

DIRECT ACTION

A Socialist Fortnightly No. 43 June 28, 1973

20 cents

Workers Fight Back!

FORD, BHP, SEC, . . .



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Why The Catholic Church Opposes Abortion



DIRECT ACTION

No. 43, June 28, 1973

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EDITORIAL

THE STRIKE WAVE

With real wages falling, Australian workers have begun to fight back. The employers' offensive against the working class, expressed primarily through inflation, is meeting some resistance.

Runaway inflation is confronting each and every worker. Working people are finding it impossible to maintain their standard of living. Even on official figures, inflation has now reached the rate of ten per cent annually. It's difficult not to feel the pinch when food prices have already gone up ten per cent since last December and every day brings news of more rises.

The counter-attack can be seen in the many industrial struggles taking place in the current period. The NSW Builders Laborers are campaigning for permanency. Ford workers held an extremely militant demonstration demanding a living wage. The NSW SEC workers are struggling for a 35-hour week. BHP workers are fighting for their right to bargain directly with their employer and for over-award payment.

As workers' militancy increases the employers have responded with ever increasing provocations. Massive lay-offs have been conjured up to try and split the working class when strikes strikes take place. Threats of deregulation and other forms of court action have been made against various unions. In the case of the NSW Teachers Federation and 11 metal unions in that State, that action is already proceeding.

One measure of the employers' intransigence has been their extended propaganda. Designed to create division and pit worker against worker and create confusion, newspaper advertisements are being placed in ever growing numbers. No sooner does the Master Builders Association finish its full-page anti-builders-laborers series than the NSW SEC and Ford apply the same method.

While the central thrust of many of the recent struggles has been tied to wages, the new strike wave surging throughout Australia has on some occasions extended further. The most significant instance of this was the BLP's struggle for permanency, raising the issues of union hire designed to guarantee the right to a job. Here the question of wages played a secondary role.

The Ford workers went on strike in order to obtain higher over-award payments, but the upsurge that took place on June 14 wasn't only about wages. The militant action of the picketers in trying to prevent a resumption of work was a direct revolt against the inhuman working conditions, as well as disgust at the betrayals of their union "leaders". They violently objected to the speed-ups and the particularly vicious exploitation of migrant workers.

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Socialists Ejected from Tasmanian ALP

BY PETER EDWARDS

The front pages of Tasmanian and mainland newspapers reflect the growing crisis in the Tasmanian branch of the ALP which has arisen out of the expulsion "trials" (see DIRECT ACTION 42). For example The Australian of June 25 carried a front page story on the expulsion issue called Rift in Tasmanian ALP State Branch Purges Left. The local paper The Examiner had the headlines Five Aged by Labor and gave the details of the "ALP Scoreboard":

- * Expelled: Hugh Dell - secretary of the left-wing Davey St Branch.
- * Suspended: John Green (3 years), Rana Roy and Don Smith (1 year) - all Labor Youth.
- * Resigned: Richard Mulcahy - junior vice-president of the Tasmanian ALP.
- * Threatened Resignation: Derek Holden - State secretary, Textile Workers Union and Mervin Radford - president, Tasmanian Farmers Union. The last three are all members of the State Executive of the ALP.

The developments of the last few days have followed an intensive campaign against the threatened expulsions which lasted for almost four weeks. Soon after the charges against six leading radical ALP members were announced, a strategy meeting of the left was held to mobilise a defence campaign. Arising out of this meeting a committee of three were elected to investigate the illegalities of the 1973 State ALP Conference which elected the present executive. (Tasmanian State conferences are highly unrepresentative of the rank and file due to the existence of bogus branches which ensure right-wing control of the party machine). The committee was instructed to lobby Federal support and submit a report to the ALP Federal Conference.

On June 16, a few days after this meeting, the hierarchy replied by holding a conference of the "Young Labor Association". This conference - held with 4-days notice - was blatantly and crudely rigged in order to ensure that the YLA machine would be under the control of the families and friends of politicians. Labor Youth members and other young radicals who had not been informed of the conference responded by holding a mass meeting of young people in the Hobart Town Hall. The meeting voted to continue the old Labor Youth movement which had been illegally disbanded by the hierarchy and elected a steering committee to organise a mass Labor Youth Conference. The committee included one of the six members under threat of expulsion, Rana Roy, and two other radical activists, Michael Butler and Peter Atkinson.

All this time a vigorous campaign to fight the expulsions was being conducted. Richard Mulcahy and Tim Thorne addressed an enthusiastic meeting of workers at the Launceston railway workshops and Rana Roy spoke to a meeting of students at the University of Tasmania. Three television appearances by Roy including a debate with the president of

SYA Member Bashed

BY CHRIS SLOANE

On Friday June 1 a Socialist Youth Alliance member selling DIRECT ACTION in Civic Centre, Canberra, was assaulted by Rodney Robinson, a member of the Socialist Labour League (SLL).

The "reason" given by the SLLer was: "You're selling on my corner". Quite apart from the question of property relations, DIRECT ACTION sellers had been there for an hour before the SLLer. In fact, DIRECT ACTION is regularly sold here. The week after the attack, Robinson didn't turn up to claim his "rightful" corner.

When it was pointed out to Robinson that the left doesn't settle any problems that arise between its different components with violence, this automaton replied: "Pablote petty bourgeois garbage." (sic)

the YLA, public statements by ALP branches, car stickers and other such means were used to win mass support against the expulsions.

Finally on Wednesday June 20, three days before the expulsion "trials" were to start, a writ was issued in the Supreme Court by Dell, Thorne, Green and Smith which challenged the legality of the ALP State Conference, the executive which it elected, and the validity of the decisions made by the conference and the executive. Despite a strong legal argument, the Supreme Court rejected the applications of Dell, Green and Smith. However it granted an injunction preventing the hearing of charges against Tim Thorne "on the basis that it could prejudice the court case of Neilson v Thorne". (Neilson, the Minister for Education and Treasurer of the ALP is suing Tim Thorne for defamation following a television programme). This means that Thorne will be able to attend, as a delegate, the Federal ALP Conference in July where he has threatened to "expose these corrupt and anti-Labor gangsters" (referring to the misleaders of the Tasmanian State ALP). Thorne was elected secretary of the divisional council in the Federal electorate of Bass - an indication of his grass-roots support.

On Saturday June 23, Richard Mulcahy announced his resignation from the ALP. This followed a leakage that the hierarchy had decided on a seven-year suspension or expulsion for Mulcahy and expulsion for Dell. The executive then met to hear charges against the three other Labor Youth members. Many of the questions were completely irrelevant to the charges and related to the Supreme Court action, the past history of Labor Youth and in one instance Roy's involvement "with other political groups in the Tasmanian Education Action Group" (EAG) Green was then suspended for 3 years ("he's a lawyer and he should have known better") and Smith and Roy were suspended for 1 year. The next day, Hugh Dell was expelled from the ALP.

Although the relatively lighter sentences for the Labor Youth activists may appear, especially in the case of Roy, to be an attempt to appease the well-organised young militants of Labor Youth, neither they nor any other section of the real left will tolerate this repressive decision.

What is needed now is an all-out fight to expose the corrupt and reactionary misleaders of the State ALP. In this fight, the cowardly tactics of compromise adopted by certain union bureaucrats and other fake lefts must be rejected. The incredible public support that the six received, particularly the support of the ranks of the trade-union movement, is indicative of their disgust at the repressive tactics and reactionary policies of those who control the Labor Party. These "corrupt and anti-Labor gangsters" must be exposed before the working-class supporters of Labor so that we can build the socialist alternative.

The SLL has a history of this sort of activity. In January, 1972, two SLLers raided a conference of the Socialist Workers League and removed internal documents. In England, the Socialist Labour League there (with which the Australian group is affiliated) bashed a member of the Fourth International, Ernie Tate, who was distributing literature at a meeting organised by the SLL.

The whole left must understand that physical assaults to settle differences among the left are totally reactionary. This was the method employed by Stalinism to prevent the discussion of opposition views. These sorts of attacks must be repudiated by the whole left.

These attacks demonstrate a lack of confidence in the ideas of the bashers. As it was, the attack resulted in brick sales of DIRECT ACTION to some of the people who had witnessed the attack.



