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# australian marxist review

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29 SEP 1976

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**Theoretical journal of the  
Socialist Party of Australia**

- \* *Peace Movement*
- \* *Dictatorship of Proletariat*
- \* *The Australian Media*
- \* *European Conference Analysed*
- \* *International Issues*

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QUARTERLY. VOLUME 5 No. 3 SEPTEMBER 1976 - PRICE 30c

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# Australian MARXIST Review

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## Editorial

# Crucial Times

As the great depression began to encircle the capitalist world in the late 'twenties and early 'thirties the erroneous theory was developed that Australia would "prove an exception" and not be seriously affected.

The theory of "exceptionalism" has made no reappearance in the current period of yet another of capitalism's cyclical crises. It is not surprising. There is little doubt among either Australia's capitalist class or working class that the nation is deep in the grip of a new economic crisis of grave consequence.

Currently a great debate ensues between basic sectors of labor and capital whether a "consumer-led recovery" or an "investment-led recovery" offers the best prospect of economic stability.

The reality is that the inherent, objective laws governing the private-profit-motivated system of capitalism render it impossible for any lasting recovery to be achieved short of basic social change.

This requires fundamental revolutionary change from the unplanned, crisis-producing system of private profit to the planned, public-serving system of socialism.

While demands for more consumer spending to preserve and extend purchasing power must be a basic feature of any immediate labor movement program, the current crisis must be tackled by reiterating the basic solutions resident in the socialist objective which stands as the official (but too often forgotten) policy of the Labor Party, the labor movement and the ACTU.

Raising of such fundamental concepts is made all the more important by the recent Fraser Budget which quite ruthlessly (and vainly) seeks to solve the capitalist-created crisis at the expense of the workers.

As ACTU president (and ALP president) Bob Hawke told the last ACTU Congress, the crisis of inflation and unemployment gripping all major Western countries is not the fault of the workers, it is the fault of the system. The truism must never be forgotten by any sector of the labor movement.



at a June general meeting, an Australia Party representative attended the Sydney East Timor Moratorium meeting to urge, again, that the broader slogan be adopted. The "stacked" general meeting overrode this proposal, which was supported by representatives of the Socialist Party of Australia, the Young Socialist League and the Building Workers' Industrial Union.

Participation of the Australia Party would obviously broaden the campaign considerably. But the ultra-left try to deny this by suggesting that, after all, the Australia Party does not have much electoral support and that the ALP branches which agree with its stand on slogans are not the ALP as a whole. These ultra-leftists also argue that the same four slogans ("independence for East Timor," "Indonesian troops out," "no trade, no aid," and "solidarity with Fretilin") are Australian-wide and that the same slogans operate in the more successful Melbourne Moratorium Committee; therefore it is not the slogans which are the cause of the Sydney Moratorium's relative lack of success.

I am not suggesting that the slogans are the only cause. But I am suggesting that narrow approaches and methods of work generally, which have certainly been more symptomatic of Sydney's peace activity than they have of Melbourne's, can play a big part.

Let us look at each argument raised by the ultra-leftists. Perhaps the Australia Party does not have much electoral support, but it does comprise a group of people who are neither of the left nor the ultra-left. The Sydney campaign has not extended far beyond these groupings. The Australian Party could clearly add a vitally needed element of breadth.

Other broad groups would be more likely to look sympathetically at the campaign if the Australia Party could be seen to be a part of it. Church groups, which are not part of the Moratorium Committee in Sydney, could well be among these.

As for those ALP branches which have turned their back on the Sydney Moratorium campaign: They may not comprise the ALP in NSW as a whole but, if they were to become involved in the Moratorium Committee, they would have more chance of interesting their Party as a whole in it than would be possible if they remained outside of it.

As far as comparison with the Melbourne East Timor Moratorium campaign is concerned, there is no doubt that greater breadth has been achieved in that city despite the claim that the Melbourne movement is using the same slogans as Sydney.

To my knowledge, the Australian Party in Victoria did not ask for the slogan "no military aid," as it did in Sydney. That it did so in Sydney was the kind of contention for Sydney to keep in mind in judging whether there was a good reason for varying the recommended national slogans. Unless

the peace movement is flexible enough to take account of local and regional variations in popular feeling it is bound to lose breadth and effectiveness. That the Melbourne peace movement can gain some significant ALP support despite the adoption of slogans which could be broadened to gain even wider ALP, and other, support is to be seen, partly, as evidence of regional differences and varying possibilities for the peace movement in different parts of Australia. It should also be appreciated, however, that the ALP left in Victoria is relatively stronger than it is in other States and is far from typical ALP thought, as a whole, throughout Australia.

Slogans and methods which are likely to have the best chance of mobilizing the most significant sections of the ALP throughout Australia and thus therefore of having the best chance of forcing the ALP leadership nationally and in each State to a stronger stand on East Timor need to be carefully thought out with due regard for local and regional differences. Unless the ALP, the Party that is presently enjoying the mass support of the Australian working class, is substantially won to an issue throughout Australia, that issue is unlikely to win decisive mass support from the Australian people.

It is a pity that so much analysis still has to be repeated years after the lessons of the Vietnam Moratorium campaigns which showed, positively and negatively, how such a broad "umbrella"—type of body as a Moratorium should best be organized.

Experience in the anti-Vietnam war movement made it quite clear that the most effective campaign was one which concentrated on the main issues of getting the invading troops out and urging independence of the invaded. Slogans (e.g. "Victory for the Vietcong") were concepts supported by the Socialist-committed left but they could not maximize united actions involving the largest number of Australians. Such advanced concepts could be held by participating organizations **outside** the Moratorium, but the broad movement needed to be built on broader aims of ending this brutal, unjust aggression; aims which could achieve maximum mobilization among Australians. The Melbourne Vietnam Moratorium campaigns, by concentrating on the broader issues and building a broader movement achieved the best results by far. About 100,000 people "took over the streets" at the height of the Vietnam Moratorium campaigns in Melbourne. With a smaller population than that of Sydney, Melbourne repeatedly bettered Sydney's participation.

Admitting that the relatively large ALP left in Victoria gave that State certain advantages, the potential for greater rank-and-file ALP involvement in other States offered by the then opposition nationally of the ALP to the Vietnam War was generally neglected or sabotaged (as it was in Adelaide where the SA Branch of the ALP was deliberately driven out of the Moratorium Committee).



# Whither the Dictatorship of the Proletariat?

by Steve Mavrantonis

The question of the dictatorship of the proletariat is once again at the centre of political discussion in the international Communist movement. Some views are being advanced by sections of the labour movement both internationally and in Australia about the validity of the concept of the dictatorship of the proletariat in today's conditions.

These views (to which the Communist Party of Australia also subscribes) have one thing in common: the rejection of the concept of the dictatorship of the proletariat as obsolete and the propagation of the idea that the working class will win power by means of a "democratic process". The transition will be peaceful, non-violent, pluralistic in character and therefore will not be the dictatorship of any particular class.

