their constituents.

So I think it is important that everybody on the left gets together. It is going to take time, unfortunately, and I don't think Britain has time. But the goal should be to make sure they have common policies, that they make the MPs accountable, and that they make people aware of what is happening in Parliament.

This is another thing that happens.

People think oh well, I voted for my MP and that is it. But very important laws are coming out of Parliament. Today, for example, I heard with horror that capital punishment may be coming back in Britain—a Bill is going through Parliament right now. It's a mistake sure that people know what is happening.

One way to do this is to encourage activists to produce and sell their various papers, such as *Militant* and *Socialist Action*. Such papers should include information, some of the common policy the left has agreed to fight around, as well as the particular political point of view.

Q. What sort of impact has the Irish struggle had on the Labour Party in Britain?

A. Again it is the left-wing that take up this particular struggle. The right-wing seem to have a policy of maintaining the status quo in Ireland with the troops still there in Northern Ireland. Most left-wingers support the withdrawal of the troops from Ireland. Most of the left-wing supported the H. Block hunger strike campaign.

Of course, there is great debate among people as far as the bombings are concerned.

Most of the left wing see it as a struggle by people for their rights.

But, of course, the left-wing is a very small section of the Labour Party.

STOP THE RIGHT TO WORK THE CUTS



Unemployed demonstrate in Glasgow.

Unfortunately, the majority of the Labour Party see it as quite right that British troops should be in Ireland suppressing what they see as guerrillas who are fighting against the British. I don't think the whole question of Ireland has been fully debated. I don't think the whole question of how the Irish Republican people feel has been put to the Labour Party properly.

I know there is great fear about people within the Labour Party about getting involved with groups like H. Block or Troops Out. This is because if you do get involved, as I did, you can get harassed by the police quite a lot. You can have very difficult for you. Because made very frankly, the whole of the establishment is quite paranoid about the situation in Northern Ireland and can make life very difficult for people active in those sort of campaigns.

I wish that the situation could be resolved in Ireland. But I can't see it happening at the moment particularly with the Tory Government back in and the right-wing of the Labour Party silent on the whole question, or actually supportive of Tory policy.

Q. What sort of role do the unions play in the Labour Party in Britain at present?

A. One would hope that the unions would be representing the people who actually belong to unions. But, in many cases they don't; their leaderships are very right-wing. Many union leaderships tend to go along with the right-wing Labour policies. They don't seem to be encouraging people to demand better conditions either. It seems to be much more a policy of, well, you have got a job, hang on to it, because you probably won't have a job next year.

I remember the rail strike last year by ASLEF, the smaller of the two rail unions, which was really trying to fight for better conditions. But they were just smashed by the TUC [Trade Union Council]. They had to go back to work, accept rostering, and accept conditions against which they had been fighting for six weeks.

Another worrying thing is that once you become unemployed, there are very few unions that have actually got an unemployed section. Some unions have such sections. I know here in Australia the Teachers' Union has. You pay a certain amount if you are an unemployed teacher and you still belong to the union and I think this is good. This way the unemployed have some means of feeling they have a voice somewhere.

I think all the unions should openly encourage this. I think the union leaderships won't encourage the unemployed to be organised because they want to keep in with big business, they want to keep in with the capitalists, they want to keep in with the Government. They don't want to admit there



is so much unemployment, they want to pretend that it is not really happening.

I think also the Tory Government's legislation for secret ballots for union elections and industrial action is going to be a big danger. Because it means that votes can be fixed. The Thatcher Government is scared that the workers are going to realise exactly what they're up to and start going on strike, start using their power.

Q. Can you tell me about the Militant Tendency in Britain?

A. The Militant Tendency has always been the big bogey as far as the Labour Party is concerned. And I can't understand why. They work very hard and they get people into the Labour Party, which I would have thought would have been to the advantage of the Labour Party.

They pretty well support Labour Party Conference policies on the 35-hour week, nationalisation of banks, nationalisation of industry, support for women's liberation and so on.

They go into working class areas and recruit members to sell their papers. They encourage people to be political, they encourage people to go to meetings to discuss ideas, and they encourage people to be full members of the Labour Party as well.

I think probably one of the reasons why the right wing of the Labour Party fears the Militant Tendency so much is that they feel people shouldn't be members of "two parties". But I honestly can't see why it should matter particularly if people are working to the good of the parties they are making them into the bogey the right-wing has and to undermine good people like Peter Tatchell who was a very good Militant Tendency member

and would have been a good Member of Parliament.

Q. Where do you think the Labour Party should go from here?

A. Again I can only say that I think the Labour Party itself should get more organised, the left-wing should get together, should get common policies, and should fight against any Tory proposals which are dangerous or unacceptable to working-class people.

I think that within the left a new leader or groups of leaders have to be found fairly quickly. I don't think it is any good pretending that the Labour Party is a united party. But I think that it is important to say, okay, there is a right-wing and a left-wing in the Labour Party, like the "wets" and the hardliners in the Tory Party.

I think that the left-wing has got to go out into areas of high unemployment, into the industrial and the agricultural areas of Britain, and work really hard with people, point out what is happening, talk to people, and get people to talk about what is happening.

I think they have got to try and educate people and show them that together they can do something to stop it. But this will only happen if all sections of left-wing are prepared to forget their sectarianism, are prepared to forget their own little fights, and start fighting back against the Thatcher Government.

Unfortunately, Maggie Thatcher has got such a big majority in the House of Commons that some of the anti-labor bills she is going to put forward will be passed. But I think that once people realise better what she is doing then they will try and do something about it, they will start to fight back in a big way.



# The Party polarises

## Queensland State Council

"We are in Government now . . . and some people do not seem to realise that we cannot allow ourselves the little self indulgences of the past."

By Anthea Parker  
Member of Kurilpa (Qld) branch and the AT&MOEA

Those were the words of Bill Hayden at Queensland State Council on June

4. Hayden was speaking against a motion from the Petrie F.D.E., which called on the Federal Government to implement policy on East Timor.

At his urging, an amendment was passed which stated that "the timing, rate and extent of (policy) implementation is a matter for the Government to determine in the light of prevailing conditions."

And so it was with most major policy areas at this State Council meeting.

### Socialist left extract

... it must be noted that many members of the Australian community, and more particularly many members of the Labor Party who worked hard for a Federal Labor victory, are in a state of shock at the performance of the Hawke Government. Within weeks of obtaining Office, the Hawke Government

orchestrated a shameful campaign, by smear and innuendo, against a former Party Official, David Combe. They accepted the word of ASIO, an organization which has been a leading enemy of the Labour movement since its inception, and initiated injunctions against Australia's only 'progressive' newspaper—the National Times. It has clearly breached, in a very fundamental way, Party Policy on important Foreign Policy issues, such as Timor, Sinai and Vietnam. It has retained the services of John Stone, who has been a leading Government functionary in promoting anti-working class monetarist policies in the time of the Fraser Government.

But it was not only the substance of the decisions made by the Hawke Government — it is the manner in which it has operated, particularly in relation to the Parliamentary Caucus of the Labor Party Mini-Budget. Most, if not all, of these decisions were taken without proper consultation with the elected members of the Federal

ALP. It is on public record that member of the inner Ministry lied to the full Ministry, and Caucus, on the reasons for the black-banning of David Combe, and justified it on that most treasured of conservative grounds, the interests of National Security.

Since 1967, the Labour movement has supported the great struggle of the Vietnamese people against US Imperialism for self-determination. The replacement of the murderous Pol Pot regime with the Vietnamese-backed Kampuchean Government was a necessary and proper step to protect the integrity of the Kampuchean revolution. The fact that this action is used to deny reconstruction aid to the Vietnamese people is to be deplored. The scandalous and unprincipled courting of the Indonesian regime and the denying of years of ALP support for the fight of the Timorese people, is perhaps a cause for greater shame.

The gap between policy and performance is becoming alarmingly large. It will only narrow if the rank-and-file members of the Labor Party and the Trade Union movement insist that the democratically arrived-at decisions of Policy are followed, and it is in the interests of all factions of the Labor Party that proper procedures of accountability are adhered to.

The real debate was about the role of policy as decided by the rank and file of the Party. Many delegates obviously felt uneasy about the way that the Hawke Government has thrown policy out the window on uranium and on foreign policy issues such as aid to Vietnam or self-determination for the East Timorese (see extract in the box from a Socialist Left publication distributed at Council).

But following the lead of Bill Hayden, the majority consistently opposed attempts to voice these criticisms of the Parliamentary leadership.

The uranium debate was where Hayden showed his true colours most fully.

Two motions were received calling for a special Federal Conference to discuss uranium policy, but the Socialist Left chose to ignore this call in favor of an amendment which said that "the Queensland Branch views with alarm recent reports of new contracts for the sale of uranium, and reports that the Government does not recognise any connection between the sale of uranium to the French, and nuclear tests in the Pacific."

Hayden immediately launched into an attack on those in the party who dared to criticise Bob Hawke and who were using 'destabilising tactics' against the Government. I wonder what effect such an accusation has on those on the left of the Party who maintained up to the March elections that Hayden would have made a more progressive leader than Hawke!

As a result of Hayden's intervention, even the amended motion was lost, though only after a division was called for.