Ford strikers confront line of police

Rank-and-file workers expose union bureaucrats STRUGGLE ERUPTS AT FORD

BY ANDREW JAMIESON

Following months of fruitless negotiations between union leaders and the big car manufacturers, employees on the assembly line at the Ford factory in Broadmeadows decided to strike to demand a 45 per cent over-award payment (amounting to a flat \$7 per week increase) and 17.5 per cent loading on annual leave.

The strike, which is now entering its sixth week, has involved about 4000 men and women who had been forced to live on about \$70 to \$75 a week or less and work under inhuman conditions. The conditions on the assembly line have become one of the main points of contention in the ensuing strike - employees have had to face a speed-up with 54 cars an hour off the assembly line along with a polluted atmosphere and wet conditions. Those on the assembly line even have to ask permission to go to the toilet and there are delays of up to one hour for this. Workers who are over a minute late "clocking on" are penalised by having their pay docked by \$2.

Faced on the one hand with the rising cost of living and the grinding oppression of the assembly line the employees entered on a militant strike despite the pleas of the union leaders to stay at work according to their preconceived scheme of guerrilla action against GM-H and Ford. This plan whereby industrial action was to be taken against GM-H while Ford workers were to back them up illustrates the bankruptcy of actions of the union leadership principally belonging to the Vehicle Builders' Employees Union (VBU) and the Amalgamated Metal Workers Union. They intended to hold back Ford workers by initiating action at GM-H, a company that had just fobbed off their employees by granting an extra \$2.20 to \$5.50 a week.

The growing disparity between the union brass and the rank and file became more apparent at a strike meeting at Ford on June 11 when Laurie Carmichael, assistant commonwealth secretary of the AMWU and a leading member of the Communist Party of Australia suggested a return to work. The rank and file, incensed by Ford's arrogance towards them were angered at the recommendation and charged the stage and the union brass beat a hasty retreat. Without a clear indication of how the voting went and without a division taking place, Carmichael declared the motion carried.

However on Wednesday June 13, after about 1500 men returned to work, pickets arrived outside the car assembly plant. Their numbers rapidly grew until over 1500 pickets massed outside. They were joined by quite a few from inside who explained that they had received notification of an earlier starting-time from the Ford employers.

At this time, one of the most militant demonstrations for many years occurred outside the gates. Workers of many nationalities gave vent to their anger against Ford by pushing down brick walls, breaking windows, and pelting down the growing number of strike-breaking police with fruit and vegetables. The daily press reacted hysterically with reports on the "violence" and "riotous" behavior of the Ford employees completely ignoring the violent and inhuman treatment that Ford has doled out for many years. The extreme conditions of work gave rise to the anger of the employees who rejected the sell-outs of their union leaderships.

On the following Friday another mass meeting was held outside the gates which elected to stay out on strike despite the pittance offered by Ford of about five per cent. At this stage the union brass attempted to bring the rank and file under its control again by "apologising" for the "mistakes" that had been made.

Carmichael's confession had a hollow ring about it. Laurie Carmichael has a bit of a record of selling strikes out, of getting workers to go back to work. This man, who only a year and a half ago said "Arbitration be damned", has managed to get quite a few workers into arbitration.

As reported in the June 19 Tribune, the CPA weekly, Carmichael misinterpreted the feelings of the rank and file. To an extent this is true, he didn't realise that he couldn't hold the rank and file in check. The role of a genuine union leader is to lead the union's members towards victory; not to capitulate to the bosses. Many of the ranks have begun to see through the role of Carmichael and others who try to counterpose negotiations and smart schemes to direct action.

Another important factor that has arisen out of the strike is the question of migrants. Ford's have utilised the language and ethnic barriers between the different migrant groups in order to

split the solidarity of the Ford workers. This has, however, blown up in their face as oppressed groupings, in particular the Greek workers, have come to the fore in the struggle. The Greek community has rallied behind the strike by organising collections to help the striking workers and their families.

Ford workers, regardless of their national origins have mobilised together on this occasion. Differences were thrown aside with a real display of international



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BHP Workers Campaign for Over-award Payment

BY DAVE HOLMES

As reported in DIRECT ACTION 42 (see Mass Meetings pledge to fight BHP) BHP's NSW steelworkers have been campaigning since April to establish the principle of a minimum over-award payment for BHP workers. They want a minimum over-award payment of \$18.50 plus a production bonus.

Over 32,000 steel workers are involved (16,000 in Wollongong, 14,000 in Newcastle and 2000 in Sydney) in eleven unions. The campaign has involved a series of rolling strikes. In Newcastle and Sydney, 16,000 steel workers struck for 24 hours on June 14 in support of the campaign.

BHP has applied to the NSW Industrial Commission to deregister the eleven unions (or their branches or state affiliates) involved. There are the Amalgamated Engineering Union, the Australasian Society of Engineers, Boilermakers and Blacksmiths' Society of Australia (Newcastle branch no. 4, Sydney branch no. 1 and Wollongong branch no. 13), the State branches of the Building Workers' Industrial Union, Electrical Trades Union, Federated Ironworkers Association, Federated Moulders' Union, Operative Printers and Decorators' Union and the Plumbers and Gasfitters Employees Union. The case opened on June 18. The NSW Trades and Labour Council and the ACTU support the unions in

their opposition to the deregistration moves.

BHP accuses the unions of allowing their members to take part in "illegal" strikes and of not taking "proper and sufficient" steps to restrain them.

The Australian Financial Review (June 18) reports that "BHP has said the cost of meeting the unions' demand in full would be \$56 million a year." Maybe, but BHP is not exactly in a disastrous financial position. The Sydney Morning Herald reported June 15:

"BHP has smashed all its major production records in its latest year. The giant steel, iron, minerals, oil and gas complex is now certain to beat last year's record profit of \$76.1 million. Production figures released today suggest that this year's profit will be around the \$85 million mark. This will be achieved despite a reported 14 per cent drop in BHP's half-year earnings."

Delegates meetings from the involved unions were held in Newcastle and Wollongong. At the Wollongong meeting on June 19 Laurie Short, Federal Secretary of the FIA gave the main report for the NSW Trades and Labour Council. On the question of the deregistration, Short said he considered it unlikely in view of the continued high demand for steel and the presence of a Federal Labor Government. He said that



BHP's Port Kembla steelworks

the campaign had "political overtones" -- Federal Labour Minister Cameron has stated his support for the steelworkers' demand; also, Federal Immigration Minister Grassby had put an end to BHP's direct recruiting of would-be migrants.

Delegates questioned Short on extending the campaign. One delegate asked if, in view of the fact that BHP's most profitable sectors were oil and natural gas, the campaign should not be extended to involve BHP's interstate workers. Short's response was that this would restrict the campaign and reduce its

effectiveness since these workers already had high over-award payments and wouldn't be involved in the Newcastle and Wollongong workers.

Laurie Short went on to say that the interstate unions concerned with BHP at this stage would not be asked to act later "if the campaign gets more serious." This attitude is seriously mistaken. In view of the surge in the economy, the enthusiastic sentiment among BHP's NSW workers, the support from the Federal Government and the fact that BHP's interstate workers already have high over-award payments it is not true that extending the campaign would weaken it. When it comes to extend the campaign if not now, when is a chance to really hurt BHP?

Involved in the steelworkers' campaign is the principle of a minimum over-award payment. BHP pays its workers average over-award payment below that of other metalworkers. For example, the South Coast AMWU and FIA members outside BHP get \$21.40 in over-award payments and moulder get \$18.50.

The campaign leadership is recommending to the mass meetings this week that the rolling strikes be called off for a week pending further negotiations. This is a mistake. It is precisely the mass action of the workers that provides the strength in negotiations with the company.

The steel workers struggle not only involves the right to bargain collectively but raises the question of nationalisation of BHP under workers control. An end must be called to this giant monopoly holding society to ransom and depriving its workers of a decent standard of living. How indicative it is that when BHP raises its basic prices by three per cent some months ago there wasn't much opposition but their employees have to fight tooth and nail for elementary wage justice.