There is nothing new in these arguments. This crucial theoretical question has been strongly debated ever since the inception of the Communist movement because it involves some of the most fundamental political issues.

Another popular argument advanced by both left sectarian and right revisionist groups is that the dictatorship of the proletariat is not really a Marxist concept but an invention of Lenin's which was imposed upon the international working class movement by the strong will of the leader of the October socialist revolution.

The fundamental theoretical, ideological error of the above arguments is the adoption of a non-class approach to the question of democracy and the dictatorship of the proletariat. They fail to see the real relationship between the social classes and the political systems which express the interests and the power of these classes.

In analysing this rather complex question we must proceed by posing the questions: What does "Democracy" really mean? and what is the dictatorship of the proletariat?

In answering the first question one must first of all try to establish whether there is such a thing as "pure", non-class or above class democracy. Democracy in its "pure" form is not possible in a class society and never in the history of class society has such a system of "pure" democracy existed.

Democracy, like all other social phenomena, has a definite class content. Democracy can only be examined in relation to the rule of a certain class and in relation to the state apparatus used by the ruling class to safeguard its interests.

In a class society democracy means a certain system of rights and privileges of the exploiters at the expense of the exploited masses who have no rights and no privileges.

We can only therefore talk about certain types of democracy associated with and expressing the interests of this or that social class and not about democracy in general, abstract or "pure" democracy.

Thus, comparison has to be made between bourgeois democracy and the dictatorship of the proletariat.

As Lenin pointed out in his book *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky*: "The question of the dictatorship of the proletariat is a question of the relation of the proletarian state to the bourgeois state, of proletarian democracy to bourgeois democracy."

*Bourgeois democracy* means the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie (of a small minority) over the masses of the working people, that is the vast majority of the population. Bourgeois democracy, Lenin said, "always remains and under capitalism is bound to remain restricted, truncated, false and hypocritical, a paradise for the rich and a snare and deception for the exploited, for the poor."

*The dictatorship of the proletariat*, on the other hand, is working class democracy. It is the dictatorship of the working class in alliance with other exploited classes, the dictatorship of the vast majority of the people over a small minority of exploiters and the social parasites attached to this minority.

Proletarian democracy is a democracy for the poor and not a democracy for the rich that every bourgeois democracy, even the best, really is. The purpose of the proletarian dictatorship is to create socialism, to do away with the division of society into classes.

It is only in this content that we can compare the two concepts.

To try to counterpose the dictatorship of the proletariat to abstract or pure democracy like the followers of the various non-Marxist tendencies in Australia and overseas do today and like Kautsky and other infamous renegades of the working class movement did in the past, is according to Lenin "using the mendacious phrase of a liberal who wants to fool the workers."

The best answer to the second question can be Karl Marx's own definition



of the dictatorship of the proletariat: "...Between Capitalist and Communist society lies the period of the revolutionary transformation of one into the other there corresponds to this also a political transition period in which the state can be nothing but the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat".

So much about the dictatorship of the proletariat being one of Lenin's "purely Russian" formula.

As for the democratic character of the dictatorship of the proletariat it is worth mentioning here Lenin's evaluation of the working class democracy: "Proletarian democracy is a million times more democratic than any bourgeois democracy; Soviet power is a million times more democratic than the most democratic Bourgeois republic."

This is so because only the dictatorship of the proletariat can emancipate humanity from the oppression of capital and make the blessings of democracy really accessible to the masses of the working people, whereas even in the most democratic bourgeois republic—Australian bourgeoisie often boasts that Australia is one of these republics—the blessings of democracy are in fact inaccessible to the vast majority of the working people.

The dictatorship of the proletariat was first implemented in Russia following the October Socialist revolution.

In the concrete historical conditions of Russia in 1917, the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the creation of the Soviet state, meant the transition from the oppressive rule of the landlords and foreign and local capitalists, from a monarchical state of terror and suppression, from ruthless exploitation, starvation and misery of the people, to a new infinitely higher type of democracy. The new socialist democracy put an end to the exploitation of the landlords and the bourgeoisie and gave the toiling masses for the first time in history, the right to be masters of their own destiny.

It meant the use of revolutionary violence against the resistance of the former ruling classes and at the same time laying the foundations for the construction of a new society based on the socialisation of the means of production which in itself opened the way for the complete and final elimination of classes and the future formation of the classless (communist) society.

All other countries where the revolution was successful and which took the socialist road also introduced the dictatorship of the proletariat, with some variations due to specific local conditions, as a necessary transitional stage in the revolutionary process.

From what has been said so far it becomes clear that there are two main aspects and tasks of the dictatorship of the proletariat

To suppress the resistance put up by the overthrown regime, eliminate the exploiting classes and all causes of human exploitation, eliminate all forms of social injustice and national oppression and to build and consolidate a new social system, i.e. socialism, and prepare the conditions for a transition to Communist construction, a classless society.

Hence, it is obvious that the main purpose of the dictatorship of the proletariat is to carry out creative activity, constructive work.

To ensure the gains of proletarian democracy, to safeguard the new proletarian state against violence used by the former exploiters it may be essential to meet this counter-revolutionary violence with strong working class action. Bourgeois falsifiers always attempt to picture the dictatorship of the proletariat as complete violence, which allegedly stems from the very nature and outlook of Communism.

These distortions are absolutely groundless because neither in ideology nor in politics nor in "our ideal" as Lenin said, "is there any room for violence over the people."

Revolutionary violence is used only against the exploiters and their organs, and only when they attempt to reverse the situation and pose a threat to the revolution. As Lenin commented in his critique of Vandervelde's book *On the State* "...bourgeois democracy suppresses the working class and exploited people, and proletarian democracy will have to suppress the bourgeoisie."

## VALID TODAY

Very often we come across the argument that the concept of the proletarian dictatorship is outdated and no longer valid in conditions of developed capitalism, in technologically advanced capitalist societies. I have set out above the two main tasks of the dictatorship of the proletariat. The question, therefore, is: are those two aspects and tasks valid today? Is there a need for the replacement of monopoly capitalism by a socialist society? Is today's bourgeoisie in industrially-developed societies prepared to voluntarily give up its position and privileges without a fight, without resistance and violence? Is there still a need for a transitional period of development during which the conditions are set for the consolidation of the socialist society and the transition to the higher stage of communist society?

No one claiming to be a revolutionary could seriously deny the need for replacing the rule of monopoly capital by a new socialist state. In fact in today's conditions of developed monopoly capitalism, the need has become more apparent, as the striving for ever increasing profits, monopolies assume a greater control not only of the economic life of the countries they rule but of the state apparatus, culture and public life generally



The exploitation of people under monopoly capital rule has reached unprecedented heights and successive economic crises with large armies of unemployed, inflation and economic stagnation, dominate the life of most of the industrially developed capitalist countries.