One positive feature of Council was the unanimous support expressed for the introduction of legislation in both the Federal and Queensland Parliaments to give effect to the U.N. Convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women.

While this might seem a relatively uncontroversial issue, a great deal of time has been spent in attacking this legislation in the local media. All sorts of bizarre claims have been made, such as, that children will be separated from their parents at birth, and that women will be forced out to work against their will.

At least the Party is immune to this right wing propaganda. But it is a great shame that the section of the legislation dealing with Affirmative Action has been removed by Cabinet. This section is essential to really begin the elimination of job discrimination against women. In a period of economic recession this is vital.

## NSW Women's Conference

The resolutions passed by the NSW Labor Women's Conference, held on May 28 and 29, proved once again that rank and file women in the NSW Branch are far to the left of the Party leadership.

The views of the 700 delegates from ALP branches and affiliated unions were a sharp contrast to the predominantly conservative male delegates to NSW State Conference two weeks later.

By Lou-anne Barker  
Member of the Port Kembla (NSW) branch and the Federated Ironworkers Union

Women's Conference anticipated many of Hawke's betrayals of ALP policy and passed a number of resolutions on foreign policy which either reaffirmed or strengthened present policy.

An urgency motion to immediately implement ALP policy on East Timor and grant visas to the Fretilin representatives to tour Australia was adopted. Conference called for renewed aid to Vietnam and the withdrawal of recognition for the coalition forces including the remnants of Pol Pot's regime, along the Kampuchean border.

It was only a week later that Hawke ditched both these aspects of present foreign policy.

Another motion on Central American policy was also timely since Hawke took only a further week to ditch the present policy in the scramble to assure Reagan and Wall Street of his whole hearted allegiance. This motion called on the Federal ALP to declare its opposition to U.S. military and financial aid to the Military Junta in El Salvador and to condemn the action of the U.S. Government in financing and training the counter-revolutionary forces invading Nicaragua.

The ALP Government was also urged to withdraw troops from the Sinai, recognize the PLO, to call on the U.S. to halt the flow of arms and money to Israel and support a democratic secular state of Palestine.

Conference was structured to attempt to combine different methods of discussion and debate, so some workshops as well as the more usual plenary sessions were held. This worked to a certain extent but it put the Conference under tremendous time pressure. On any one motion or policy area the time for debate was very limited.



British women at Greenham Common—a human chain against US bases.

Workshops were held on four policy areas; Women and Unemployment, Women's Centres, Uranium and Disarmament and Women in Prison. In each of these debate centred around a previously prepared printed statement. In addition there were four workshops on skills to provide greater information and increase women's participation in the Party.

One of the more interesting workshops which led to much debate at the plenary session was the one on Uranium and Disarmament. The workshop was run by Tessa Mallos who is one of the leading figures in the Nuclear Disarmament Co-ordinating Committee.

Discussion at the workshop centred on peace, disarmament, uranium mining and U.S. bases. One woman from the Movement Against Uranium Min-

ing pointed out how the Federal Government was already flouting policy on the safeguards of uranium mining, as well as on the export of uranium by selling uranium to the French Government.

Part of the prepared motion for the workshop, stated that "Labor Women reiterates its policy of opposition to all foreign bases on Australian soil" and should take action to ensure that "as a first step the Government should take action to ensure that American facilities in Australia cannot be used to initiate or facilitate the use of nuclear weapons." During discussion it was pointed out that this was the main purpose of the bases which provide a key link in the U.S. nuclear weapons system, therefore



Labor Women call for extensively amendments the NSW Land Rights Legislation.

## Labor Women

Continued from page 17

Labor Women should be demanding that the Labor Government immediately remove all foreign bases.

However that strand of the Steering Committee with Anne Catling as spokesperson argued for caution: "... we have to be careful about our tactics... be careful how we put things forward... there are powerful forces lobbying the ALP from the other direction... and we must tone down our demands in order to win the rightwing of the Party."

This defeatist logic predominated in the workshop but fortunately on the Conference floor it was roundly deflected. An amendment reaffirming Labor Women's previous policy of the immediate removal of the bases was passed despite vigorous opposition by Catling, the mover of the workshop motion.

Another amendment passed at the workshop, almost got overlooked at the plenary session when it was apparently forgotten. This stated that Australia should develop a non-aligned foreign policy and withdraw from the ANZUS alliance. After a reminder brought it to the floor of Conference, this too was passed.

Many other progressive motions were passed by Conference. The recent NSW Land Rights Legislation was criticised and extensive amendments to the Act were called for. These included a provision that acknowledges Aborigines' prior ownership of land, to allow for claims

to private land, to widen the definition of claimable land and other provisions to make the Land Rights Act a genuine one and not a legalisation of the past theft of Aboriginal land.

The time problem and the consequent weakness in the range and depth of debate was very marked in the section on industrial policy. In the current recession industrial issues are of particular importance to women. Job availability, work practices, wages, etc are important when unemployment has skyrocketed, wages have been cut through a virtual one year wage freeze while inflation remains at the 12 percent level. However almost the entire time slot for industrial policy was taken up with discussion on the Victorian bushfires. While this is an important issue, it was certainly not controversial and did not warrant excluding other debate by having it first up on the agenda.

In an attempt to get some discussion on these issues an urgency motion condemning policies which try to make working people pay for the economic crisis was debated. But here too there was little time for debate. The content of the motion which opposed "any measure that attacks workers wages and standard of living" and which blames the crisis on "greedy" workers not profiteering bosses, was passed. But direct reference to policies which actually cut wages like the Mini Budget's tax on superannuation were deleted by an amendment from Catling.

However some industrial and

economic policy emerged from the unemployment workshop. There was one amendment which demonstrated the desire to implement the ALP's socialisation objective in the light of the crisis by demanding the nationalisation of BHP. This was passed. And a motion calling for a capital gains tax to help stop the growing inequality of income and wealth in Australia was also passed.

There was a heated debate on the Richmond Report on the mentally ill and handicapped. Despite extensive material distributed by the NSW Nurses Association explaining the inadequacies of the Report and how it will lead to a reduction in Health Care facilities and jobs, a compromise motion was passed. (for details of the Report see page 7)

As usual on areas concerning women and social welfare, Conference was progressive, calling for the abolition of the conscience vote on abortion among other things.

1983 Labor Women's Conference reflected yet again that the bulk of women in NSW Branch want to see radical changes carried out by a Labor Government. The fact that these Conferences exist is important in developing women's confidence in increasing their participation in the Party and hopefully carrying forward in the fight for more progressive policy inside the ALP.

It is a pity that Women's Conference did not have any decision making power. It is one of the most representative Conferences in the ALP at present.

## NSW State Conference

There were few surprises at the NSW State Conference held on the 11-13th June. With the right wing in firm control, not only was the outcome predictable but the debate was stifled.

By Bruce Threlfo  
Member of Annandale (NSW) branch

In the wake of Bob Hawke's world tour, the main topic of debate was Party policy. In an amendment to the Administrative Committee Report, John Birch called for the policy-making process of the Party to be followed, particularly with regard to East Timor, Indonesia, Vietnam and uranium. He pointed out that the Federal rules of the Party were quite clear, and referred to the precedent set by John Curtin in calling for a special National Conference during World War II to change the Party's policy on conscription.

The response of Centre Unity was to say as little as possible about policy. Their position seemed to be that Hawke and the Government shouldn't be criticized, and should be able to change policy if they so desired. The amendment was defeated along factional lines.

On the next morning of Conference, an amendment to the Foreign Affairs report that policy on East Timor and Indo-China be implemented "according to the rules of the ALP" was accepted without dissent. A further amendment, referring to the policy of withdrawing Australian troops from the Sinai peacekeeping force, was also accepted when the mover, Peter Baldwin, explained that he wasn't seeking immediate implementation of the policy.

The next round in this debate came when Bill Hayden addressed Conference. Contrary to the impression of most members up until now, Hayden informed us that there had been *no* breach of policy by Hawke. Further he claimed that the Federal Executive and Caucus could interpret and implement policy over time and according to the prevailing circumstances.

Even taken at it's face value, this means that the Parliamentary wing is under no obligation to follow Party policy. In fact, it was nothing more than covering for Hawke's repudiation of long held Party positions. Even the right-wing didn't feel up to advancing such a blatant denial of reality.

The remainder of Conference followed the predictable pattern of recent years. The only departure from the

normally tight factional alignment was over a call for the implementation of the 38 hour week in NSW.

The 1982 Conference passed a motion supporting shorter working hours for Government employees, despite the opposition of Neville Wran and Barrie Unsworth. This year a similar resolution had already been accepted, when an amendment calling for legislation within 12 months to generalise the 38 hour week across the board in NSW, was put forward.



Barrie Unsworth

This was narrowly lost by 319 votes to 304, with several Centre Unity union delegations voting crossing the floor. One of the arguments put forward in opposition to the amendment was the Hayden line of the previous day—that the timing for the implementation of policy should be left to the Parliamentary Party.

In another setback to the unemployed, a motion to lift the freeze on public sector employment in NSW was also defeated. This further revealed the contradictory position towards unemployment taken by Conference.