NSW SEC Workers Fight for 35 hour Week

BY PETER LUTZE

200 striking power house workers voted on June 22 that they would not be responsible for the safety of scabs entering the Bunnerong power house to break the strike in support of a 35-hour week. The scabs are highly paid engineers who were granted a 35-hour week by the State Electricity Commission (SEC) six years ago. After an inquiry lasting eighteen months and costing \$50,000 the full bench of the Industrial Commission has decided that the power-workers' demand for a 35-hour week was not justified. Even the right-wing NSW Labour Council was taken back by the decision, calling it a "completely dishonest report" and advocating a campaign which "would inevitably involve workers in direct industrial action."

The SEC has not given up hope of breaking the back of the strike. The State Government has invoked special powers which will enable power rationing to be enforced, with a fine of up to \$1000 for anyone who breaks the new regulations. Twenty unions involved are working on plans to negate the rationing.

In its attempt to discredit the power workers in the eyes of the public the SEC has not stopped at plainly dishonest tactics. Commenting on the situation at the Liddel power house, the Industrial Officer of the NSW Labour Council, J. McBean, said, "Our representatives in the union at Liddel telephoned today to

say that the station could be in full production. It appears that the commission (the SEC) is deliberately cutting back power supplies in a bid to force industries to close and, thereby, put pressure on the unions. Officially the Labour Council claimed that one 500 megawatt plant had been closed at the station, while two others had been deliberately reduced from 500 to 250 megawatt production.

The workers' action has met with the expected open hostility from some areas. The Sydney Sun of June 22 stated in its editorial, "They (the workers) don't care what hardship or damage they cause to anybody else as long as they get five extra hours of idleness for themselves." (sic) The Sun also reported the Minister for Mines, Fire, as saying, "I want to make it very clear that the professional engineers and senior administrative officers (the scabs) are displaying outstanding loyalty and a proper sense of responsibility to the community." Apparently power workers, like nurses, teachers, tanker drivers and anyone else performing an 'indispensable service' is expected to put up with unfair conditions of work and pay so as not to "inconvenience the community".

The combined action of salaried and wage workers in this dispute has brought the 35-hour week campaign to a new level of militancy. Previously, the initiative had been taken solely by the wage workers who for the past two years have been struggling to get the SEC to introduce the shorter week. The

salaried division has in the past acted as a brake on the fight by refusing to take part in stoppages. The role played by the NSW Labour Council has been that of conciliator. Against the wishes of the majority of militant workers the council accepted the offer of an inquiry from the NSW Premier, Askin.

The full bench decision has placed the council in the position of having to go along with the workers' demand for action. With the council bowing to mass pressure and the unprecedented involvement of the salaried division in the dispute, the crisis for the SEC has reached new proportions. At first they attempted to negate the effect of the strike by sending in "flying squads" of engineers and administrative officers to keep the plants running. The workers fought this by having a sit-in strike to keep the scabs out. Their decision not to be responsible for the safety of the scabs was a direct threat to the SEC and proved that the workers were determined to carry the strike through until their demands are granted. The rationing being introduced may have the effect of delaying a crisis but the outcome will be the same.

The resurgence of the 35-hour week campaign as a major issue in industrial disputes underlines the importance of time for both workers and employers. Advances in modern technology can only have the effect of increasing the productivity of each hour worked. Employers, by attempting to maintain

the 40-hour week, are not trying to maintain profit levels, which is the basis of the case against the 35-hour week, but are in fact trying to increase their profits. All that stands in their way is the workers who seem to think that they should also get some of the benefits of modern technology rather than having technology used against them.

The technological developments in the power industry have more than justified the introduction of a 35-hour week. As the main thrust of the State and Labour Council campaign for this shorter working week is concentrated in this industry, any retreat will represent a set-back in the campaign. The dishonest efforts of the SEC in needlessly cutting down the supply of electricity is just one indication of the employers' resolution not to give in on any cutting of the working week.

The SEC employees and other workers must stand firm. A united effort could gain the 35-hour week for all workers. To expose the lies of the SEC an intensive effort must be launched to convince other workers, particularly those laid off as a result of power cuts that the SEC ordered. The Federal Labor Government must also step in and directly assist the strikers. If the Victorian and NSW SECs refuse to grant workers' demands then the Labor Government must take over the production of electricity and put the industry under workers' control.



NSW power workers vote at 200-strong meeting on June 22. The Sydney Sun labelled this "A Vote for Violence".

Media Attacks Victorian Power Workers

BY JAMIE DOUGHNEY

On Thursday June 21 members of the Federated Engine Drivers and Fireman's Association in Victoria's State Electricity Commission power stations in the La Trobe Valley began imposing bans on overtime and availability for replacement of late or sick workers.

About 1000 members of the FEDFA are involved in the work bans which stemmed from union attempts to obtain an increase to \$9.60 in shift allowances. In deciding to take this action the workers, in a meeting on Wednesday, rejected an offer of \$7 which had been made by the SEC in an Arbitration Commission hearing.

The reason for rejecting the offer and insisting on the rise to \$9.60 was that white collar workers employed in the La Trobe Valley stations had already received that amount, and until about a year ago there had been no differentiation in allowance between blue and white collar workers. Responsibility for this falls squarely on the SEC who stubbornly opposed any flow-on, and in effect by proposing \$7 were after a de facto reduction in the entitlements of FEDFA members.

From the time the work bans were announced a calculated campaign was brought to bear with the aim of defeating the union and discrediting its members. Coinciding with the Ford strike, the action of the traditionally militant La Trobe Valley workers provided another opportunity for the employers and the Press to deepen a mounting reaction to the demands of

working people.

The first step in the campaign was taken by the SEC in its imposing of inordinately severe power restrictions throughout the State. It is interesting, and very revealing, to observe the way in which this has been done. At 4.00 pm on Wednesday it was announced that power cuts were unlikely. Then, after an apparent change of heart, the SEC assistant general manager, N.G. Chapman announced the power cuts with the comment: "It virtually breaks our hearts to put them on!" Virtually, although not fully, since the cuts enabled the commission to produce the old bogey of "harm to the community" as a weapon with which to bait the workers.

So far the cuts have meant that 200,000 people (according to press reports) were laid off work and all but essential services were restricted. In answering the claims of the SEC, State secretary of the FEDFA, S. Williams, said:

"As far as we're concerned, the SEC can have as much power as it wants to," he said.

"We don't want to inconvenience anyone, we just want to win our pay claim."

Either by not acceding to the just claims of the workers or by slapping on the power restrictions, the SEC bears full responsibility for any "hardship" which may be caused.

The next step was taken by the Press. The Melbourne Herald of June 21 carried a front-page lead article on the

bans under the titles Community Suffers, It's Judge and SEC men Rapped on Ban.

It also carried a photograph of city office workers with the subtitle "Glum and Unsmiling... city workers trek out of Hiders St station today in strike-bound Melbourne".

The article reported State Premier Hamer as describing the work-bans as "a callous act", and also reported the condemnation of Arbitration-Court Judge Aird. The same type of reporting was also evident in other newspapers and on radio and television. The Sun of June 22 featured a cartoon by "Jeff", depicting Ford workers throwing bricks at a plant building and SEC workers doing the same to a group of cowering characters underscored by the title "The community".

Providing the springboard for the next round in the attack was Aird, who showed what the "impartiality" of the Arbitration Commission really amounted to. He made the following remark to a hearing which was called to negotiate a settlement of the dispute:

"I want to make it clear in the public interest that unless the SEC management acts against the La Trobe Valley workers, they will not lose pay but the community will be put to serious hardship."

The practical intentions of this statement was clearly revealed on the following day when the SEC laid-off several hundred of the FEDFA members, keeping on enough to supply essential services. In so doing the real aims of the SEC, the Press, the Arbitration Commission and the State Government

were brought more directly into the open. By enforcing a lay-off they were demonstrating that it was they who were really "causing the hardship" in their attempts to confront the FEDFA, and also that the additional several hundred workers could have supplied much more power than required by essential services as entailed in the severity of the acts.

At a meeting on June 25 the workers decided to return to work with the \$7 increase offered and to refer the case to the full bench of the Arbitration Commission. The decision was passed by a majority of two-thirds but support for it did not seem enthusiastic. The openly provocative action of the SEC coupled with the lukewarm attitude of the Trades Hall Council meant that many of the workers felt isolated by the hostile atmosphere generated by the Press. Militancy, however, remained high and the workers made it quite clear that they have not given up the idea of a further strike, if their demands are not met.