Historical experience, even from the most recent past, also provides us with ample proof that state monopoly capitalism is not prepared to voluntarily give up its positions. It would be extremely naive for revolutionaries to think it would.

In fact monopoly capital has improved tremendously its state apparatus, building its military strength and its capacity and methods to deal blows at the working class movement, to militarily intervene in other countries and to impose fascist dictatorships whenever its political rule is challenged.

One has only to look at what happened in Greece in 1967, in Chile, Argentina, Cyprus, East Timor—to mention but a few obvious cases of use of bourgeois violence to crush the progressive movements in those countries—to appreciate the importance of the need for effective working class resistance to the bourgeoisie's efforts to stay in power by all means. One could also draw useful conclusions from the recent actions of Australian big business circles, which culminated in the infamous political coup of November last ending with the overthrow of the elected Labor government.

It goes without saying also that from the moment the working class gains power in our industrially developed country the need is there for consolidation of this power to face the counter blows of the deposed ruling class, which are certain to occur, for elimination of exploitation and for developing the economic and material base for the advanced socialist society.

Both the main tasks, therefore, of the dictatorship of the proletariat remain valid today and consequently the concept of the proletarian dictatorship is not at all outdated. It is as living and as indispensable for the success of revolution today, as it has ever been in the past.

Certainly, any genuine revolutionary position is to seek a transition from bourgeois to working class power along the most peaceful path possible. The transition from one class power to another is the decisive question.

However, those who propagate the non-validity of proletarian dictatorship and maintain that the political transformation can only take place by a "democratic, peaceful, non-violent" process, presumably parliamentary struggle, fail to ask the question: Democracy for whom? For what class?

They also fail to see that the dictatorship of the proletariat is nothing but working class democracy immeasurably higher than any bourgeois democracy. This argument also fails to take into account the historically

proven fact that the means and methods of the working class assuming and keeping power does not always depend upon the working class alone. In most cases it depends upon the methods and means used by the former exploiters. When they resort to violence as they often do, the working class has no alternative but to use revolutionary violence against them.

To propagate therefore the "peaceful development" as the only way of struggle for socialism, is like denying the working class movement the use of the most powerful weapon against the class enemy. It is like offering the working class and its allies as easy prey to the all powerful and resourceful bourgeoisie.

Local conditions in every given country have of course determined and will in future determine *the variation* of the proletarian dictatorship, the particular form of the proletarian state. The main and fundamental features however of the dictatorship of the proletariat—the leading position of the party of the working class in the revolutionary process, suppression of the former exploiters and preventing them from regaining power, elimination of exploitation and socialisation of the means of production—have universal application and are objectively determined by the dialectics of social development.

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# The Australian Media

by W. J. Brown

*("Most monopolistic in the world"—but coming under increasing challenge)*

The United States Journalism Quarterly in 1973 assessed the Australian press as the most monopolistic in the world.

So it is. And the monopolistic concentration is getting worse.

Four big bodies control Australia's basic media. Through national press radio and television networks they daily dispense a skilfully slanted news and cultural diet that heavily influences the Australian people's political, social and cultural attitudes.

These four bodies are—The Herald and Weekly Times (Chairman Sir Philip Jones); John Fairfax Pty. Ltd. (Sir Warwick Fairfax); News Limited (Rupert Murdoch) and Consolidated Press Holdings Ltd., (Kerry Packer).

The first three actually hold a controlling interest in every metropolitan newspaper published in Australia.

Monopolistic tentacles have tightened on the media since the US Journalism Quarterly report of 1973.

Consolidated Press has sold its Sydney newspapers to Murdoch while retaining big Packer holdings in T.V. and Radio.

While Australia has a National Government radio and TV network known as the Australian Broadcasting Commission, the above private groupings wield basic media power through their interlocking chain of press, radio and television control (See research material at end of this report).

The hard fact is that the Jones, Fairfax, Murdoch and Packer groups virtually dominate all radio and TV networks.

The first three are also dominant in provincial and suburban newspapers, magazines of all types catering for women, sporting groups, youth, etc.

Their monopolistic power even stretches beyond our island continent's coastline to influence the surrounding Pacific and Asian region. For instance, the most powerful group, the Herald and Weekly Times owns five newspapers

in Fiji, one in Singapore, one in Papua New Guinea and a printing and publishing company in Fiji.

In Australia, the big four do not hesitate to exercise their extensive media power to peddle the most biased and reactionary viewpoints on both national and international political issues.

For instance, at present, the Australian media is joining the most extreme war-mongering voices in the West in full cry against detente.

Daily the Australian media echoes Reagan-style ravings about "Soviet threats" and the need to step up the arms race to close the alleged "gap" between the Western countries military capacity and that of the Soviet Union.

Sometimes the facts leak through—but this happens mainly on the State-run ABC media. Some commentators on the ABC come out with facts to show that contradict the line that the Soviet Union is allegedly building up bases and naval presence in the Indian Ocean. One commentator on the ABC, retired American Admiral La Roque has given grim figures that contradict the USA lag theory and underline the need for disarmament.

The figures show that the USA has enough nuclear weapons to "destroy the Soviet Union 45 times over", while the USSR has three times less that capacity. These facts found no reflection in monopoly-run sections of the media.

In national politics the bias of the privately owned media has stirred anger and opposition from both professional and industrial unions who have charged that their claims and policies are frequently misrepresented.

But the concentrated power and consistently implemented bias of the big business controlled media is coming under increasingly strong challenge from still wider sectors of the Australian community.

The major challenge from journalists (officially backed by the journalists' union—the Australian Journalists' Association) in December, 1975 was particularly significant.

A strike took place involving about 450 journalists working for News Ltd. (the Murdoch press chain) in Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane and Canberra.

The journalists struck for 48 hours to "protest against repeated and continuing bias in the reporting and presentation of political stories" during the national election campaign of late 1975.

(Background to this strike was the extraordinary action of the Queen of England's Vice Regal representative in Australia, Sir John Kerr. An appointee of the Whitlam Labor Government, Kerr sacked that Government and



installed the conservative coalition as a "caretaker government" pending special national elections in December.

This remarkably ruthless coup d'etat master-minded by the Australian ruling class was followed by a most biased attack on the deposed Labor Government by the privately owned media. This was launched to ensure the coup was duly crowned by election of the big business backed Liberal-Country Party Coalition.)

The journalists strike was the first strike in the history of Sydney journalism on a moral issue. It directly challenged the bias by press bosses against Labor.

While they indicated in their resolution that they were not supporting "any political party" the journalists' strike resolution spoke in strong terms.

Declaring that they were acting "against a very deliberate and blatant bias in the presentation of news" the journalists' resolution said:

"The AJA members believe this bias has become so obvious to readers that they would well believe that we are in part responsible for it.

"We have therefore felt it necessary to dissociate ourselves entirely from the desecration of the traditional and historic ethics of journalism, which we expect of ourselves and of our employers, and which we sincerely believe that readers expect of both of us.