John McBean, in his opening address as President of the NSW Branch, emphasised the plight of the unemployed and pointed out that living standards were declining. Neville Wran declared to Conference that NSW was in a far sounder financial position than any other state. Yet when it came to actually doing

something, they all ducked for cover.

This is in contrast to Victoria, where the introduction of the 38 hour week for its 80,000 health industry workers from July 1 will create an extra 2000 jobs.

The debate on uranium resulted in further watering down of that remainder of the uranium policy. The motion from the left accepted the 1982 National Conference Policy, but called for an interpretation which would allow only 58,000 tonnes to be mined. The right advocated that all existing mines and the proposed Roxby Downs mine in South Australia should be completely mined out, and this motion was carried.

The machinery matters debated dealt with Affirmative Action and rule changes to membership procedures.

The Affirmative Action proposals were put before Conference in 1982 but were deferred. In the meantime, there has been a significant reduction in the scope of their application.

Women will comprise one third of policy and machinery committees, with a minimum of one woman on each. The Administrative Committee and Review Tribunal will have a minimum of three women each.

But that is as far as it goes. Thus, Affirmative Action proposals regarding National Conference, National Executive, State Conferences, FECs and SECs have all been dropped. So effectively this decision seeks to exclude women from the decision-making bodies of the Party, and is in direct contradiction with the recommendations from the 1981 National Conference.

These proposals were adopted without dissent, despite the lead article in the May issue of "Challenge" which claimed that the left were opposed to the watered down version.

The rule changes to centralise membership procedures were carried by 441 votes to 274, despite the Steering Committee attempt to defer the proposals until 1984. These changes will deprive branches of the right to admit members to the Party, and are generally seen as a step in the direction of centralized pre-selection procedures in the future.

Overall, the decisions of Conference were aimed at taking the pressure off the Labor Governments at both State and Federal level. Discussion of the problems facing Australian workers, like unemployment and declining living standards, was little more than generalised rhetoric, with no real alternative solutions put forward by the Left.

## Victorian State Conference

It was one of the best State Conferences for a long time with the Left winning resounding victories on many policies ranging from local issues such as uranium, ASIO and the Tasmanian Dam to foreign policy on Central America, East Timor and Vietnam. Left-winger Gerry Hand MHR for Melbourne summed it up when he said:

By Chris See  
Member of Springvale (Vic) branch  
and the Tramways Union

"The media kept asking me, why wasn't the blood flowing a foot deep through the doors of the Conference? I replied that as usual they hadn't done their homework. There's no blood because it's clear that the rank and file membership of the Party are fully behind us."

The Right wing was in disarray with hardly one Parliamentary even attempting to defend Hawke and his numerous statements on his overseas trip. There are rumours that the Right

wing are even cheesed off with Hawke's neglect of them, now that he's in power.

And Hawke's positions are indefensible. He has blatantly ignored all the democratic procedures of the Party, where policy has been hammered out over many Conferences and by many delegates and are not to be discarded so lightly.

Of the many decisions at the Conference, two items have received very little attention by the media. One was the decision to proscribe the Industrial Action Fund, a split-off from the National Civic Council (NCC). It's known by that in NSW and Victoria but it's called the Industrial Research Organisation in Queensland.

Certain Trade Unionists have fallen out with B. Santamaria and have set up the new organisation to fight the Left in all matters relating to the trade unions. However Mike O'Grady (President of the Anti-NCC Sub-Committee) said that we shouldn't be fooled by the split since the aims and objectives of the IAF are exactly the same as the

NCC i.e. to keep Labor out of power, as it had done for 20 years, since 1954.

The motion to ban members of the IAF from membership of the ALP was carried unanimously.

The other item ignored by the press was a firm rebuke to Hawke on his statement in Washington, expressing confidence that the Reagan Administration will make a satisfactory "balance" between human rights and U.S. strategic goals. It can be summed up as "all the way with the CIA".

The Conference called on the Federal Government to immediately disassociate itself from Reagan's policies in Central America, particularly in relation to El Salvador and Nicaragua. Further Conference reaffirmed its support for the Nicaraguan Government and for recognition of the Democratic Revolutionary Front as the legitimate representative of the Salvadorean people.

It was pointed out by Ros Eason (Foreign Affairs Policy Committee member), that U.S. policy is internationally isolated. "Even more offensive was the suggestion by Hawke that the counter-revolutionary forces operating against Nicaragua have

end all aid to the Junta of El Salvador.

— Brian Howe, Minister for Defence Supply;  
— Peter Bachelor, Victorian State Secretary of the ALP;

— Jean McLean, President of the Foreign Affairs Policy Committee;

— Joan Coxsedge, MLC;  
— Percy Johnson, Victorian State Secretary of the AMFSU;  
— Peter Steedman, MHR for Casey;

— George Crawford, Victorian State President of the ALP;  
— Senator Olive Zakharov;  
— Ros Eason, Foreign Affairs Policy Committee member;

— Carolyn Hogg, MLC;  
— Eddie Mikaleff, MLC;  
— Kevin Hardiman, former Victorian State President of the Victorian ALP;

— Bill Hartley, Victorian President of the Food Preservers Union;

— Jim Simmonds, Victorian Minister for Employment and Youth Training;  
— Gerry Hand, MHR for Melbourne;

— Solange Shapiro, Junior Vice-President of the Victorian ALP.

— Ralph Edwards, Miscellaneous Workers Union;  
— Andrew Theophanous, MHR for Burke.

genuine human rights grievances. These are ex-members of the National Guard who had carried out atrocities under Somoza," she said. Percy Johnson of the AMFSU seconded the motion, drawing attention to new events in Chile, the jailing of unionists in the copper town for daring to hold a 24-hour strike. Jean McLean added that the CIA had admitted to attempts to undermine the Nicaraguan Government and that the motion was in line with the sentiments of the Foreign Policy Committee which supported National Liberation movements in the fight against repressive regimes.

In addition to this motion, several prominent members signed a protest letter to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Bill Hayden. (see box)

On the first day Conference had heavily criticised the Government over East Timor. It was noted that Government leaders had, in their superior wisdom, formulated different policies from those formed by the Party's democratic procedures and that Party members were incensed. Once again the East Timor Policy was reaffirmed with particular emphasis on the impending United Nations vote.

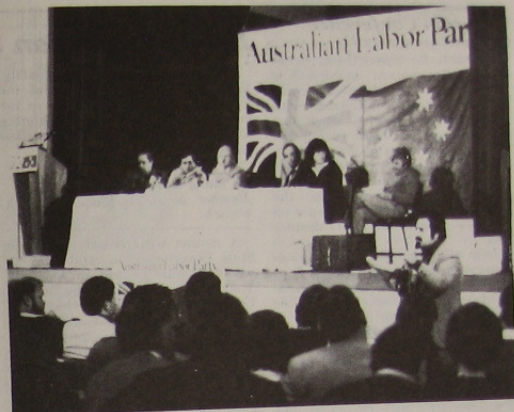
Barry Cunningham, MHR for McMillan, tried to defend Hayden and Hawke by objecting to the words "implement without delay" saying the Government needed more than 100 days to implement policy in the best possible manner. The motion was carried overwhelmingly with one lone audible voice against.

In a separate motion by Caroline Hogg Conference endorsed the visit by the Fretilin representatives Abilio Araujo and Roque Rodrigues to Australia at the end of July and urged all members to attend the public meeting (see the itinerary for the tour in the ad on page 27)

An urgency resolution on aid to Vietnam which demanded an immediate resumption of an aid program suitable to the needs of the Vietnamese people was debated. Bill Hartley pointed to why Vietnam is being punished.

"Vietnam does not want to stay in Kampuchea but as long as the U.S. continually demands to have a pro-American Government in the region, the problem will remain, until America amends its stand and gives Vietnam every possible assistance. We were the aggressors and have a huge obligation to give aid. This was even recognised by the Paris Accords."

Closer to home the Anti-Uranium Committee Report called on the Federal Government to cancel the special licences granted to Energy Resources of Australia (Ranger) and Queensland Mine (Nabarlek) to negotiate new uranium contracts, and further we urge that Queensland



Victorian State Conference June 1983.

Mines should not be permitted to proceed with shipments of uranium to France."

Hawke has outraged Party members just on this single issue alone. His actions even go against the Hogg

amendment which stated that licences to mining companies that sell uranium to France would not be granted while they are engaged in nuclear weapons testing. The resolution  
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## Victorian Left gains ground

George Crawford, Federal Secretary of the Plumbers and Gasfitters Union and Socialist Left candidate, won the position of State President of the Victorian branch of the ALP by 241 votes to 200 against Centre Union candidate Jim Davis, State Secretary of the Transport Workers Union.

Crawford is an outspoken supporter of left views and trade union militancy. In his acceptance speech, he said it was the third occasion that he had been President during his 39 years involvement in the Labour movement. He was President when he visited Hanoi in 1972 and was heavily criticised by the Federal Leadership at the time. He still maintains a strong interest in Vietnam.

Solange Shapiro, the new Vice President spoke on the theme that policy had to be implemented and not put away on the shelf. This is only the second time a woman has been an Officer of the Party. The first was Sally Johnson in 1969, also as Junior Vice President. Shapiro hoped it wouldn't take a further 12 years for another woman to be elected.