A motion was put to the meeting by a militant shop steward but was ruled out of order before it could be put to the vote. The motion read, "This combined meeting can only support the motion passed at the meeting on June 20 which said 'we accept nothing less than that granted to salaried staff--we resent the SEC's provocative action with stand-downs and reject the latest offer. We have therefore no alternative than to reduce output to minimum load'". Although the motion was blocked by the chair, support for it was high.

IN BRIEF.

LORDLY GESTURE

US Secretary of State William Rogers recently completed a whirlwind tour of Latin America. Commenting on his stop-over in Mexico, Time magazine reported, "... (Rogers) gave his hosts symbolic proof of Washington's willingness to right old wrongs, by returning several pre-Columbian artifacts that were stolen from Mexico and later recovered in California by US officials. They are part of a much larger cache of relics that will be returned to Mexico by year's end." Time did not mention if the US also intends to give back the millions of post-Columbian dollars that have been ripped off from Mexico by US companies.

INFLATION

Figures released on June 20 by the Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics show that between May 1972 and May 1973, food prices in the six capital cities rose by an average of almost fourteen per cent. The recent national wage case resulted in a rise of two per cent plus \$2.50 being granted to all workers. Clearly the greedy workers had better stop demanding wage rises or they'll ruin the economy.

ROBINVALE GASTRO-ENTERITIS EPIDEMIC

In recent weeks over 600 people in the town of Robinvale located on the Murray River in northern Victoria have been treated for gastro-enteritis, a disease which can be fatal, especially for young children. Robinvale draws its water supply from the Murray River, as do many other river towns. At present Robinvale is the only town affected by the epidemic, although Dennis Ferrett, principal of the primary school in the town of Buronga which also draws its water from the river, says that students at the school regularly suffer from a mysterious 24-hour stomach illness.

The fact that Robinvale's water supply is not filtered may account for the epidemic. Tests on Murray River water at Echuca, 500 miles upstream from Robinvale reveal that the water usually has an E coli count of above 20 and that the count has been as high as 134. By world health standards 20 is regarded as acceptable and 100 as dangerous. The existence of a drain which empties

storm water, household wastes and at times the overflow from septic tanks into the river upstream from the water supply intake may also have something to do with the epidemic.

Victorian Health Minister Scanlan however has dismissed the idea that the water supply might be responsible for the epidemic. He even went on television and drank a glass of Robinvale water -- which probably says more about his intelligence than it does about the water. Scanlan isn't offering any suggestions about what might be causing the epidemic but he might have a point about the water. How silly to think that people might get sick from drinking water drawn from a river into which gutters and sewers discharge. Clearly sinful Robinvale has displeased the gods who are now raining pestilence upon the town as a payback.

HEALYITES RECONSTRUCT MARXISM

In 1963 Gerry Healy led the British Socialist Labour League, together with a few supporters internationally, out of the Fourth International and set up an organisation which they called "The International Committee to Reconstruct the Fourth International." Since that time Healy's followers have been very vocal in claiming that they alone adhere to the Marxist method of analysis.

Recent issues of Workers Press and The



"And I can report progress in our efforts to halt pollution. We've now confined it to where people live."
Grin and Bear It by Lichy

HEALYITES RECONSTRUCT MARXISM

Bulletin (the British and United States Healyite newspapers) reveal just how closely the Healyites adhere to Marxism in analysing current events. The two papers carried conflicting assessments of the US ruling class's attitude toward the Watergate scandal. Workers Press said: "Nixon is under siege in the White House, with a powerful section of the American ruling class growing more and more determined that he must go.

The moneyed interests which stand behind the Washington Post and The New York Times are interested, above all, in clearing the decks for all-out trade war and deflation."

The Bulletin drew the opposite conclusion about the affair. It said: "This crisis has come at just the moment when the capitalist class requires a strong government to carry on a trade war against Europe and a virtual civil war against the American working class, and all sections of the ruling class are beginning to come to Nixon's defence, trying to prevent the complete downfall of his Government."

How could two organisations using the same method of analysis and examining the same event arrive at opposite conclusions? It seems that the Healyites rather than employing Marxism to analyse the contradictions of capitalist society are trying to integrate the contradictions into Marxism.

SLIP OF THE PEN?

The local variety of Healyites had a somewhat more bizarre version of events. The May 4 issue of Labour Press, in an article headed "Watergate Scandal Exposes Both Parties" had this to say:

"But whether Nixon holds on to the reins of power or not, both the Democrats and the Republicans will be vying with each other to provide the new legislation necessary for stepped up trade war and mounting attacks on the American ruling class."

NEEJY SCHOOL

Following the Federal Government's decision to cease state aid to the 140 most wealthy schools, the accountant exclusive church-run schools, said that if Federal aid was withdrawn, the parents of the school's students would really should be careful about placing additional burdens on these parents. Just imagine all those Scotch students out tramping the streets of Footscray or Port Melbourne looking for work. Fees at Scotch College are \$2130 a year for boarding students.

SPEAKING FOR HIMSELF

Country Party member of Federal Parliament Bob Katter said recently: "There must be something basically wrong with society -- with us as well as the kids -- if young people are increasingly turning to drugs..." Katter was advocating introduction of the death penalty for central figures in the trade in illegal drugs.

RACISM IN GIPPSLAND

The Senate Committee on Social Environment was recently told of some examples of discrimination against Aborigines by the medical services in Gippsland. In one case a young Aboriginal girl asked a nurse from the Ministry for Aboriginal Affairs to give her a ride to the doctor in a nearby town where she had an appointment. The nurse refused because of a directive from the ministry that Aborigines were not to be carried in ministry cars. So the girl was forced to hitch-hike in the rain. Three days later she died of pneumonia. The committee was also told that Aboriginal patients at Warragul were automatically admitted to the old geriatric section of the local hospital and excluded from a new, well equipped section.

At Warragul and Traralgon hospitals Aborigines are refused blood transfusions at night and at Bairnside ambulances will not travel the 45 miles to Lake Tyers without a doctor's verification that the trip is absolutely necessary.

UNCHRISTIAN

The Anglican Church has written to the NSW Education Department criticising the department's proposed sex-education programme. The Anglicans think that it would be better to include in the course moral norms based on religious beliefs and a course is to break if the aim of the course is to reinforce ignorance and superstition surrounding sexual matters, it will be impossible for the education department to agree with the church's criticisms. Explaining reality, how unchristian can you get!

ONLY VITAL TO WOMEN

W. F. Sheahan a Labor Party member of the NSW Parliament has criticised the Victorian ALP for taking a stand in favor of abortion law repeal. Sheahan said that the Victorians had raised a controversial issue which was not vital to Labor policy. When did the necessity to meet the needs of large numbers of people who are oppressed in this society cease being vital to Labor policy?

... STEVE PAINTER

Women's Course Struggle at Sydney Uni.

BY PHIL JEANS

Once again the philosophy department at Sydney University is in uproar. Philosophy Dept. on Strike, Sisterhood is Powerful, and Student-Staff Control read the banners in the quadrangle.

The struggle is just the latest attempt in a series by the department to break out of the straight-jacket imposed on it by the university hierarchy in the interests of bourgeois society. It is perhaps the most intense struggle to date due to its mass proportions. The action, which includes a Women's Embassy on the campus laws, resulted from the rejection of a course, The Philosophical Aspects of Feminist Thought, by the professorial board. Thus the struggle doesn't stop at the departmental level but brings into question the whole role of women in society, and confronts the males who dominate all positions of authority.

To understand how this struggle developed, it is necessary to mention the preceding events leading up to the present struggle.

The first dispute occurred in mid-1971 when two staff members, Michael Devitt and Wal Suchting, proposed the teaching of a two-part Marxism-Leninism course for 1972 and 1973. One of the two co-heads of the department, the right-wing professor, David Armstrong, ran to the vice-chancellor screaming that he was faced with a "political challenge". The promoters of the course compromised to call it a Marxism course but Professor Armstrong used his departmental veto to block the course. Professor Armstrong's discrimination resulted in press coverage and finally the course went before the arts faculty which accepted it.