"Freedom of the press is not a right owned by publishers nor by journalists. It is a right that belongs to the people of Australia, a right to know all the facts and viewpoints so that the people can make intelligent judgements on the political, social and personal issues which affect their lives."

Despite the journalists fine effort to stop the private media bias, it is generally estimated in the Australian Labor movement that the deliberately slanted news presentation during the 1975 election campaign played a major part in ensuring that the Whitlam Government was defeated and the caretaker Government of conservative parties installed by Governor General Kerr was consolidated in office.

A Sydney magazine, the New Journalist, compiled by journalists opposed to media bias made a detailed study of newspaper bias against the Labor Party during the elections.

A Labor Party Radio Commentator, Mr. Bob Carr broadcast the following comment:-

"Journalists should well be concerned about the elections. The last campaign saw Australian journalists go on strike—for the first time in history—to protest the contents of their newspapers. Seventy five members of "The Australian" staff said in a letter to their boss, Mr

Rupert Murdoch, "We are loyal to the best traditions of journalism... We cannot be loyal to those traditions, or to ourselves, if we accept the deliberate or careless slanting of headlines, seemingly blatant imbalance in news presentation, political censorship and on occasion, distortion of copy from senior, specialist journalists, the political management of news and features and stifling of dissent..."

An interesting feature of the extremes Australian bosses went to during the 1975 election campaign was the attack they mounted against the ABC news and commentary sessions.

ABC news and commentaries are (and were during the 1975 election) more objective than the privately owned media.

Yet during the election campaign (and since) the privately run media, Australian big business and the new conservative government have kept up an attack on the ABC for alleged "left wing bias". Under pressure from the monopoly media and heavy pressure from the Fraser Government the ABC has quite noticeably shifted to a more and more conservative bias.

The above mentioned Labor commentator Bob Carr dealing with allegations of past ABC bias towards Labor stated:-

"As for that hoary old myth about the ABC being pro-Labor, the official tally shows that ABC news (in the 1975 election campaign) gave the Coalition seven minutes more coverage during the campaign, than the Labor Party. If only the newspapers were that balanced."

The continuing hostility towards the ABC by the conservative government was manifest in the heavy slashing of 1976 government budget allocations to the ABC which, commentators estimated, could eventually cause reduction of up to 1,000 in ABC staff. (The ABC is officially rated as the biggest employer of journalists in Australia).

The fate of the ABC which is under creeping curtailment makes it clear that neither the conservative Australian Government nor its big business backers are prepared to tolerate even moderate competition by the ABC as a more objective media source—or even an alternative cultural media to the capitalist product.

During the Labor Government's term of office, a useful proposal was made to establish a Press Council. It was to be nothing more than the type of council that has been operating in Britain for 20 years.

A number of valuable (but not revolutionary) proposals put forward by Labor included the possibility of separating the media barons from either their TV/radio controlling interests or their control over newspapers.



This surely was reasonable enough.

Blanket command by one private business group over such vital sections of the media as the press, radio and television is obviously undesirable. It is outright monopolising of all media for peddling the same private big business viewpoint.

The original concepts of the Press Council under Labor were bitterly attacked by the big media owners. Since the advent of the conservative government the concept has been substantially watered down. The Press Council has since come into being under the present government but gone are all the more serious proposals of the previous government that attempted to place the media under some form of more responsible, democratic control.

Of course, the big media moguls always describe themselves as upholders of the "freedom of the press".

The reality is that the "free press" of the "free world" are mocking misnomers on both counts. The press is not free in the capitalist world except in the final analysis, to express the basic views of its private owners. The world in which the media is a tightly held captive in monopoly tentacles is not a "free world" but one under ruthless domination of finance capital.

Democratic challenge to this situation keeps getting higher and wider. Printers were prominent in the journalists fight against bias during the December election campaign. In the South Coast Industrial city of Wollongong in New South Wales, mine workers in July, 1975 occupied the offices of the Mercury, a Fairfax publication, to protest at false reports in that paper.

In International Women's Year women delegates at the "Women and Politics" Conference in Canberra marched on the offices of the Canberra Times and occupied the editorial rooms in protest against the discriminatory attitude in press reports towards women.

Journalists took a strong stand against the arrogance of Queensland Premier Joh Bjelke Petersen earlier this year.

Some expression of radical opposition to the private media monopoly is also seen in Media Action Groups that have emerged in some cities.

During the election in Sydney a group of militant journalists backed by militant unions from both industrial and professional spheres got together to publish a national paper called "The Citizen". This provided an alternative press in this period to the open bias of the dailies.

Such groups, and gathering trade union readiness to act against the private media, are a good start.

They show that a new attitude of challenge is developing to the concept that a big business controlled media can use and abuse their private control of the press, radio and television to the detriment of the people and their democratic rights.

It is a good start—but one that needs to get more basic backing from the united trade union movement and the labour movement generally in the continuing campaign against what our United States journalist colleagues so rightly assess as "the most monopolistic press in the world."

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# Consumer-Led Recovery and Capitalist Reality

by Ron Barrett

What do we mean by the term consumer-led economic recovery? Why do we advocate consumerism? Why should we as Socialists have any need to advocate consumerism when workers are being constantly bombarded with adverts by the mass media imploring them to buy the goods advertised?

It has become fashionable on some sections of the left in recent years to denigrate consumerism and to oppose what is termed the accumulation of material possessions.

This attitude is enshrined in both Trotskyist and Maoist theory in the principle of produce much but consume little.

There is evidence that this is practised in China itself and the extreme left generally see it as a way of assisting under-developed countries to overcome food shortages.

This is part of the extreme left's failure to realise that the plight of backward countries is caused by unfair distribution of wealth resulting in the few consuming much and the majority consuming little.

To correctly understand the role of consumerism we must see it first as a necessary part of physical existence. From primitive times man has had to produce and consume his basic necessities of food clothing and shelter in order to live and develop.

The needs of modern man are far more extensive but so is his ability to produce wealth.

Under Capitalism a contradiction exists between the ability to produce wealth and the capacity to consume it.

In the philosophical sense this is one of the reasons for the Capitalist economic cycle of crisis, depression, recovery and boom with the boom period ending in a crisis of over production.

It is obvious that the resolution of this contradiction lies in the continuation

of consumption particularly on the part of the wage worker as he constitutes the largest section of society.

To facilitate this there must be high wages and stable prices.

Prices are seldom if ever stable, they are usually blatantly increased for the purpose of increasing profits. This has been the case with BHP and its never ending steel price rises with the effect that this has on the prices of commodities containing steel. Every time prices go up wages go down.

Marx said:

“Since the capitalist and the workman have only to divide this limited value, that is the value measured by the total labour of the working man, the more the one gets the less will the other get and vice versa. Whenever a quantity is given, one part of it will increase inversely as the other decreases. If the wages change, profits will change in an opposite direction. If wages fall profits will rise and if wages rise profits will fall”.