The swing to the Left was also reflected in the composition of the Administrative Committee of the Party. The Socialist Left faction has won two extra positions on Sunday's election at the Conference. The SL has

never been in a better position since intervention in 1970. The Administrative Committee, made up of 33 members, runs the Party between Conferences with 30 being elected from Conference and 3 being the elected Officers of the Party. The State Secretary sits in at these meetings but has no vote.

During the last two years there has been an alliance between the Independents and the SL enabling the latter to win on several hotly contested battles such as the appointment of Peter Bachelor as State Secretary and a recent decision to call on the Victorian Government to support the ACTU's call for full quarterly cost of living adjustments.

The factional line up at Conference had the SL taking 14 positions and Centre Union just managing to hold onto 13, with the Independents reduced from 5 to 3 positions on the Administrative Committee. When the officers positions are included, the SL will have 16 votes, Centre Union 14, and 3 Independents. The Left nearly achieved an absolute majority; all they needed was a few more votes to take 17 out of the 33 positions. Now they will need the support of one Independent which shouldn't be too hard after the alliance of the past two years. No wonder the right are rather worried!

### Protest letter

To the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Bill Hayden.

Dear comrade,

The Prime Minister's recent statements on Central America are in contradiction to the present ALP National Policy on this issue. The current National Policy on Central America clearly requires the United States to call on the United States to stop "its interference and the provision of military assistance" to the region. However during his visit to the United States Bob Hawke had failed to project this policy. Instead he goes so far as to express confidence that the Reagan Administration will make a satisfactory balance between "human rights" and United States strategic goals in the region. Yet the fact is that the Reagan Administration arms, trains and supports in every way possible a Government in El Salvador which is responsible for an average death rate of 100 persons per week and for the death of 40,000 civilians over the last three years. On the other hand it does everything in its power to undermine the popular Nicaraguan Government in an attempt to overthrow it.

The Labor Government should immediately re-affirm its policy on the region and as a real contribution to peace in Central America it should:

1. Recognise the FDR FMLN of El Salvador as a representative political force.
2. Support, in any way possible, the call of the FDR FMLN for a political solution to the Civil War, based on negotiations between the FDR FMLN and the Salvadoran Junta.
3. Support in the UN (and other international forums) the initiatives of the Government of Nicaragua for "direct negotiations with the United States Government based on mutual respect and recognition of the right to self-determination" to resolve the military conflict in the region.
4. Extend economic and humanitarian aid without strings to the Governments of Nicaragua and Grenada for the purpose of economic and social reconstruction.
5. Place all possible pressures on the Government of the United States to unconditionally withdraw all military forces introduced or supported by the United States including counter-revolutionary forces in Honduras and Costa Rica and

## Victorian Conference

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tion added". We deplore the hypocrisy of the Government in mouthing protest against French nuclear testing in the Pacific while at the same time preparing to supply the French with the very material used in such tests." There was a very pointed reminder to delegates in the report referring to Rule 24 that policy within the ALP is not made by directives from the leadership. A Special Conference on the uranium issue has been called for July 3.

John Cain made the timely announcement that in the last few days they had passed a bill through Parliament declaring Victoria a nuclear free state and outlawing the nuclear industry in Victoria.

ASIO again came under attack, with a call for repeal of the 1979 ASIO Legislation and the disbandment of all security and intelligence organisations which are secret and unaccountable.

The Status of Women Policy Report moved successfully that the State Government move rapidly to implement the decriminalisation of prostitution.

All the proposed rules changes were passed with a few amendments.

- The number of State Conferences shall remain the same at 3 a year instead of the proposal of 2.

- The cost of concessional membership has increased to half that of the full rate. The motion to amend it to 25% of the full rate, commensurate with the level that Hawke promised to make the pension in relation to the full wage, was lost. This increase to half rate will discourage the unemployed and poorer sections of the community from seeking members and putting their legitimate political claims within the Party.

- Unions now can appoint delegates who don't have to be members of that union. This legalises a practice of abuse by both left and right factions in the past. However it bypasses the fight to democratise the unions to get delegates who really represent the ranks. For example Bob Hawke goes to the Conference as a delegate from the Textile Workers Union. (The TWU has an interesting history. It has been known to agree that the owner of a factory with a predominantly migrant women workforce be their shop floor delegate).

In summary Conference clearly showed that it was dissatisfied with the performance of the Government to date. The ranks want to see the implementation of the policy they have formulated over the years, and are angry to see it ignored in such a cavalier fashion by the Parliamentary Party.

## South Australian State Conference

Industrial health and safety, legalisation of marijuana, and the right of police to carry guns in the street were some of the highlights discussed at the South Australian State Conference on June 11-13.

By Marg McHugh  
Member of Belair/BladeWOOD (SA)  
branch

A motion was passed calling on State Government to establish four workers health centres in Adelaide. The motion was seconded by Dr John Cornwall, SA Minister for Health.

This will certainly be a long overdue gain for workers as so many doctors don't have any understanding, knowledge or training about the specific problems that workers face from industrial injuries. These range from overuse and back injuries, heat injuries, all those tissue damaging effects from handling chemicals and breathing fumes, as well as other dangerous substances like asbestos to list but a few.

This will mean a big step up in the quality of health services as well as providing a resource for the labour movement in the fight to improve working conditions. It was further strengthened by a resolution calling for a levy on employers' premiums paid into workers' compensation schemes in order to fund research into occupational health and safety.

Mick Young, the Special Minister of State, successfully put a motion calling for a tax on wealth and a capital gains tax. This raised a furore with fellow Cabinet members Keating and Bowen. This proved to be only one of many controversial decisions of Conference.

Dr Cornwall also spoke in favor of a Young Labor resolution to decriminalise the cultivation and use of marijuana by adults in private. Cornwall intends to introduce a



Police—business as usual.

Private Member's Bill to this effect to Parliament in the Autumn Session.

The motion was passed overwhelmingly by 135 votes to 55. But the issue has certainly caused a storm here in Adelaide. Debate has been non-stop in the press since it has been non-stop in the press since the Conference. The most entrenched opposition has come from the police.

Another bone of contention for the police at Conference was the decision to phase out the practice of police wearing of exposed pistols in sensitive public places.

An official from the Police Association said that the Association would resist "any moves to disarm police" and "there is no way they (the police) will back down." A special meeting of 1000 police voted to stop issuing on-the-spot fines from June 30 if any action is taken by the Government.

So far no action has been taken and the case is being taken to Arbitration at present. It certainly is an issue which has caused a lot of controversy here in Adelaide.

Another issue concerning the role of the police came to the fore when Conference unanimously voted for the intervention by the South Australian Labor Government before the Hope Royal Commission into Australia's security services, to ask for a much closer examination of ASIO's role in political surveillance.

The Government intends to table the White Report into the activities of the South Australian Special Branch in 1978. This Report revealed political investigation of Labor Parliamentarians, trade unionists, peace activists and even some religious ministers.

Other important motions that were carried were in response to the flouting of policy by the Federal Leadership. These included reaffirmation of existing policy on East Timor, uranium and aid to Vietnam.

## The first 100 days Ken Fry Interview

Q. How would you evaluate the first 100 days of the Hawke Government?

A. Well you could sum it up in one word. It's been disappointing—particularly in relation to foreign policy. A few weeks ago I went onto the campus here at the Australian National University. I had been invited to speak about the differences between the foreign policy of the Fraser Government and that of the Labor Government.

I expounded at length on all sorts of things. Since then however, some of the statements of the Prime Minister have made rubbish of what I said there and I feel embarrassed by it all.

I feel it most particularly in relation to East Timor, to aid to Vietnam, and more recently, to Central America.

I had stressed very clearly that the ALP policy on Central America was very different to Fraser's and pointed to the statements by Lionel Bowen to the Parliament last year where he criticised Fraser's support for Reagan.

I can only interpret the Prime Minister's remarks during his recent US visit as cuddling up close to Reagan, even on El Salvador. At the same time he took a swipe at Nicaragua when basically we should be sympathetic.

What has happened, to look at it broadly, is that the Prime Minister has moved our foreign policy attitude very much to the right—very much behind the American Alliance. As a result we've seen the Party's reaction to this rightward move at the various State Conferences over the last few weeks.

The foreign affairs motions passed at the various State Conferences did reaffirm existing policy and express the rank and file's disappointment and outrage. What do you see as the next steps in this conflict?

A. I don't think there's any doubt about the response of the Party ranks. If anything the resolutions passed have moved a little further to the left than previously. I think this is symbolic too. What the ranks did was to send a message to the Prime Minister saying "Look, you've gone too far. We're here back home when you're overseas, and we've given a lot of time and consideration to these policies. We want you to listen to what we're saying." That's the message.

Now where we go from here of course depends on the Prime Minister's reaction—whether in fact he gets the message and responds. There's an important Federal Executive meeting



Ken Fry

at the end of June at which, no doubt, these potential conflicts will be raised and the reaction to the Prime Minister's statements overseas will be discussed.

I think the goal of the Federal Executive will be to try to resolve those conflicts, or at least to moderate them, and to suggest to the Prime Minister certain actions he may take to get back on the rails—closer to our policy—and establish a good relationship with the State Branches and through their Conferences back to the rank and file.