The second dispute occurred in late 1971 over the vacant chair of philosophy. Professor Armstrong threatened to resign if the department-backed Professor Nerlich got the job at the expense of a "Christian fundamentalist" whom he was supporting. Professor Armstrong finally stepped down as co-head of the department and the retiring Professor Martin was replaced by Professor Nerlich.

Six months later in mid-1972 the developments that led to the present dispute arose. A post-graduate student happened to attend a department meeting and staff decided that they would forget the old "gentlemen's agreement" method of running the department and allow the post-graduates democratic rights.

The process snowballed and soon staff and students (undergraduates and post-graduates) had achieved the democratisation of the department and a formal constitution was drawn up to concretise the fact.

It should be noted here that although democratisation may be achieved at the departmental level, the department has no final power, for all decisions have to be ratified by the successive rungs of the hierarchical ladder: faculty, committees of the professorial board and the senate. Thus, any radical proposals

which may be initiated at the departmental level will mean a confrontation higher up the ladder.

With the democratisation, the form of examinations was changed by the deduction of take-home exams. Students also got action on the curriculum committee, allowing effective recommendation of the courses they wished to be taught.

In March 1973, a meeting of the philosophy department voted in favour of the course titled The Philosophical Aspects of Feminist Thought, reflecting the effect of the women's liberation movement on the campus. Strangely enough, the curriculum committee rejected the course (in 1972) although the faculty of arts approved the course 34 to 33. The matter then went to deputy vice-chancellor O'Neill, who declared that there wasn't enough money to pay lecturers!



Women's embassy in quadrangle at Sydney University

Gay Student Victimised

BY PETER JAMIESON

Events surrounding the victimisation of a resident of an on-campus residential college have led to a call for the governing body of Macquarie University, Sydney, to disaffiliate the college.

The dispute involves the recently opened Robert Menzies College, the actions of its master, Dr Alan Cole, and an excluded student, Jeremy Fisher. There has been wide press and television coverage of the case.

A lengthy Press statement and statements issued to students of the university by the chairman of the Macquarie University Students' Council (MUSC), Jeff Hayler, summarised the details:

Following an attempted suicide on Robert Menzies College premises by a resident of the college, Jeremy Fisher, the master of the college, Dr Alan Cole, discovered in his belongings that Fisher was treasurer of the Macquarie University Gay Liberation Club. When Fisher returned from hospital and had

However anonymous sponsors provided money, and then a committee of the professorial board was set up to consider the appointments. On June 18, their recommendations (Jean Curthoys and Elizabeth Jacka) were over-ruled by the professorial board (39-7). There was only one precedent for this so the department was forced to respond. A meeting of the philosophy department voted 112 to 9 to strike and set up the Women's Embassy.

Since that time, the main efforts of the strikers have been directed to pickets of classes and successful attempts to spread the strike and build the struggle.

So far, the fine arts department, Italian I and II, Government IV, Latin IV and some sections of Government I and Anthropology I, have voted for the strike. A meeting of the government department is also expected to endorse the strike action, and it

appears that once formal meetings have been organised most departments of the arts faculty will strike. A meeting to other faculties.

The professorial board meeting which rejected the appointment of Jean Curthoys and Elizabeth Jacka recommended a meeting prior to the meeting of the 500 staff and students passed almost unanimously a motion to the effect that the professorial board should reconsider its action and appoint two women immediately. Most speakers stressed that a scientific analysis of women's oppression was essential and that it was insufficient for a male dominated professorial board to reject the recommended women, with no mention of the women even before them.

A speaker from the psychology department also attempted an explanation of how the members of the professorial board had unconsciously assimilated the sexist attitudes of our society.

After the meeting, 150 staff and students moved to the reconvened professorial board meeting and demanded entry to present petitions with thousands of signatures and notice of the motion passed at the mass meeting. The professorial board were only prepared to accept two representatives, so the crowd surged into the meeting only to watch the professorial board adjourn.

The struggle for women's courses (and not only in the philosophy department) is extremely important. More and more women are rejecting the way they have been written out of history in schools and universities. So the struggle to get a course that even recognises this historical and current oppression is an essential first step in forcing the university to respond to the needs of women.

discussions with Dr Cole the question arose of Fisher's commitment to gay liberation. Fisher informed Dr Cole that he was a homosexual whereupon Dr Cole insisted that Fisher repress his sexual preferences and seek help from someone prepared to assist him. Fisher was excluded forthwith from the college until he complied with these conditions.

When details of Fisher's treatment reached other students, a deputation of the Students Council executive approached Dr Cole. Despite extensive discussions with the executive, Dr Cole refused to budge. He continued to justify his exclusion of Fisher solely on the basis of his Christian belief that homosexuality is a perversion of God's law. This view is not even unanimous amongst Christians many of whom have far more enlightened views. In The Sydney Morning Herald of March 31 Alan Gill wrote an article entitled

The Church and Homosexuals mostly devoted to repeating reactionary views expressed by the principal of Moore Theological College, Canon Knox. Canon Knox uses the old ploy of "God's will" to denounce homosexuality. Later in his article Gill concedes that there are homosexuals who consider themselves Christians and see no personal conflict in this. Although they are of course in conflict with the church hierarchy. Recently we have seen cases of ministers of religion marrying persons of the same sex.

Clearly, in view of this, Dr Cole's claim to be implementing some divine precept in excluding Fisher from Menzies College is false. Even Canon Knox says his complaint is only against avowed Christians who also profess homosexuality.

In victimising Fisher in terms of his (Cole's) personal Christian interpretation, Dr Cole also clearly violates Macquarie University by-laws. These by-laws set out conditions whereby the university permits establishment of residential colleges on campus land. Chapter 16 section 5 states:

"A college shall not impose any religious test as a condition of membership of the college..."

opinion the excluded student was being subjected to a religious test in that he was being required to endorse the official Anglican view on homosexuality. Hayler felt that resentment of students towards Dr Cole would spring from two grounds: 1) that students are becoming more aware of legal and social institutions that infringe upon the individual's right to his or her expression of sexuality. Earlier this year students strongly rejected homosexual-baiting in the student newspaper.

2) that students desire a wide diversity of on-campus accommodation, collegiate and non-collegiate. Despite longstanding agitation for adequate low-cost accommodation, all that has resulted is provision of Dunmore Lang College (200 places) and Menzies College which is only partly completed and houses 50 students at present.

What's more, although 75 per cent of the cost of these colleges is financed by State and Federal governments, both are run by religious organisations, which have to raise the other 25 per cent by soliciting donations from wealthy persons. Individual donors of \$650 or more are able to have a student's room named after them! One of the reasons for the monastic atmosphere and intransigence of Dr Cole and the Anglican administration is the fear that wealthy potential donors will be scared off by any liberalisation.

At present several measures are planned. 1) A motion that the Menzies College be disaffiliated by the university council, governing body of the university, is to be proposed by Lindsay Allen, vice-chairman of MUSC and student representative on the university council. 2) The Builders' Labourers Federation, some of whose members are employed in completing work on the Menzies College, has indicated support for the campaign. Failing any reasonable outcome industrial action has been suggested. 3) A demonstration to coincide with the next meeting of the university council at which the censure motion against Menzies College is to be put.

Although it is examination time all students have been urged to show solidarity with the courageous stand taken by Jeremy Fisher and to condemn the discrimination against homosexuals.

Abortion Campaign Grows at Macquarie University

BY KIM REYNOLDS

A group of active feminists at Macquarie University, Sydney, have initiated a group to work in liaison with the Women's Abortion Action Campaign (WAAC). This university group has lately been working on building the June 30 demonstrations.

The June 30 actions are co-ordinated nationally with rallies and marches taking place in Sydney, Brisbane and Melbourne. The demonstrations have been called around the following demands:

- * Repeal All Abortion Laws!
- * Freely Available Safe Contraceptives!