To this must be added the burden of inflation which is caused by the price of a commodity being raised artificially above its real value placing a further strain on workers' wages which must be compensated by wage indexation.

Marx could have been referring to wage indexation when he said, “The working man should try to get some share in the increased productive powers of his own labour and to maintain his former relative position in the social scale.” This clearly shows why we support wage indexation. But we should not see it as the be all and end all and why it is necessary to struggle for wage rises outside of indexation.

While political economy is a very complex subject requiring constant study and re-study it contains the quite simple fact that to understand any set of economic conditions is not only a question of knowledge but of class interpretation. This is the basis of our party's call for recovery from the present depression to be consumer-led.

The capitalist class on the other hand do not have the same stake in economic recovery that the workers have. They seek an investment-led recovery.

This is the main conclusion to be drawn from the May mini budget and the August Budget which are based on the concept of wage restraint for the consumer and profit guarantees to the investor.

This will mean increased unemployment while enabling employers to continue to profit at the workers' expense.

When we are told that it is necessary for firms to make big profits for the good of the country or the economy this should be answered in a definite



class way.

It is goods and services demanded by the working class and its allies, in short the greater part of society that will create work and end the depression. It is obvious that the only way to move towards a crisis-free society is to curb the power of monopoly and to continually raise the people's living standards at the expense of profits.

The only real and lasting way to achieve this result is by achieving the Australian labour movement's goal of socialism.

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# Unification That Began A New Era

*30 years after the foundation of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany*

From an article by **Erich Honecker**, First Secretary of the Central Committee of the SED

It was in April 1946 that the remarkable Party Congress took place at which the Communist Party of Germany and the Social Democratic Party of Germany united to become the Socialist Unity Party of Germany. Wilhelm Pieck and Otto Grotewohl sealed that historic act by a handshake. Wilhelm Pieck said that the effect of this unification of the German workers' movement would prove the beginning of a new era in German history.

The existence of the German Democratic Republic, her foundation and development justify those words perfectly. Under the leadership of the SED our people have, during the past 30 years, successfully followed the path into a new future opened by the Soviet Union's victory over fascism. We succeeded in realizing the anti-fascist and democratic revolution and leading to victory the socialist revolution by a uniform revolutionary process and by hot contests with imperialist reaction and their confederates. The life of the people in our country has been changed completely.

In the course of all these years the Socialist Unity Party (SUP) proved to be the transforming revolutionary force of society. It met its responsibility and stood all the tests of the class struggle. It inspired the working class and all the working people to great achievements. It has always given the right answers to the questions of life by its strategy and tactics. All this had only been possible because the SUP has been guided by the scientific theory established by Karl Marx, Frederick Engels and V. I. Lenin. The SUP applied that theory to the concrete conditions of our country and utilized comprehensively the experiences gained by the communist world movement, especially that of the CPSU.



## THE UNITY ACHIEVED ON A REVOLUTIONARY BASIS ENABLED THE PEOPLE'S VICTORY

To perform the fundamental change in the history of our people it was necessary to overcome the splitting up of the working class caused by imperialism and opportunism and to achieve the unity of the working class on a revolutionary basis.

By its call of June 11th, 1945 the Communist Party of Germany showed all the anti-fascist and democratic forces an aim and a path to overcome the power of monopoly capital which had caused two disastrous world wars, helped fascism up, and was principally responsible for fascist crimes. In this significant document the Communist Party of Germany took warnings from history and orientated towards the creation of anti-imperialist and democratic conditions including the opportunity to open the path to socialism for the German people.

In doing so, the Communist Party was ruled by Leninist revolutionary theory. It proceeded from the fact that the anti-fascist and democratic revolution develops into a socialist revolution according to how the working class under the leadership of the revolutionary vanguard realizes its hegemony, how it wins decisive powerful positions, and forges and extends the alliance with the other working classes and strata.

On the basis of a Marxist-Leninist analysis of the concrete conditions and proportion of forces the Communist Party of Germany then aimed at the foundation of an anti-fascist and democratic and a parliamentary republic with every right and freedom for the people, differing basically from the Weimar Republic. This task required the complete abolition of fascism and militarism, the removal and punishment of war and Nazi criminals expropriation of concerns, banks, and big landowners, as well as the occupation of key positions in the state and the economy by representatives of the working people.

In the centre of efforts of the Communist Party, the members of which returned from fascist prisons and concentration camps, or emigration, was the establishment of the unity of action of the working class. The Central Commission of the Social Democratic Party of Germany agreed to the appeal of the CPG of June 11th, 1945 in its own appeal of June 15th, 1945. Thus the leading bodies of the SDP and the CPG could arrange the agreement on unity of action in Berlin on June 19th, 1945. The wish for unity of the working class was supported by the warnings of history. The people had to pay severely for the fact that the unity of action of the working class had not been achieved on the eve of fascism ascending to power. Many members of the Social Democratic Party of Germany and their communist comrades drew the only right conclusion from the experiences with fascist power: to never again allow fratricidal strife.

The SUP became more and more the centre of attraction and the motor for all the anti-fascist and democratic forces.

The enemies of the working class resisted the unification by strong measures. The imperialist forces realized what depended on the result of this struggle. The establishments of the Socialist Unity Party on a revolutionary basis meant, at the same time, that the working class in alliance with all the workers would take the leadership of the nation.

At its First Congress the SUP looked to the future and gave the Party a programme based on the struggle of the working class and its allies. In the principles and objectives unanimously accepted by the Party Congress the theories of Lenin on the development of the bourgeois-democratic revolution into a socialist one in his work "*Two Tactics of the Social Democracy in the Democratic Revolution*" were employed creatively. At the same time the programme drew out the significant experiences of the German and international workers' movement, first of all those of the CPSU. Furthermore, it took into consideration the historic lessons of the VIIIth World Congress of the Communist International.

Because the unification took place on this basis the further development of the SUP as a revolutionary party of the proletariat was guaranteed.

## THE QUESTION OF POWER—THE BASIC PROBLEM OF THE REVOLUTION—HAS BEEN SOLVED SUCCESSFULLY

The working class can only perform its historic mission if it overcomes the split in its ranks caused by imperialism and opportunism; if it unifies on a revolutionary basis and is led by a Marxist-Leninist party which is closely linked with the masses and accustomed to fight.

The most important features of a Marxist-Leninist party are its revolutionary spirit, its irreconcilability towards capitalist society, its fight for the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat, for the shaping of the socialist society and its internationalist alliance with the CPSU and the communist world movement. As the conscious vanguard of the working class it is ruled by the revolutionary theory of Marxism-Leninism which scientifically expresses the interests of all the workers. V. I. Lenin wrote in his work "*State and Revolution*": "By the education of the working class Marxism educates the vanguard of the proletariat which is able to assume power and to lead the whole people to socialism, to manage and organize the new order, and to be teacher, organizer, and leader of all the workers and exploited people in the shaping of their social life without the bourgeoisie and against the bourgeoisie".