I'm sure the Federal Executive will try to play the moderator. I don't think they will try to confront Hawke, but they will certainly give him the clear message that his actions have not been endorsed at at least three State Conferences. A typical example of the response was at the ACT Conference where we had a resolution calling for the review of the ANZUS Treaty. That's a fairly normal resolution but somebody circulated an amendment which added the words "with the view to ultimate withdrawal from the Treaty".

Now that's a new dimension to the view. Last year I don't think it would have been carried but this year it was carried overwhelmingly.

I think people really think in view of the threat of nuclear war, the possibilities of the development of other socialist countries and socialist governments gain some grounds in

## political analysis

certain areas, then we should have an ultimate goal of withdrawal from the ANZUS Treaty.

Historically we have got nothing out of the Treaty. It served the American interest and continues to do so.

There are areas like East Timor where our interests are quite different. It is not in our interest to have CIA involvement in our union movement. Nor in our interest to have Indonesia threatening the peoples of Papua New Guinea. Take the overflights of the B52s—I don't see we get anything out of that. And then there's the whole question of the US bases where our ultimate objective should be that they should all be withdrawn.

I don't think resolutions like these were hasty. I think they reflect a good deal of thought by people who are trying to look ahead and foresee the future and see we are going down the wrong road.

Q. The whole issue of security and surveillance came up at several Conferences around the question of ASIO, the Combe affair, political surveillance and the Royal Commission. You've had personal experience of political harassment of this sort haven't you?

A. Oh yes I've got quite firm evidence that can be substantiated. I'll be making a submission to the Enquiry on the basis of my involvement in East Timor being subject to investigation and surveillance by ASIO. It's been well documented in the press and I've asked questions in the Parliament. There is hard information about phone taps and people quizzing friends of mine about my activities.

This just substantiates what everyone knows. ASIO devotes a lot of their resources to political activity which they shouldn't be doing.

But I have my doubts about what this current investigation will achieve. I have grave misgivings because of what happened with the previous Hope Report. It demonstrated the abuses and weaknesses of ASIO and then used this to strengthen its role instead of clipping its wings.

I have a very firm commitment to ASIO's wings being clipped. They should not indulge in political work at all. They should concentrate on counterintelligence against foreign intelligence operations in this country. If we can't get this done by legislation coming out of the current Report, then their activities should be contained through the Budget. You just don't give them enough money. But if you look at the Budget expenditure since the last Hope Report, there has been a tremendous increase over the years.

I see ASIO's political surveillance as a threat to our privacy. ASIO is dominated by the old cold war at-

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## Fry Interview

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titudes. A lot of their operatives are people of European descent with hang-ups about socialism. They are generally anti-ALP and anti-union. It's very much to our detriment and I think we must take a very firm line here.

I've never said that we don't need a security agency. Of course we do but its role needs to be very clearly defined. The Combe affair is a typical example. I believe they were very heavy handed in the way they operated. In fact the whole Combe affair was very badly handled politically in my view and I think the Enquiry will show this. It depends if the Report is made public or not. There's a lot of evidence being heard in camera which may prevent this.

I'm not very optimistic that anything positive will come out of the current Enquiry given the previous experience.

Q. Coming back to the question of the Federal Executive taking the Prime Minister to task about his statements, do you think that the recent change in the factional strength on the Federal Executive will make it take a stronger stance?

A. I think so. But you've got to be careful not to overestimate this. It

doesn't mean there is a clear Left Right division. A lot of people take a progressive view on one issue and a conservative view on another. For example I know that sometimes the Tasmanian delegates have particular views of their own which are not consistent with factional alignments.

But the recent ACT election will tend to strengthen the Executive in exercising some moderating influence on the Prime Minister. It's not an Executive that the Prime Minister can be seen to be steam rolling. It's not just the Left, but people from the Centre who would tend to take up the point of view of the rank and file and try to restrain the Prime Minister in a serious conflict.

Q. There has been an argument advanced by the right wing generally and by Hayden at several State Conferences that there has been no breach of Party policy. Instead what has occurred has been the constitutional right of the Parliamentary Party to exercise the timing of the implementation of policy. Has this argument any validity?

A. No, certainly not. Of course the Parliamentary Party has always exercised the right in deciding timing. But when you come to a thing of basic principle like supporting the right to self-determination, that can't be said to be subject to timing. It's fundamental. You're either for it or against it. You

can't say you're for it this month and against it next—or perhaps we might that's nonsense. We are signatories to the United Nations Charter which incorporates the right to self-determination and this is a commitment.

In relation to other issues like aid to Vietnam it's a clear cut policy and Hayden said it would be implemented immediately. There is clearly a difference between Hayden and Hawke on this issue.

Mr Hawke says there is a relation between giving aid to Vietnam and the question of withdrawal of Vietnam from Kampuchea. As though you could hold a gun at the head of the Vietnamese saying we won't give you aid unless you withdraw! Now that's a very simplistic sort of approach to foreign policy.

According to Mr Hayden there is no relation between aid and withdrawal. I think Hayden's attitude on this is much better. He's been quite strong on Vietnam aid in the past and I think he still is. So there is obviously conflict there.

The other area where we've clearly gone against policy is in relation to our attitude on El Salvador. Our policy, as I understand it, is that we are opposed to the American involvement there. But you couldn't interpret what the Prime Minister said as being consistent with this policy. Certainly he said

that the lack of human rights was to be deplored but then he didn't criticise the American role there. Then he goes on to refer to the lack of human rights in Nicaragua without any first hand knowledge at all. Now I've spoken to people who have been there quite recently who have quite a different view. Nicaragua's problems stem from interference from outside which is quite clearly backed by the CIA.

So it's quite disturbing the way we've moved away from our policies. And I certainly don't think you can explain it away by saying that the Parliamentary Party has the right to determine the timing when these things are done.

The time of course is important in relation to making the decision about how we vote in the UN if there is a resolution on East Timor's self-determination. But even so, I think our policy is such that the Prime Minister and Mr Hayden when they went to Indonesia should have said, "If it comes up in the UN our policy is clear, we have to support it." So let's accept that and conduct our negotiations with Indonesia from that position. But there's no indication that any such thing was said.

When we know if there is going to be a resolution in the UN then the decision will have to be taken in the Caucus and that may well be the crunch point.

Q. What about the proposed Parliamentary fact-finding tour to East Timor, will this be useful in resolving this issue?

A. Not really. I'm skeptical about the whole exercise. It isn't that I have doubts about the people going, it's the time allowed for the tour. They're only to be there for about a day and a half. That's quite inconsistent with the Prime Minister's statements about looking at the position in some detail and getting the full information about what's going on there.

All you can get in the time allowed, is to look at a bit of the window dressing around Dili and the areas where Indonesia has put a lot of aid as a result of pressure from Australia.

As far as I'm concerned the trip will primarily be used as a propaganda weapon to endorse Indonesian policy there, to provide some rationale for us to continue the military aid to Indonesia and to put the whole issue of East Timor behind us.

Q. I believe there is an Australian tour planned for two Fretilin representatives. I know their visas were delayed by Hawke. Is the tour going ahead?

A. Yes there will be a tour of all major capital cities in the last two weeks of July, (for details see page 27). There's a lot of interest both in the Party and in the community. All the East Timor Support Groups have collaborated to make this a real success. The media are very interested



Hawke/Suharto consensus—street theatre protest at Vic State Conference.

in the issue, particularly given the debate that's gone on and the conflict between the rank and file and the Parliamentary Leadership.

It will be a very interesting tour. They've got very recent information out of East Timor so it will bring people up to date. It is really remarkable how the East Timor issue has been kept alive for so long and there's no sign of it faltering, just the reverse.

Q. Do you think rank and file committees and support groups are the way to keep the pressure up on politicians to keep to policy?

A. There are limited ways you can do that but certainly this tour is an excellent way that the rank and file can come out and support an issue like East Timor. And they should come out and say, "We'd have a voice. We don't believe that foreign policy issues should just be left to the leadership or to an elite group of people or to professional advice." Historically this has led us into wars that we should not have been involved in such as Vietnam.

Q. Do you see big mass movements like the Vietnam War movement, and now the growing anti-nuclear movement, as the way to reach out to people, to educate, politicise and mobilise them to pressure Government policy?

A. Yes the anti-nuclear issue is very important because it cuts across party lines to a large extent and involves all sorts of people who are not normally in politics, for example the church groups. It's important to maintain the

non-party political context to keep the way clear for everyone to be involved—to get mass support.

Q. Increasingly people on these marches are taking up more political demands—of the question of the US bases, the question of the visits of the US nuclear fleet in Western Australia. In fact in Perth the March mobilisation took up this demand en masse when the Peace Committee there had rejected it as being "too political." And increasingly the anti-base demand is raised universally across Australia including the churches. Don't you think this political process will continue?

A. I think so. The other element involved here is the generation gap—the consciousness of young people and particularly the consciousness of women to the threat of nuclear war.

There's been a big incremental jump in consciousness over the last couple of years. I think that as these younger people move up and have greater influence in the movement this will increase.

A new generation has grown up in the anti-war atmosphere and are more aware of it. It can only gain momentum, hopefully to the extent that Governments can't ignore it, which is what tends to happen at present.