The major activities so far of the Macquarie University WAAC have been a forum with speakers including Bobbi Sykes, militant black activist, George Petersen, NSW Labor MLA and an active supporter of the right to abortion both inside and outside Parliament, and Nita Keig, managing editor of DIRECT ACTION and a long-time feminist activist. The forum was well attended. A surprising new development was the absence of the anti-abortion forces. These "right-to-life" people have hitherto been very active in attending pro-abortion rallies and on several occasions engaged in disruptionist tactics.

Following the forum there was to be an "abortion show". The show was to include singing by well known women singers as well as a performance of a play on abortion by Myra Lamb, the American feminist playwright. The play was produced by the university's drama society as a mark of support for the struggle of women. Unfortunately the play had to be cancelled at the last moment due to illness in the cast of the play, but it is to be performed at a later date.

The activity by MUWAAC was a lead-up to a general meeting of students at which Macquarie University WAAC was to ask for a \$200 grant from the students'

council to aid the abortion campaign. The motion had already been passed by the students' council but had to be ratified by a general meeting. The meeting was well attended and this time the opposition, apparently all men as only they spoke against the motion, expressed their views.

On seeing themselves outnumbered, one of the "right-to-lifers" moved that all those against abortion leave the hall in the hope that a quorum would no longer be present. This move was thwarted by the quick action of the chairman of the meeting. All the doors were locked and when a quorum was still determined to be present the vote was taken. It was an overwhelming victory for the WAAC.

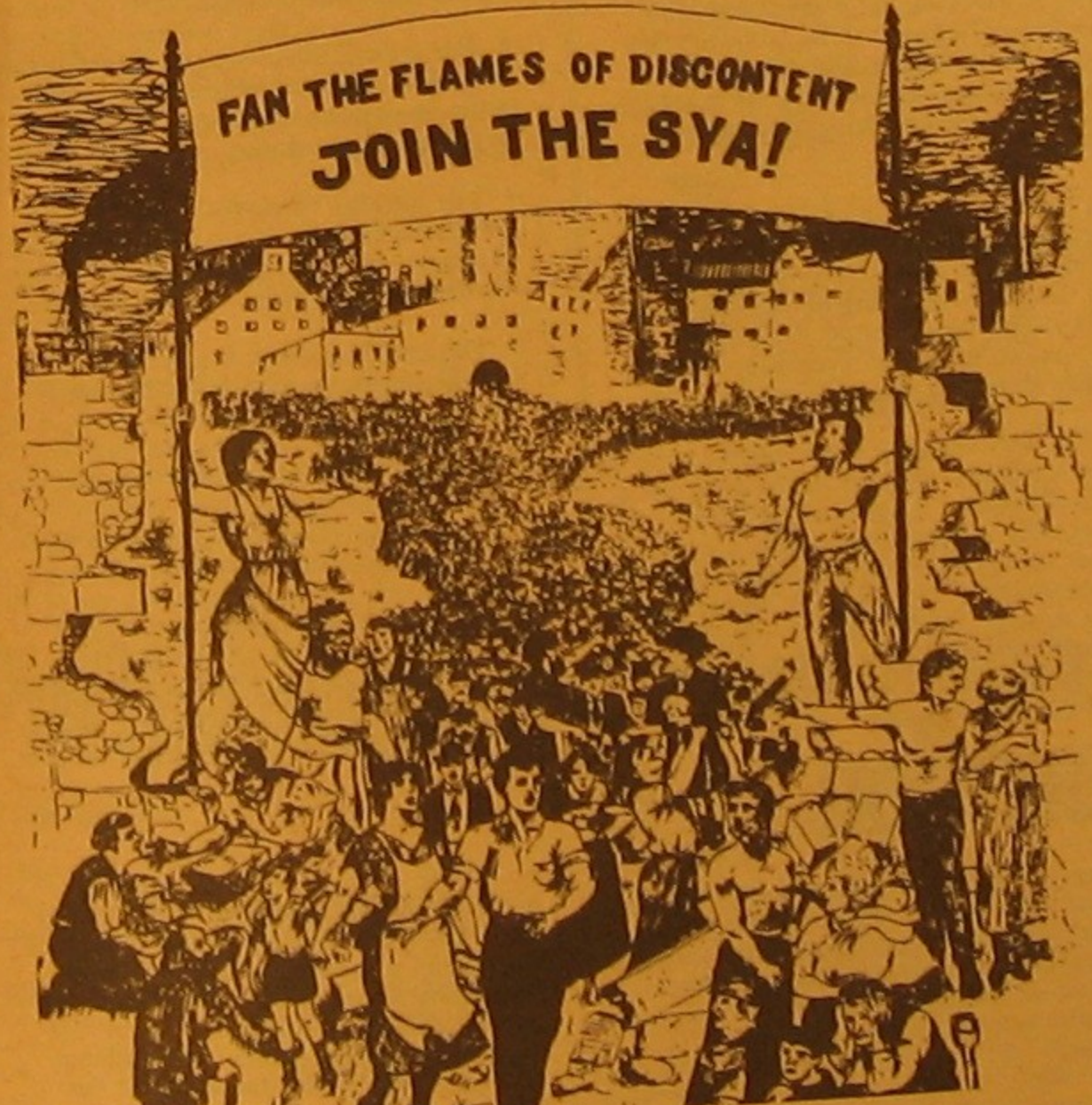
Hopefully women on other campuses will take the lead in setting up similar groups on their own campuses. The example of Macquarie shows how widespread support for the pro-abortion movement really is if it is actively mobilised.

The June 30 campaign is only the beginning of the counter-attack on the reactionary forces which defeated the McKenzie-Lamb bill in May. We are not demoralised but more determined than ever to mobilise thousands of women to win our rights. The right to abortion is an important step along the road.

The Women's Abortion Action Campaign can't survive on the \$200 from Macquarie University for long. The campaign needs your help.

Send donations to the addresses below:

Publicity material or information can be obtained from:
Women's Abortion Action Campaign
25 Alberta St, Sydney 2000, Ph. 617325
Women's Abortion Action Campaign
134 Musgrave Rd, Red Hill 4059, Qld.
Women's Abortion Action Coalition
16 Little La Trobe St, Melbourne, 3000
Women's Abortion Action Coalition
Bloor House, Bloor Court, Adelaide, 5000



If you support the struggle of women for their liberation, the struggle of working people against unemployment and inflation, if you oppose the bureaucraties in the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, and China and support the struggle for socialist democracy there, if you want to work for a socialist Australia and a socialist world, then join the SOCIALIST YOUTH ALLIANCE.

I would like to join SYA..... Send me more information.....
NAME..... ADDRESS.....
POST CODE..... PHONE.....
Post to SYA, PO Box 160, Glebe 2037.

Women in Revolt



Abortion Demonstration in Germany

More than 2000 persons demonstrated in Bonn on June 2, demanding repeal of paragraph 218 of the criminal code, which outlaws abortion. Bonn was chosen for the demonstration because the Bundestag is considering proposals for the reform of the abortion law.

The demonstration was called by a wide range of women's groups and political organisations. The action was seen as a response to a vocal "right to life" movement organised by the Catholic Church. Pointing to such features of West German society as unwanted children in orphanages and unattractive living conditions for children, the call to the demonstration asked: "When have these self-appointed defenders of the life of the unborn ever defended existing life?"

A leaflet distributed by the Gruppe Internationale Marxisten (GIM - International Marxist Group, German section of the Fourth International) to build the action pointed out that the proposals for reform were the result of the struggles of the women's movement:

"When we fight the abortion law, we are fighting the right of the state to control our lives. It is only because of the untiring struggle of women that the Parliament now feels forced to liberalise paragraph 218. We cannot rely on the rulers to 'give' us legal abortion; they know too well what is at stake.

"It is the duty of every revolutionary organisation," the leaflet concluded, "to show its solidarity with women and to support their struggle. Only a strong women's movement can free women from their oppression."

Evelyn Reed Tours Japan

Evelyn Reed, the Marxist anthropologist who recently toured Australia and New Zealand, has had a very successful tour of Japan.

Asahi Shimbun, the Japanese equivalent of the New York Times, gave a news report of her arrival and kick-off meeting on May 12 in Tokyo as well as an extensive feature article for the women's page. Many of Reed's meetings drew large audiences. In Osaka 500 people came to hear her lecture.