The question of power has always been the basic question of the revolution. In order to decide the question "Who—Whom?" in the hard and difficult class struggle to the benefit of the working people it was necessary to act



consistently to apply the Marxist-Leninist understanding that the establishment of the political power of the working class is an indispensable measure for the transition to socialism. We succeeded in linking the anti-fascist and democratic revolution with the struggle for socialism by the creative employment of Lenin's revolutionary theory.

By constant reference to the level already achieved and by an exact analysis of the masses' development of consciousness our party led the first stage of the revolution step by step into the second one. The defeat of the old bourgeois state apparatus and the establishment of the political power of the working class were the basic prerequisites for that.

The working class in alliance with the farmers, the intelligentsia, and the other working people established and strengthened its political power with the foundation of the German Democratic Republic on October 7th, 1949; it created the socialist state of the workers and peasants as one form of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Following this way our workers and peasants state could fully perform its function as a main instrument of building up socialism.

The rights and freedoms of the workers freed from exploitation are not only proclaimed in a socialist state but also guaranteed because every citizen has the political, economic, social, and cultural opportunity to realize his rights and freedoms. The socialist power in the GDR will go on to develop the further display and improvement of socialist democracy.

The unification of the CPG and the SDP was also most significant in the development of a Marxist-Leninist alliance-policy with all the anti-fascist and democratic forces. The unity of the working class was a solid basis for a broad alliance with the other classes and strata, with the farmers, the intelligentsia, the urban middle classes, and even parts of the petty and middle bourgeoisie.

The alliance policy of the revolutionary party of the working class is necessary to establish and consolidate socialism once and for all. Our Party succeeded in establishing close and lasting relations of fraternal and creative co-operation between the working class, the class of cooperative farmers, the intelligentsia and the other working people. Those relations will still more deepen in the processes of shaping the advanced socialist society, creating the prerequisites for the gradual transition into communism.

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*The world capitalist press tried to cover up the success of the Conference of Communist and Workers' Parties of Europe held in Berlin, June 29-30. The truth was that this was a most significant gathering from which emerged a profoundly important document for world peace, detente and social progress. The final documents (published by New Times 28/76) should be read and studied by all. Here we present a summing up of main features of the Conference.*

## European Conference Sets Path For Peace And Social Progress

### V. Zagladin

The international working class movement and its main product, world socialism, make up the greatest creative force of the present times. This is most convincingly borne out by the current state of affairs in Europe.

At the Berlin Conference of Communist and Workers' Parties of Europe, Leonid Brezhnev said: "Today, it is more clear than ever that imperialism can no longer dictate Europe's destinies. The socialist states, and the working class and democratic movement in the capitalist countries today have a weighty word in their determination."

A truly symbolic reflection of the profound changes, which have occurred on our continent as a result of the growth of the force and influence of socialism, and of the working class and democratic movement, was the European Conference on Security and Cooperation, which ended a year ago. It drew a line under the results of the Second World War, worked out the principles of relations and cooperation of states on the basis of peaceful coexistence, and opened new prospects for the further strengthening of peace and security in Europe and elsewhere.

In the twelve months which have elapsed since then, much has been done to implement the conclusions and recommendations of the Final Act of the European conference. This refers to the political and economic fields, and to human contacts and the exchange of information.

However, something else has been most clearly brought out, namely, that the forces of the cold war, reaction and aggression are not at all prepared



to lay down their poisoned arms. This is pointed out by facts virtually every day: the latest Western decisions on stepping up the race in arms; provocative calls for interference in the internal affairs of Italy and Spain, and any other country "threatened" by the will of the people for the democratisation of social systems, the endless stalling in response to the peace moves of the USSR and other socialist countries, and it does not matter whether they refer to problems connected with the termination of the arms race or to the development of many-sided economic cooperation in Europe.

Reactionary journalists, who clearly seek to torpedo detente, are ever more vigorously claiming that detente is in a logjam and very little of it is left today.

**It was precisely in such an atmosphere that representatives of nearly 30 million Communists of Europe got together in Berlin and clearly stated their appraisals and positions, and set forth a joint programme of action in the conditions which have taken shape.**

A consistent realistic approach, excluding both deliberate embellishment of the situation and unjustified pessimism; a firm conviction of the power of the forces of peace and social progress; optimism, and an unbending will to work for the further deepening of detente—all this characterises the afore-mentioned appraisals, positions, and programme.

The participants in the Berlin conference noted that "all the positive shifts in Europe and beyond its confines are the result of a struggle over a period of many years of all the anti-imperialist, democratic and progressive forces."

It should be noted that, for all the difference of the composition of their participants and their aims, there is a definite connection between the Berlin conference of Communists and the Helsinki European conference at state level.

The participants in the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe stressed the need "to exert efforts to make detente both a continuing and an increasingly viable and comprehensive process, universal in scope," and concentrated their attention on formulating the principles guiding relations between states. Apart from that, they reached accord on confidence—building measures, including prior notification of major military manoeuvres, major military movements, and so on, and in principle declared for the eventual attainment of universal and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control. They emphasised "the complementary nature of the political and military aspects of security".

Having fully approved of this conclusion, the participants in the Berlin conference went far beyond this and stated that the discontinuation of the

arms race is the main element in the furtherance of detente. Leonid Brezhnev said, in part, "It is now more important than ever to pave the road to military detente and to stop the arms race." This idea was voiced by practically all the heads of the delegations of the European fraternal Parties.

The participants in the Conference stressed in the final document that it was necessary to put an end to the arms race and to start the reduction of the armed forces and armaments, and went on to list practical measures which should be taken to reach this end.

The participants in the Berlin forum resolutely supported the overcoming of the division of Europe into opposing blocs and declared in no uncertain terms for "the prevention of the creation of new military blocs or military groupings." The timeliness of this declaration is quite obvious now that calls for the formation of some new militarist alliances, either on the basis of the Common Market or on a broader base (e.g., including Japan), are heard every now and then from West European capitals.

Thus, the Berlin conference put forward a genuinely concrete programme for military detente, the implementation of which would contribute towards the strengthening of peace in Europe and throughout the world.

The Berlin Conference of Communist and Workers' Parties of Europe put special emphasis on the unbreakable link between the strengthening of peace, the deepening of detente, and the furtherance of social progress, and exhibited a profoundly class and Party approach in comprehensively analysing this link.

Both the speeches of the participants in the conference and its final document clearly indicate that the policy of peaceful coexistence, active cooperation among states irrespective of their social systems, and the relaxation of international tension by no means signify the existence of the political and social status quo in this or that country, but, conversely, "create optimum conditions for the development of the struggle of the working class and all democratic forces as well as for the assurance of the inalienable right of each and every people freely to choose and follow its own course of development, and for the struggle against the rule of the monopolies and for socialism.