But I think it's getting to the stage that Governments can't afford to ignore the basic wishes of the people. They don't want to be involved in a nuclear war or any sort of war and they want to be consulted beforehand not like what happened in Vietnam.



## Withdraw the Sinai troops!

When newspaper headlines highlighted the massacre in the Sabra and Shatila camps in Lebanon last year, horror and a revulsion for what had occurred, was expressed throughout the world.

In a special report by the *Sunday Times* (London) evidence was given of

By Irene Robson  
Member of Coburg (VIC) branch

Israeli complicity with the Phalangists:

"By nightfall the Gaza hospital corridors and wards were jammed solid as 2000 Palestinians and Lebanese, mainly women and children, tried to escape the gunmen—Israeli troops were fully in control around the camps and inside, an unimpeded massacre was taking place."

Newspapers everywhere gave similar reports. What many did not however explain, was that this massacre is a direct result of the policies of Zionism, and part of the ongoing planned genocide of the Palestinian people. As was in the famous massacre at Deir Yasin in 1948 when at four o'clock on the morning of April 9th one hundred and thirty-two Zionist members of the Irgun and Stern Gang murdered the entire inhabitants of this Arab village—more than two hundred men, women and children.

After the Beirut massacre, many protest marches throughout the world took place, calling for a withdrawal of Israeli troops from Lebanon. It was during this time the 'Peace Now' movement in Israel itself grew to such proportions—a movement which began when Israel first invaded Lebanon, and a movement which we, by our continued presence in the Sinai,

are sabotaging.

For the record shows that the Sinai force has done nothing to protect peace in the Middle East. On the contrary, it has only given aid and encouragement to the most reactionary people within Israel, those Zionists who, in forcibly dispossessing an entire people, suppress and exploit not only the Arab people, but the Jewish people as well.

It is not a United Nations peace-keeping force, but one constructed by the US Reagan Administration with the sole purpose of 'tightening it's grip on the Middle East' and in the process, bringing ever nearer the threat of a 'limited nuclear war' to the area.

Both these facts have been highlighted in the past by the Deputy Leader, Mr. Bowen, and Mr. Hayden, and by many others within the Labor Party.

For here we have a situation fraught with danger. The International Institute of Strategic Studies has rated Israel as the fourth strongest military power in the world. It has access to the best military equipment United States money can either provide or finance. And Israel is consolidating its position in Lebanon, poised for action which daily becomes more imminent.

The immediate withdrawal of our troops from the Sinai would be an important step in helping to stabilize this dangerous position, an important move towards peace in that region, as well as giving clear encouragement to the 'Peace Now' movement in Israel, and to the Palestinian people also.

The Sinai troop withdrawal was promised by our Prime Minister in the days leading up to the Federal election, and a promise which our Branch has consistently tried to implement.

In our latest efforts to honour this electoral promise, we have called on the Member for Melbourne, Mr. Gerry Hand, (see the box) to table our

resolution, and we are confident he will do all in his power to help us fulfil this most important duty, which is so salient a feature in our efforts for peace in the Middle East.

Mr. Gerry Hand, M.P.,  
Member for Melbourne,  
Parliament Office,  
400 Flinders Street,  
Melbourne, 3000.

Dear Gerry,

At our last ALP Meeting of the Coburg Branch, held on the 17th May, we decided, unanimously, to ask you to put the following question to the Prime Minister, and to the Deputy Prime Minister:

Why is it that Labor Party Policy, as promised by the Prime Minister before the election, has not been honoured; namely, the withdrawal of Australian troops from the Sinai?

The record shows that the Sinai force has done nothing to protect peace in the Middle East. On the contrary, it has only given aid and comfort to the most reactionary people within Israel, whilst at the same time discouraging the progressives in that country, and continuing to deny the Palestinian people their rights.

These people have suffered greatly in the last twelve months. In Lebanon, the war left thousands dead and injured. Palestinian prisoners have not been accorded P.O.W. status by Israel and thousands of Palestinians and Lebanese civilians continue to be detained without charge in the Ansar concentration camp held by Israel in South Lebanon.

The withdrawal of Australian troops from the Sinai would be a clear statement from the Australian Government that it is no longer willing to condone the suffering of the Palestinian people.

Our Branch thanks you for your help with this question, and we look forward to hearing the answers you receive—both from the Prime Minister, and the Deputy Prime Minister.

Yours sincerely,  
Irene (Robson)

## Alternate Economic Strategy

Dear Pat,

I was interested to read your review (*Labor Militant* Vol 3 No 1 May 1983) of my proposals for an Alternative Economic Strategy. The review reiterates one strong point, that "the mobilisation of the labour movement should not be seen as merely an adjunct to a progressive government's activities". I agree.

There is a longer version of my article, which appeared, together with other viewpoints on this issue of alternative strategies, in *The Journal of Australian Political Economy*, No. 12/13 (available for \$5 from Box 76, Wentworth Building, University of Sydney, NSW 2006). That fuller presentation emphasises the need to integrate proposals for an AES and the ongoing struggles of the working class. Indeed, the article stresses that one of the most important functions of an AES is its tactical role in helping to coordinate such struggles.

Certainly, I concede that the main emphasis (in both the long and short versions of my article) is on how the state can be progressively adapted, and your review correctly identifies dangers in this approach if "it portrays social change as something that comes about as a result of deals worked out over our heads".

However, an approach which focusses on workplace conflicts has the opposite danger of neglecting the way in which socialists can influence the policies of the state and its role in the possible transformation from capitalism to socialism.

The solution presumably lies in an effective integration of struggles influencing the state and the workplace. Of course, that is not a new problem for the labour movement!

I do not profess to have the solution, but I hope that this exchange of views will stimulate more people to think about how this integration can occur. In the meanwhile, I do not think it constructive to write off the proposals for an AES as heading "in exactly the wrong direction".

Yours sincerely,  
Frank Stilwell

## Attacks on Central America

Dear Editor,

Last year I came across *Labor Militant* November 1982, where an article by Chris Graham exposed the lies and slanders of the Centre Unity faction about Nicaragua. Graham rightly took to task the views expressed by Stephen Magee in *Labor Leader* September-October 1982. Magee claimed that the

achievements of the Nicaraguan Government had been "dubious", that the Sandinistas had closed down the opposition press, "repressed" the Miskito Indian population of Nicaragua's east coast, and that Nicaragua was "more than half way towards becoming another Stalinist prison camp".

Magee's article had a clear purpose which has now been fully revealed. It was to pave the way, in circumstances where the revolutions of Central America are gaining more and more support from Labor Party members and supporters, for a Labor Government elected in 1983 to fall in behind US policy on Central America.

Bob Hawke's recent trip to the United States is the fruition of this project.

In Washington, Hawke denounced the "leftist deprivations" of the Sandinista Government and expressed his confidence that the Reagan Administration would take full account of "human rights" considerations in the region.

Hawke's intent, and the real effect of his US trip, has been to line up the Labor Government uncritically behind Reagan's war policies in Central America.

As the actions of Democrats (and Republicans too) in the US Congress reveal, the Reagan Administration uses, as cover for waging a war in Central America, a feigned commitment to "human rights" and "democratic" practices, like the totally fake elections in El Salvador in 1982.

Imagine my shock when I recently

came across the same sort of arguments and misinformation but this time in a paper claiming to be socialist.

In an article entitled "Revolution or Regression" in the June 1983 issue of *Socialist Fight*, Leon Parissi not only attacks the Nicaraguan Government for its lack of human rights, but implies that Cuba does little to support the liberation struggles in Central America because it is committed only to a "peaceful road to socialism".

He then goes on to attack the liberation fighters in El Salvador for putting more time into cultivating links with "the pro-capitalist social democrats of the Mexican and French Government (sic) than with the organised working class of the imperialist countries".

No matter how sincere the commitment of *Socialist Fight* to socialist policies may be, the only effect of this attitude to Nicaragua, El Salvador and Cuba is to put itself politically in line behind the Hawke-Centre Unity group which openly follows Reagan and the US State Department.

Both the FMLN of El Salvador and the Nicaraguan Government have called for an end to the hostilities in Central America through a process of negotiations between the parties directly involved and the withdrawal of US and US-sponsored forces in the area.

Socialists should wholeheartedly support these initiatives

Comradely,  
Joan Baxter

## EAST TIMOR SPEAKS!

After being banned by Fraser from entering Australia since 1976, Fretilin Central Committee members Abilio Araujo and Roque Rodrigues will speak throughout Australia next month.

This is a unique opportunity to hear about the current situation in East Timor, the Fretilin-led resistance, the current cease fire and how Australians can help bring peace and self-determination to East Timor.

**SYDNEY:** Sun July 24, 2pm, Tom Mann Theatre, 136 Chalmers St, Sydney Hills (nr Central). Ken Fry MHR also speaks.

**WOLLONGONG:** Thurs July 21, 7pm, Wollongong Workers Club (upstairs), Market St, Wollongong.

**MELBOURNE:** Sun July 31, 2pm, Dallas Brooks Hall, East Melbourne. Brian Howe, Min for Defence Support also speaks.

**ADELAIDE:** Tues August 2, 7pm, Shannon Room, Trades Hall, South Terrace.

**PERTH:** Fri August 5, 7pm, Perth Town Hall. Sen Gordon McIntosh also speaks.

Yes, I want to help pay for the East Timor tour!