Evelyn Reed

Currently the abortion law in Japan is under attack by reactionary forces. "The Eugenic Protection Law" - the name of the abortion law of Japan - has existed since the 1930s. Under this law a woman is granted the right to legal abortion if it is ascertained that her foetus would be born defective. After the US atom bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, this law acquired an acute meaning in Japan. This law also includes an "economic clause" under which a woman who pleads economic hardship and cannot afford to have a child is granted a legal abortion.

The law, however, requires that a woman's husband must co-sign her appeal for an abortion. If she does not have a husband she must "invent" one; have a male friend sign as her husband. This, of course, is a humiliating and discriminatory practice against unwed women.

Whatever its limitations, however, the abortion law is under attack. A bill is being introduced to Parliament to drop the "economics clause." If this reactionary legislation is successful, poverty will no longer be a reason for a woman to have an abortion. At present some three million women annually avail themselves of this clause. It is not surprising then that Japanese women were most interested to hear how US women forced the Supreme Court decision legalising abortion in the US. Reed was able to talk about the fight of WONAAC (Women's National Abortion Action Coalition) to repeal all abortion laws.

Reed commented that the similarities were far greater than the differences amongst women liberationists of different nations. Japanese women asked the same questions and displayed the same intense interest as the women in Australia and New Zealand.

She said: "National boundaries dissolve under the impact of women's common needs and universal oppression. For a long time we have been told by the imperialists that the 'gulf' between East and West is unbridgeable. The truth is that national boundaries are bridgeable by women fighting for their liberation."

Ceremony Protested

The Melbourne Sun of June 20 reported a militant demonstration outside the "Miss Teenage" ceremony in Melbourne:

"Last night's crowning ceremony was constantly interrupted by women demonstrators shouting: 'This degrades women!' Police ejected more than 120 protesters while Sir Rohan (Delacombe - Governor of Victoria) and his daughter, Frances, were still in the hall..."

In spite of attempts to cut them off, some of the chants were heard over the TV broadcast of the ceremony.

Some 30 protestors formed lines across the town hall steps and continued to protest to the departing audience with banners expressing opposition to contestants using women (of any age) as sex objects and the "charity" excuse used to justify the event.

WAAC Suburban Meetings

The first of a projected series of meetings involving supporters of abortion on request was held on June 13 at the Footscray Institute of Technology. Approximately 60 attended the meeting which was organised by the Women's Abortion Action Coalition. (WAAC).

WAAC is comprised of an active group of feminists from such movements as Women's Liberation (WL), the Abortion Law Repeal Association (ALRA) and Women's Electoral Lobby (WEL).

Films were shown at the meeting, and guest speakers were Dr Bertram Wainer, a long-time defender of a woman's right to have access to abortion, and Zelda Deprano, feminist and active opponent of the present laws.

Both Zelda Deprano and Dr Wainer stressed the need for an end to the suffering of women who, when faced with the decision of bearing an unwanted child or having an abortion, are forced into a nerve-racking search for assistance. The present repressive abortion laws often force women to accept the agonies of an illegal operation done without anaesthetic, by an amateur in unhygienic conditions.

A major aim of the WAAC suburban meetings is to reach a broader strata of women in the suburbs, who would not normally be in contact with the city-based women's organisations.

... TINA HARSANYI

French Tests Opposed

BY KARL KRAUTSCHNEIDER

Widespread opposition to the French nuclear tests at the Mururoa atoll in the Pacific Ocean has forced the Whitlam Government to send the frigate Supply to the fringe of the test area. The New Zealand Labour Government has already decided to send the warship Otago to the actual test zone, with Cabinet minister Coleman on board.

"Unofficial" news broadcasts that the testing had begun led the student councils in Melbourne to issue notices calling for a protest march on Friday June 15. Some 90 protestors left Melbourne University to march to the city square.

En route observers of the march gave numerous indications of their support. In one case several people alighted from a tram and joined the march.

Forty students from Monash University

had already assembled at City Square. From the square the protesters marched to UTA French Airlines, and to the French national bank. Both businesses closed early for the day in response.

The "sighting" of the nuclear test by one of the peace vessels turned out to be an error. The rally and march showed, however, the potential for organising broader demonstrations against the French nuclear programme.

Whitlam's action in sending the Supply to the test area was the least he could do. His success in winning a favorable decision in The Hague opposing the French tests would have achieved nothing if it was not followed up, as the French Government had already indicated in advance its intention to ignore it. But direct action, international boycotts by unions, or physical intervention by the Australian Government.

Labor and Immigration



BY SOL SALBY

The recent riots at the Broadmeadows Ford factory in Melbourne brings into the open a lot of important issues relating to immigration. Of those involved a majority were migrant workers, gration.

Since the end of the sixties there have been two dominant schools in Australian capitalism which conflict on this issue. One school favored continued immigration at a high rate designed directly to assist companies such as BHP in their recruitment of labor. This school which predominated within the Liberal Party tied the size of immigration directly to the requirements of the big companies, allowing them to recruit directly in Southern Europe. The protagonists of this body of opinion concentrate on the productive efforts of migrants and see production moving up or down together with the number of migrants.

The other opinion, which is predominant in the Australia Party and the ALP, emphasizes the migrants' consumption. This school in immigration does not decrease unemployment, in fact it has the opposite effect of increasing unemployment.

This they tend to favor a "growth policy" based on slow rather than rapid migration.

For all their differences the two schools agree in principle. They both see migrants not as human beings but as factory fodder. The whole history of Australia's post-war migration scheme is a continuing story of the search for cheap "acceptable" labor.

The initial steps for the whole scheme were taken under the Chifley Labor Government. Arthur Calwell, the then Minister for Immigration, realising the needs of Australian capitalism, changed the course of immigration. Prior to that date the main source of migrants was Britain. But the needs of Australian capitalism in the post-war reconstruction period could not be satisfied by migration from Britain alone. So immigration

TTAV Seminar: Democracy in Education

BY ELIZABETH WHEELAHAN

The crisis facing the education system is a matter for concern for increasingly large numbers of people. Recently the Technical Teachers Association of Victoria (TTAV) held a seminar on democracy in education in order to bring to the surface the key problems facing all people involved in education. The TTAV is the most radical of the teachers' unions in Australia at the moment and the one that has shown the most concern over the problems facing students and teachers.

The seminar was addressed by George Lees, president of the TTAV, several teachers and a group of students from the Victorian Education Action Group

tion from Europe was sought. Later on when sources in Holland, Germany and other Northern European countries dried up, attention was transferred to Southern Europe.

There are several advantages for big business in employing migrants. Migrants can much more easily be forced to work for lower wages and, even more significantly, under worse working conditions. Migrants, because of obvious communication difficulties, find it much more difficult to organise. The domination of so many of the mass-production lines by Southern European migrants has a useful role in dividing the working class and allowing the apologists for the system to spread serious myths about the welfare of Australian workers.

Most migrants are currently being recruited in countries with lower standards of living than Australia. As the comparative boom in the countries of the European Economic Community increased, Greece, Spain, Turkey and Lebanon assumed a higher significance. Not only are these workers accustomed to a lower standard of living they usually lack any material possessions whatsoever. In order to achieve the basic necessities in life these migrants have been forced to work under the most inhuman conditions in the vehicle building, glass manufacturing, and other industries.

Lack of communication makes union organising just about impossible. It was estimated, for example, that at the Broadmeadows plant there were forty different languages spoken. The task of getting all these people to take action together is quite difficult. The employers have also been helped by some old realities, for example between Turkish and Greek workers. Such divisions of the working class only aid the employers. It is quite obvious why the employers have not taken any steps to reduce or eliminate these divisions. What is unfortunate is that the union leaderships, with few exceptions, have taken no steps either. Nevertheless, the Broadmeadows experience and that of the

(VEAG) the group which organised the secondary student strikes on May 31 and September 20 last year in Melbourne (bourne). The VEAG members stressed the need for student-teacher control of education and the importance of democratic rights for secondary students. The final session of the seminar centred around an evaluation of both the seminar and the present state of democracy in education.

Barbara Wishart, a feminist, spoke on sexism and sex-role conditioning in modern education. She pointed out the measures taken by the education system to enforce adoption of pre-conceived notions of sex-roles and sexuality. Women in the education system are being prepared for their

NSW Builders Labourers Federation, which is overwhelmingly migrant in composition, has shown that migrants can be just as militant, if not more militant than any other group.