The participants in the debates gave concrete examples of the favourable influence of detente on the process of class struggle. Summing up everything that was said in this connection in the speeches and the document, one may state that the common opinion boils down to the following:

—the relaxation of tension furthers the all-round economic, social and political development of the socialist countries and makes for a fuller realisation of the opportunities of socialist society;



-detente creates more favourable conditions for the success of the movements for democratic and socialist transformations in capitalist countries;

-the stopping of the arms race will make it possible to ease the burden imposed on the working people by inflation and constantly growing prices, especially those of consumer goods;

-the development of cooperation among states fully meets the interests of the working people's struggle against the consequences of the crisis and unemployment, and the interests of the economic development of the European countries;

-the development of cultural and other contacts among countries, with the indispensable observance of the principle of non-interference in each other's internal affairs, enriches the personality of the working people in the spirit of the ideals of peace, democracy and humanism.

By showing the close relationship and interdependency between the struggle for peace, security and the relaxation of tension, on the one hand, and the struggle for social progress and the vital rights and interests of the working people, on the other, the Berlin conference promoted the most profound understanding of these relations by the people. This fact, undoubtedly, will enhance their activity in the coming battles against the opponents of peace and against the forces of imperialism and reaction.

The European Communists pointed out that the relaxation of tension was in the interests of the whole of mankind because it strengthened peace, the most cherished desire of all the peoples on our planet.

A considerable part of the Final Act of the Helsinki conference deals with problems of cooperation in the economy, science, technology, the environment and in the humanitarian and other fields.

The Berlin conference completely supported the programme of actions on these questions, advanced by the all-European conference, the programme which provides for the creation, as L. I. Brezhnev put it, of the "material fibre of peaceful cooperation in Europe." At the same time the Berlin conference took a further step in this sphere.

To begin with, summing up the results achieved after Helsinki, the delegates of the CPSU, HSWP, BCP, SUPG, the Communist Parties of Denmark, Austria and other countries resolutely opposed the practice of the Western imperialist forces, which time and again try to make use of the channels of cooperation for subversive work against socialism, the working-class and democratic movements. They said that the respect of each country's right to choose and develop its political, economic, social and legal system independently and without outside interference, to defend and further increase its historic and cultural wealth is a prerequisite and an

indispensable condition for the fruitful development of cooperation.

The Berlin conference also put forward new concrete proposals which supplemented and developed the provisions of the Helsinki Final Act.

In their speeches L. I. Brezhnev, E. Honecker, N. Ceausescu, L. Werner and other participants in the conference stressed definitely and clearly imperialism is the common enemy of the peoples of Europe and of the developing countries alike; mutual support, contacts and cooperation between Communists and all democratic forces of Europe, on the one hand, and the progressive anti-imperialist forces of the former colonial world, on the other, fully correspond to their common interests and act as a prerequisite for successes in the anti-imperialist struggle.

It is from this position that the Conference supported the countries participating in the non-alignment movement, which, thanks to its active contribution to the struggle for peace, security and the relaxation of tensions, the struggle against imperialism and for the establishment of a just system of international political and economic relations, has become one of the major factors in world politics.

One section of the final document of the Berlin Conference is specially devoted to support for the struggle waged by the peoples of Asia, Africa, and Latin America for the elimination of the centres of military tension, against colonialism and neo-colonialism, for the consolidation of national independence, against racialist and fascist regimes, and for the acceleration of their countries' economic development. It is for the first time that the European communist movement has advanced such a detailed and comprehensive programme on these issues. Thus the Conference has made a substantial contribution to the cause of further rapprochement and cooperation between the main revolutionary forces of today: socialism, the working-class movement, and the movement for the consolidation of the developing nations' independence and freedom.

The Berlin Conference has convincingly demonstrated the constructive force, the realistic approach, and the farsightedness of the European Communist and Workers' Parties. The Conference's resolutions are also of tremendous importance from the viewpoints both of the present and of historical perspectives.

The Conference has shown no less clearly that the European Communists are far from sectarian. They are ready to solve European problems together with all peace-loving and democratic forces. The will to create an all-embracing union of all forces ready to work for a Europe of peace and social progress, is the key-note of the Berlin document.

(Pravda, July 28, Abridged.)

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# INTERNATIONAL ISSUES

*For some time it has been common knowledge that some Communist Parties have been raising the question that certain concepts on which the International Marxist movement had proceeded were no longer valid.*

*The anti-Communist media has been actively using this to demonstrate allegedly unbridgeable divisions within the International Communist movement.*

*Those situations were considered by a recent meeting of the Central Committee of the Socialist Party of Australia. The meeting unanimously adopted the statement set out below.*

*Since this statement was adopted there has been a successful Conference of Communist and Workers Parties of 29 European countries which, in itself, gives an appropriate answer to those who were assured of the collapse of the International Communist movement.*

**The Central Committee draws the attention of all members of the Socialist Party of Australia to the discussions currently taking place in the international working class movement concerning proletarian internationalism and the need, during certain stages of development of the socialist revolution, for a form of dictatorship of the proletariat.**

We draw attention also to the strenuous efforts of the forces of reaction in various countries, including Australia, to play up apparent differences on these two issues for the purpose of creating divisions amongst the communist and workers' parties of the world particularly to create divisions between those parties in the capitalist countries on the one hand and those in the socialist countries on the other hand, and more specifically between the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the other communist and workers' parties of the world.

At this stage of this discussion the Central Committee takes the opportunity to affirm the undeviating adherence of the Socialist Party of Australia to the principles of Proletarian Internationalism and the sound and noble concepts on which it is based.

We also endorse the emphasis given to proletarian internationalism by representatives of our Party in speeches they made and the discussions they held while attending recently held Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, the Bulgarian Communist Party, the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, the Socialist Unity Party of the German Democratic Republic and the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party.

Those statements and the clear affirmation we now make are consistent with relevant sections of the Program of the Socialist Party of Australia.

The working class in all countries has common enemies and shares common goals. Those common features apply to the struggle for peace, democratic rights, national independence, economic progress and socialism. Those enemy forces are powerful and are themselves organised internationally. The common goals are far-reaching and either cannot be achieved on the basis solely of national struggle or such national struggles are greatly assisted by international support from forces outside of any nation.

Those circumstances have existed for a long time and were the basis for the call made by Marx and Engels more than 150 years ago "Workers of all countries, unite".

As a result of those circumstances the workers of each country have an interest in, can assist in and are assisted by the struggles of the workers of each other country.

On that basis it can be truthfully said that every success of the socialist countries and their collective successes greatly strengthen the struggles of the workers in the non-socialist countries. All that applies to the struggles of the workers in Australia. In this country we are faced by formidable forces, our own reactionaries and their organisations, U.S. imperialism and its representatives in Australia, local and foreign owned monopolies and all of these forces are related to the same forces internationally. Consequently our struggles are part of the struggle of all working class and progressive forces throughout the world and while we must rely primarily upon our own strength and the development of our struggles within Australia we gain strength from and in turn contribute to the struggles of related forces in other countries including those in the Socialist countries.