I enclose \$\_\_\_\_\_ as a donation to the costs of the Fretilin speaking tour.

NAME:

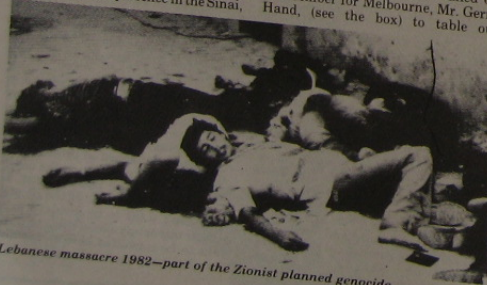
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LABOR MILITANT



26 Lebanese massacre 1982—part of the Zionist planned genocide.

## Dictatorships and the arms race

Published below is the speech given by Peter Milton MHR for La Trobe to the celebration of the 38th anniversary of the ending of World War II.

Celebrating the 38th anniversary of the ending of the 1939/45 Second World War takes me back to my early years as a teenager and the many nights I spent in air-raid shelters in London while the enemy bombers thundered overhead. In the morning we would search in the playing fields and the Gorge Commons for lumps of shrapnel. In those days the Americans, French, Russians, Chinese and the British were all Allies. I will remember the wonderful feeling we had in London when we heard the news of how the Nazis were held back in Stalingrad and later the defeat of the Japanese in the Battle of the Coral Sea.

We, civilians in London, had our own private war. First the saturation bombing with incendiaries and high explosives, later there were the flying bombs which dived eerily across the sky and then the engines would suddenly stop and down the bomb would plummet to indiscriminately hit houses, schools and hospitals. Even more diabolical in the last days of the European war, for we Londoners, were the rockets. They came without any warning and the first many of the bomb victims knew about the rocket would be waking up in hospital.

However all these experiences pale into insignificance when one considers the effects of the atomic bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The damage and the death toll in the two cities was devastating: with 100,000 people being killed or wounded in Hiroshima alone. One would have thought that human beings would have learned the lessons of the Second World War but there is a lot of money to be made from arms manufactures and the wars continue.

In South America, Africa, and the Middle East, and Indo China, over the past thirty-eight years, hundreds of thousands of people have died as a result of armed conflict. True, since 1945 we have not yet used nuclear weapons. But how long will be before some fanatical politician orders the pressing of the button.

One of the most profound anti war messages for me was a sequence from the old silent film called "All Quiet on the Western Front". In the film se-

quence which some of you may have seen, French and German troops of the 1914/18 War fought for possession of a machine gun. First the French had possession of the gun and scores of Germans were killed as they stormed the gun emplacement. With the Germans in possession the French counter-attacked and lost scores of their men in re-taking the position. After several such attacks and counter attacks the gun is silent and all around it are hundreds of dead Germans and Frenchmen. And who was the victor: the gun of course.

The French, in particular, do not appear to have learnt any lesson. They continue to experiment with their nuclear weapons, not in their own territory however, but thousands of miles away, in the South Pacific Ocean.

What arrogance to say that they must experiment in the South Pacific. Why do they not experiment in the North Sea in metropolitan France? We all know why. It is because their European neighbours would not put up with the exposure to deadly radiation and the consequent loss of rich fishing grounds which the Tahitians are powerless to prevent.

The French Government promised independence to the Tahitian people 12 years ago but the promise has never been honoured, instead they have continued their testing of nuclear weapons over the past 12 years. In the meantime a number of islanders are reported as being hospitalised each year in metropolitan France suffering from a number of illnesses arising from the earlier atmospheric nuclear tests. In these circumstances the Australian Government has made the only decision it could make in upholding ALP policy that uranium ore will not be exported to France while they continue arrogantly and irresponsibly to conduct nuclear weapons tests in the South Pacific.

Nor are the Americans blameless. They are now enlarging their nuclear weapons in the Pacific Ocean but they are in my view, attempting to do something equally as bad. They are attempting to blackmail the small inhabitants, into accepting an American military base on one third of north of Indonesia, in the Western Pacific became a US administered Territory in 1947.

The Belauans are now struggling against the greatest threat to their

survival they have ever faced. Ever since the 1939/45 War, when many thousands of Japanese, Americans and Belauans were killed, the Belauans have been determined that they will never again suffer from the wars of foreigners. As a consequence they inserted in their Constitution a provision that no harmful substances, such as chemical or nuclear weapons, will be used in their country. The Constitution can only be changed with a 75 per cent majority of the people but the Americans are threatening to withdraw their aid and assistance unless the Belauans agree to their territory becoming an American military base, which includes the nuclear option. The presence of important US military facilities would make Belau a certain target in the event of conflict, once again involving their people in a war which is not their making. Belau needs our support and I certainly hope and expect the Australian Government to provide material aid and support for the Belau cause for independence and non-alignment.

Over in Central America, fascism is not yet dead. Thirty-nine years after the defeat of Fascist Germany, fascism thrives in El Salvador, Honduras and Guatemala. In South America the Military Governments of Argentina, Chile and Uruguay continue their repression of the people. Only in Nicaragua is there hope for the people with the success of the revolutionary Sandinistas in their goal of introducing socialist policies in the interests of workers and peasants.

At this point, so that there can be no doubt about my views as opposed to some leading Federal Parliamentarians, I would like to make a few specific remarks about Nicaragua and El Salvador. Remarks which I believe are vital when we are considering the 38th anniversary of its tools of trade against fascism and its tools of trade of murder, rape, and torture, of many millions of people whose only crime was being Jewish or communist or just plain non-aryan. With the defeat of the dictator, Somoza, the Sandinistas have transformed Nicaragua. Health and education services and, above all, land, has been made available for the first time to scores of thousands of poor peasants. In contrast, in neighbouring El Salvador, the Salvadoran army is using Vietnam-style pacification tactics against the people as reported this week by *The Washington Post*. Since 1980 the USA has been attempting the overthrow of the revolutionary San-



US advisor trains Salvadoran army as part of Reagan's stepped up involvement in Central America.

dnista Government of Nicaragua and has been aiding the Military Government of El Salvador in the repression of the people of El Salvador.

Evidence of the involvement of the US Central Intelligence Agency in Nicaragua was given in *The Time Magazine* of 16 May. I quote from the article:

"The full scale CIA association with the Nicaragua Contras began last October. A State Department official in Central America who is intimately involved with the covert operation says, 'So far, they're doing better than expected but in limited geographical areas'. This official argues that the growing strength of the Contras provides an effective way for the US to apply pressure on the Sandinistas Government to end its backing of rebels in El Salvador. A senior State Department Official in Washington agrees, 'Now we have got the element of reciprocity that gives Nicaragua an incentive to sit down and talk. We've got some bargaining chips, you call off your dogs and we'll call off ours.'"

And bear in mind that report did not come from a left-wing source. Apparently, according to some politicians this official American attitude can be justified by arguing that it is an area which involves and I quote "The legitimate security interests of this country". There can be no justification for such blatant interference and Danial Ortega, the Head of the Nicaraguan National Directorate has nailed the lie that Nicaragua is linked with the Salvadoran Rebels. Again I quote from *The Time Magazine* interview with him in late May when he said:

"A totally absurd excuse for the US

to commit aggression against us. We did not invent the Salvadoran Revolution. As recently as 1977, their guerrilla movement was stronger than ours. The Salvadorian revolutionaries do not have military bases here. If they have bases outside El Salvador they are in Guatemala and Honduras".

Of course we have the inevitable comparisons with the Soviet Union's presence in Afghanistan. Personally, I regret that the Soviet Union has military forces in Afghanistan but such comparisons are ridiculous when it is appreciated that the Soviet Union has a 2,000 kilometre border with Afghanistan and that, the Afghan rebel movement in defiance of the Government is attempting to reinstate a discredited religious autocracy. One can only hope that the present peace talks taking place between Pakistan, Afghanistan and the Soviet Union are successful.

Fascism is also not dead in Europe and Neo-Nazism is growing again in West Germany. A Hitler Youth style nationalist group, The Young Vikings, boasts a membership of 1,000 teenagers. The Bureau for the Protection of the Constitution, which is responsible for internal security, has been reported as saying that 20,000 people are involved in extreme right wing groups. The Bonn Government believes that their democratic institutions are sufficiently strong to resist the race hatreds which are being revived in Neo-Nazis. But in celebrating the end of the Second World War against fascism we cannot overlook these lunatic but dangerous movements. Particularly when fascist government is so rife in many places in the world.

I would like to turn now to the arms

race with weapons sales becoming one of the chief tools of diplomacy. In 1980 more than \$US18.3 billion in major weapons were delivered to Third World countries, compared with \$US8 billion in 1975. In comparison the total economic aid to developing countries by industrialised nations averages about \$US 20 billion. Economic and military aid are given equal importance in a world where millions of people are starving. Weapons are indisputably a growth industry of the seventies and eighties. In 1980 weapons transfers amounted to an estimated \$US120 billion. The US has long been the world's largest arms merchant. Over the past decade of the seventies the US supplied 45 per cent of all the major weapons sold to the Third World. Not that I am exonerating the Soviet Union which is also a large supplier of weaponry to the Third World. However, figures do not tell the whole story. Almost without exception, the USA supplies arms to military and fascist dictatorships enabling them to continue their oppression and murder of workers and peasants. Almost without exception the USSR supplies arms to revolutionary movements and socialist governments who are fighting against attempted military take-overs and invasions. One cannot get away from the fact, however, that the growth of resources devoted to military efforts continues at the present rate, the global annual arms bill will have reached \$US 940 billion by the year 2000 (in 1980 prices).