So far as our Party is concerned it must rely primarily upon its own capacity as a Marxist-Leninist political organisation and its organised strength to win support from the workers and other progressive forces in Australia and to win and maintain a position as a viable force in the context



of Australian political life. But in that task we are greatly strengthened by our association with other Marxist-Leninist Parties and by our activities and participation in the international working class movement.

Our Party Program puts our position in the following words: "Three mighty forces today confront imperialism in every corner of the earth and are the basic force for a great alliance for progress, national independence and socialism. These three forces comprise the socialist countries, the international working class and the national liberation movements. The unity of these forces is the key to success for each and to the overall success of the struggle for peace and progress. It is of paramount importance that the alliance between the three main forces be strengthened. Any weakening or disruption of this alliance can only assist and prolong imperialist domination".

We have never found our adherence to the principles of proletarian internationalism an embarrassment or a burden and it has never required us to take directions from or to accept the hegemony of any particular Party or Parties.

Any such state of affairs would be a denial of the principles of proletarian internationalism and the guidelines for relations between communist and workers' parties. That has been made crystal clear in documents of the parties of the socialist countries especially the CPSU and in their relations with the Socialist Party of Australia.

In all those circumstances we welcome and express our agreement with the following points made on the question of proletarian internationalism by CPSU General Secretary L. Brezhnev to the recent Conference of European Communist and Workers' Parties:

"Communists do not shut themselves up within the shell of their own movement. They are always prepared for joint efforts with all those who cherish the cause of peace and the interests of the people. Every communist party is born of the working class of the country in which it is active and it is responsible for its actions first of all before the working people of its own country. It is precisely this that provides the basis for communist international solidarity". In defining proletarian internationalism "The solidarity of the working class, of the communists of all countries in the struggle for common goals, their solidarity with the struggle of the peoples for national liberation and social progress, the voluntary co-operation of fraternal parties whilst observing the equality and independence of each of them."

In connection with the issue of "The Dictatorship of the Proletariat" we affirm the view:

1. In all capitalist societies, irrespective of the forms and the extent of

democratic rights observed in any of those societies, real political power is exercised by minority forces representing monopolies and other forms of big business.

2. This fact renders the democratic rights in such societies of limited value.
3. This position of the forces of big business constitutes a form of dictatorship which is used to maintain the capitalist system in each such country and when necessary for that purpose such a dictatorship assumes oppressive and authoritarian forms.

Statements by leading Labor Party members of Parliament in Australia, concerning events leading up to and including the actions of the Australian Governor General last November 11, confirm the existence of that state of affairs in Australia.

In any process of changing the order of society from capitalism to socialism, and irrespective of the form such a process takes, the issue of political power and its exercise is decisive.

During such a period of change, which may extend over a long period, and for the purpose of exercising effective political power, the dictatorship of the capitalist establishment of the monopolies of big business must be replaced with another form of dictatorship based upon, involving and representing the vast majority of the people and which is a thousand times more genuinely democratic than the most democratic regime preceding it.

Such a form of political power is a "dictatorship of the proletariat". The program of the Socialist Party of Australia shows that we support such a concept.

In view of the importance of these matters the C.C. calls for the inclusion of the questions of proletarian internationalism and the significance and relevance of the concept of the dictatorship of the proletariat in all Party study projects.

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# INDUSTRIAL BULLETIN

Joint production of SWP & SPA

Vol.1 No.1 March 1989

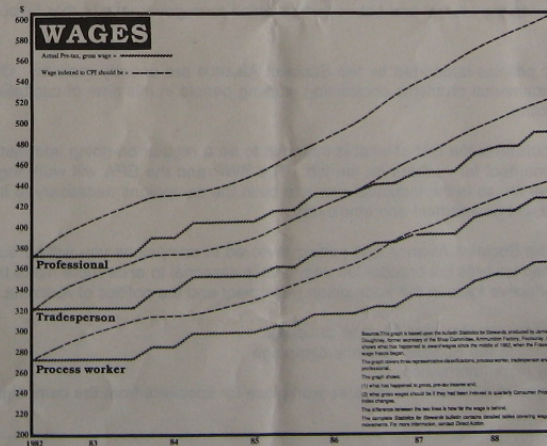
The election of the Hawke ALP government in 1983 brought with it the introduction of consensus style politics and the Accord.

Since that time, ACTU policies have adopted the idea that workers wages and conditions are somehow responsible for the economic problems of Australia.

These calls for restraint have resulted in:

- \* drastic falls in real wages
- \* declining living standards
- \* trading off working conditions
- \* multi skilling
- \* award restructuring
- \* job losses
- \* demobilisation of workers

At the same time, profits are at an all time high!!



Award restructuring is one of the worst aspects of the latest deals. It involves much more than training, multi skilling and award reclassification. It opens the way for a major assault on working conditions. Employers have a full say in the restructuring process. They are demanding "... flexible working hours, reduced penalty rates and cuts in leave entitlements ...", as well as "a flexible workforce."



Workers should demand:

- \* wage rises based on cost of living increases
- \* no reductions in working conditions
- \* no enterprise based awards
- \* protections and improvement of health and safety standards
- \* real tax cuts
- \* NO JOB LOSSES

The myth that wage increases cause inflation must be rejected. The claim that cuts in real wages are good for the country is a lie. It is good for profits but bad for workers and their families.

WAGES FIRST should replace the PROFITS FIRST policies of the Labor government and ACTU leaders. It is time to put an end to employers making all the gains and workers carrying all the costs.

The Socialist Alliance calls for a common platform of united action across all industries based on a campaign for real wage increases based on CPI rises and the defence of workers and trade union fights. Workers on the job must unite to force their unions to fight for these issues.

#### WHAT IS THE SOCIALIST ALLIANCE?

The Socialist Alliance is a joint campaign of political action, uniting the Socialist Workers Party and the Socialist Party of Australia.

The organisations involved in the alliance see it as a necessary initial step towards a genuine, viable alternative to the Liberal and Labor parties which form governments that favour big business.

The democratic policies supported by the Socialist Alliance are entirely realistic. Our policies address the fundamental problems confronting working people in this time of capitalist economic crisis and decline.

This industrial bulletin is the first of what is intended to be a regular on-going information source and organisational tool for workers on the job. The SWP and the SPA will work together with other progressive forces in the industrial arena to build the campaigns necessary to fight the attacks by the present government and employers.

By supporting the Socialist Alliance and getting involved in campaigns you will be supporting a firm, practical step towards the broader left unity that is essential to once more make the socialist alternative an effective force in the trade union movement and the politics of Australia.

I would like to assist the Socialist Alliance campaign

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