Last year I visited the USSR as a guest of the Friendship Society, as part

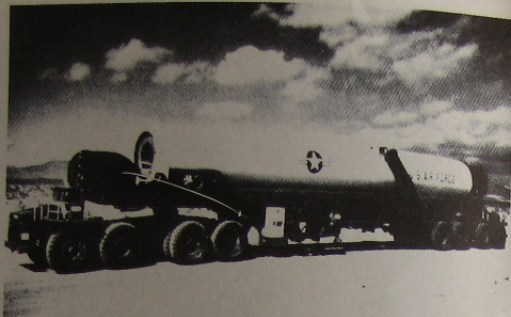
Continued page 30

## Arms race

Continued from page 29

of an ALP Parliamentary Delegation. Naturally enough we talked about the increasing escalation in the international arms race. Our Soviet hosts pointed out that ever since 1945 they had been forced, while attempting to build up their country after the devastation of the war, to re-arm themselves against the increasing aggressiveness and hostility of the USA. However, over the years it has always been a matter of concern to me that the Allies of both the USA and the USSR have acceded to economic and political pressure to join in super power conflict. If they had not acceded to such pressure it is likely, despite the sacrifices, that the arms race would not have escalated to its present suicidal state. However one has to deal with the facts. First there was the development of the atom and hydrogen bombs then the strategic nuclear armed bomber force, followed by the inter ballistic missile and the nuclear submarine. Development is now taking place with laser beams and the killer satellites. With President Reagan's star wars speech the Soviet Union has the horrific prospect of this huge escalation of the arms race with the development of killer satellites and the associated sophisticated technology at a global cost which is almost beyond comprehension. Always two years behind in the development of these diabolical weapons, regrettably the Soviet Government feels impelled to defend its citizens by attempting to match the United States' weapons arsenals. The interesting question to ask is what reason the USSR might have in pursuing aggressive policies towards the West in general and the USA in particular?

Another question to ask is what gain is there to the Soviet Union in pursuing aggression in a nuclear age? One cannot help wondering why the Soviet Union would want to launch an attack on Western Europe. The Soviet Military know only too well that a conventional war would inevitably lead to a nuclear war and the risks are just not worth it. Why should the Soviet Union risk a nuclear holocaust in order to take over the problems of attempting to control hostile populations in Germany, France, Scandinavia and Britain? Equally ludicrous is the charge that the Soviet Union would undertake a first strike of continental America. Even if the Soviet Union could destroy every one of the US intercontinental ballistic missiles, at least one third of the US strategic bomber force would remain airborne and more than twenty missile submarines would remain at sea



An MX cannister loaded on its transporter—part of the US arms escalation.

unscathed. And the Soviet Union is aware that the missiles of just one of the Poseidon nuclear submarines is capable of destroying every large and medium sized city in the USSR.

The point is that even if there was a madman prepared to press the button in the USSR, increasing the nuclear capabilities of the Western Allies is not going to make any difference. No logic exists amongst the US arms race proponents and the so called Soviet threat to US land based missiles has been used as a justification for the new multi-billion dollar MX super missile system. The US argues that MX is a defensive response to the Soviet missile threat but the new missile system, which includes the MX, Minuteman, and the new super accurate Trident II and the Cruise missiles, constitutes a first strike threat to the Soviet nuclear weapons system.

In consequence the future US threat to the strategic forces of the USSR is far greater in the mid 1980s than the Soviet threat to the US strategic forces. It is the intense fear mongering of the US arms manufacturers and the US military strategists which has caused the escalation but it is inevitable that the Soviet Union will respond to the threat.

One thing was very clear from my visit to the Soviet Union and that is that all the people, I met, officials and citizens, all year for peace. I well remember my visit to a restaurant in Moscow. We were exchanging national songs with a group of Russians on a nearby table and one of our Parliamentarians had just given a powerful rendering of "My Old Black Billy" a well known bush song. On learning that it was Australians, a and embraced me and said, in Russian, the last war and I do not want war I want peace, please. I tell your fellow Australians. It was a spontaneous gesture and I was most moved by his

sincerity.

Now I have no doubt that there are many Americans who feel the same way but it is not reflected in the words and deeds of their President, Ronald Reagan. It would not be true to say that the Soviet leaders fear this man. It is rather a perplexity and an apprehensiveness at his unfathomable behaviour. One thing is certain President Reagan is an arch conservative whose enthusiasm for a world wide crusade against communism has been voiced on a number of public occasions.

In such a climate it is difficult to negotiate with such a leader. And yet it must be attempted. Not only because a nuclear world war could result in the deaths of the majority of mankind but because the present scale of military expenditure is co-existent with domestic repression. Fifty million people died in the 1939/45 War but millions of people in the Third World have died since that time because of a lack of health and nutritional facilities. Reports produced by the United Nations have claimed that there is a definitive relationship between global arms expenditure on the one hand and starvation and disease in the Third World on the other hand.

This madness must stop. In 1974 I travelled around the USA by Greyhound bus and was most impressed by the friendliness of the American people I met. My visit to the USSR in 1982, once the language barrier was overcome, found the Soviet people to be equally friendly. Mr. Andropov has, once again, proposed the outlawing of nuclear weapons. I can only hope that the American people will pressure Mr. Reagan into seriously considering the proposal so that we can pull back from the brink of the nuclear precipice in order that the millions of lives lost in the Second World War will not have been lost in vain.

## 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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### 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.  
CANNBERRA: 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.



migrants

## Parliamentarians speak out against harassment of Turkish migrants

"Democracy in Turkey and the 'Come Back Home' letters" was the subject of a seminar held in Melbourne on May 28.

The seminar was organised by a joint committee of representatives from the Union of Australian Turkish Workers and the Australian Turkish Cultural Association.

By Coral Channells

Member of Preston (Vic) branch and the Amalgamated Metal Foundry and Shipwrights' Union.

Speakers included Hurriyet Babacan, a long-term activist in the Victorian Branch and Commissioner for the Victorian Ethnic Affairs Department; Stewart West, Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs; Brian Howe, Minister of Defence Support; Peter Spyker, Victorian Minister of Ethnic Affairs; Gerry Hand, Federal Member for Melbourne; and Caroline Hogg, MLC for Melbourne West.

The meeting, attended by more than 100 people, was called to publicise and build support for the campaign against the Turkish Military Regime's attempts to intimidate and penalise Turkish labour movement activists.

Because of political work in the Turkish community, including encouraging involvement by the Turkish community in Labor Party work, Hurriyet Babacan and 12 other Turkish activists, have received letters from the Turkish Consulates in Sydney and Melbourne threatening loss of Turkish citizenship and property, unless they immediately return home.

In her speech, Babacan gave a detailed account of the Turkish Regime's repressive rule since the 1980 military coup.

She described the mounting campaign of victimisation and harassment against Turkish-born migrants in countries around the world.

Babacan said many Turkish migrants in other countries — including trade unionists, journalists, artists, and intellectuals — have received similar "come back home" letters.

She called on the Labor Government



Hurriyet Babacan.



Military presence ruthlessly suppressing political dissent.

to extradite the Turkish Ambassador to Australia. Turkish activists believe that Consular officials, under the direction of the Ambassador, have spied on the Turkish community and that names have been sent back to the Junta.

Stewart West assured Turkish permanent residents that the Turkish Government could not force them to return home. They would undoubtedly face jail, torture, or death, if they did, he said.

West has also issued a statement in Turkish to the ethnic media outlets reassuring the community and setting their rights under Australian law.

Caroline Hogg spoke about her connection with the Turkish community and the problems Turkish migrants face in Australia.

"The Turkish community worries desperately about its children's education, about language problems, the lack of availability of Turkish speaking teachers here — about the loss of its culture. In an attempt to address these problems, they began to form associations; join political parties — indeed some took out Australian citizenship — gradually they began to become politically organised and active. But at this point the Turkish Government, through its representatives here, began to locate the ac-

tivists in this legal and democratic struggle and 13 people are summoned to return to Turkey."

Hogg said the summons to return "threatens the community and attacks these people's democratic existence. They are in every way attacks against international relations and democratic rights.

"I believe that there is a case to be made out that the Consulates exceed their authority in this matter and I would indeed like to see an investigation of the Consulates' role."

In his speech, Gerry Hand described the curtailment of democratic and trade-union rights carried out by the Military Junta in Turkey.

He pointed out that many Social Democratic parties in Europe have reacted strongly to the Regime's dissolution of the Turkish Social Democratic Republican People's Party, and the jailing of its leader, Bulent Ecevit.

He added that "I suggest that the Australian Government should examine the question of whether Australia—Turkey relations should cease."

"As a Member of Parliament," Hand concluded, "I will support all legal activities taking place, and will protest at the inhumane activities of the Turkish Junta."