Brian Carey, in a pamphlet entitled *Changes in the Australian Working Class*, has shown that certain industries and some of the most tedious, arduous jobs in the country are now being carried out by migrants. One of the by-products of this has been the spreading of various myths about all Australians being "middle class". Some of the worst illusions of the Australian-born section of the working class flow from this, with the Australian-born workers being blinded by their "superior" position. The division is somewhat analogous to that of the white and black sections of the American working class.

Poor conditions for migrants are not limited to the job floor. The inner suburbs of Sydney and Melbourne as well as the industrial centres of Wollongong and Port Kembla have been turned into Greek, Italian, Yugoslav, Turkish and Lebanese ghettos. These suburbs have some of the worst facilities, particularly in the sphere of education. Many schools in which over half the population happens to be migrants are still severely understaffed. There is a particularly bad shortage of teachers trained for the teaching of migrant children.

The Labor Party, which has been traditionally backed by several migrant working class communities, and which had the overwhelming endorsement of most migrants, whether naturalised or not, has so far taken very little action to alleviate the plight of migrants.

On the positive side Labor introduced some valuable reforms in the area of civil liberties. Migrants who were politically active lived under a constant threat of deportation under the Liberal Government. They are no longer being threatened. Naturalisation which was denied to people such as union activist and Communist Party of Australia

Sue Russe, a member of the co-ordinating committee of the VEAG, brought up the question of student rights. Secondary students have no rights as human beings. This undoubtedly facilitates the "moulding of young minds" but does very little for the individual development of the students and ultimately is not beneficial for society.

Next followed two speakers on the power of principals in the running of schools.

Above: Al Grasby
Left: Pickets at Ford's Broadmeadows plant

member George Zangalis is now granted much more readily. The Attorney-General, Senator Murphy, has introduced a bill forbidding the deportation of naturalised citizens.

Labor has also stepped into the area of company recruiting. It has told the Broken Hill Pty Co Ltd that it cannot recruit any more workers overseas. Immigration is now based on a system of sponsoring mainly by relatives. The decision to terminate the employer nomination scheme has been described by a BHP spokesman as a "severe blow".

Earlier, in April the Department of Labour rejected a proposal by BHP to bring out 300 migrants specifically to man its Whyalla plant. The reasons given by the department were that wages and conditions were insufficient to attract Australian workers there, that BHP had designed advertisements apparently to deter Australian applicants, and that South Australia, with the second highest unemployment rate in the country, should provide the workers.

These actions of the Labor Government reflect both pressure from below and the general tendency of the Labor leadership to adopt that school of thought which calls for the development of Australian capitalism with a slower population growth.

The actions of Labor can broadly be classified as progressive but unquestionably they don't go far enough. What has to be adopted by both the industrial and political wings of the labor movement is a fighting programme to change the character of immigration:

- * No discrimination, for an end to all restrictions on immigration.
- * For an end to company recruiting. Only the needs of migrants to determine government policy, not labor needs of big business.
- * For special education facilities for migrant children. For time off at employers expense for the study of English.
- * For an allowance to pay to migrant women and non-working migrants to learn English.
- And in the trade union movement:
 - * For special migrants committees in the trade union movement.
 - * For the employment of a certain proportion of union officials, shop stewards etc who can speak the workers' language.

Murray Lloyd, a student at University High last year who was prevented from receiving a teacher's studenthip at university solely on the recommendation of the principal, pointed out the extremely damaging effects of placing complete power in the hands of one person. Bill Brainbridge, a principal defended the present state of affairs on the grounds of student and teacher apathy. This argument seemed a bit out of place in a seminar on education organised by students and teachers. Brainbridge went on to advocate a system of progressive autocrats (sic). The seminar ended with a group discussion. It is worthwhile noting that both the VEAG and the TTAV have been following an action orientation with marked success.

ALP 'Left' Must Fight on Policy

BY DAVID NIZOZ

The dispute in the NSW branch of the ALP has been simmering ever since the two-yearly congress of the party, held on June 9-11, voted to change the method of selection of candidates for the Senate and the Legislative Council. Up to that point, selection was based on an electoral college of 140 people. Under the new system, the State Council of 500 members will select the candidates.

The change has incensed many of the "left-wing" delegates to the congress. To them the issue wasn't so much the method but what they saw as the intention of the motion: to remove left-wing senators Arthur Gietzelt and Lionel Murphy. This, together with the undemocratic manner in which the decision was taken, led to some strong ill-feelings.

The dispute continued after the congress with the Federal Minister for Urban and Regional Development, Tom Uren, publicly attacking the Ducker leadership of the party. John Ducker, president of the NSW ALP, responded by attacking the left's organisation, the so-called steering committee. In this attack Ducker compared the steering committee to the notorious industrial groups which were proscribed in 1955 for their anti-Labor activities.

Worker Participation à la Dunstan

BY GREG ADAMSON

On May 23, South Australian Premier, Don Dunstan, released two reports on the topic of "worker participation in management". One report dealt with private and the other with public sectors of business.

The official organ of the Public Service Association of South Australia, the *Public Service Review* of June 4 republished the conclusions and recommendations of the report on the public sector, *Worker Participation in Management*. This states that:

"We are convinced that the introduction of certain forms of worker participation in management would provide positive benefits. These should result not only in improved management/employee relationships, but more importantly, should redound to the public good."

This "public good" is referred to later on: "The benefits of a work system, calculated to relieve the monotony of performing repetitive tasks and to alleviate the feeling of alienation which in varying degrees affects all workers can be expected to produce tangible results, such as an increase in productivity."

Dunstan stated that the reports "provide a basis on which we can begin to work" while being "in no sense the last words on the subject."

The solution of "worker participation" to the problem of workers' disinterest in their jobs has become increasingly popular among "industrial relations experts". More "enlightened" companies in Europe and North America are experimenting with methods of worker coercion. Under these systems factories give

BY JIM McILROY

In the wake of the recent heavy defeat in the Victorian State elections, dissent with the Holding leadership has appeared in all sections of the State ALP. It was recently expressed in the State Conference in June with increased support for the Socialist Left. Now it has appeared in the ranks of the parliamentary party itself.

David Bornstein, member of the State Legislative Assembly for Brunswick East, accused Clyde Holding, the parliamentary leader, of organising his defeat in the parliamentary party Caucus election for shadow Cabinet positions. Bornstein had been the ALP's spokesman on social welfare. Bornstein said his shadow Cabinet defeat was part of a plan to have him removed from State Parliament. Clyde Holding replied that the

As charges and counter-charges fly and as branches, Federal electoral councils, State electoral councils etc, pass motions of confidence or no-confidence in the officers according to their composition the situation is warming up.

The conflict is expected to culminate in requests to the Federal Executive and possibly the Federal Conference by the Amalgamated Metal Workers Union and the Miscellaneous Workers Union to dismiss the branch officers. Both these unions have leaderships which generally support the steering committee. To that end the steering committee has called a meeting which is scheduled for June 29.

The major concession wrested out of the right wing so far has been proportional representation. Under mass pressure the right backed down and explained through president John Ducker and outgoing secretary P.B. Westerway that all candidates selected by the State Council will be elected on a basis of proportional representation.

A compromise solution has been offered by well-known left supporter Jim Staples who suggested that the election should be conducted among all of the 22,000 members of the ALP in the State.

While the anger at the right-wing bureau-

cratic manoeuvres is quite correct it is unfortunate that the left has picked this issue to fight the right. The new system has some obvious advantages over the old one. It is more democratic and allows for more working-class control over the selection of candidates through the requirement of at least 60 per cent union representation on the State Council.

In struggling for democracy in the NSW branch of the ALP, the left should put forward a clear platform on this issue. The most democratic way of electing candidates for the House of Representatives, the Legislative Assembly as well as the Senate is through the widest distribution of the right to vote. All members of unions affiliated to the ALP should be allowed to vote in a pre-selection ballot. They should pledge simply that they are not supporters of any political party other than the ALP. This highly democratic practice was actually in operation in the British Labour Party for some time.

The left should also resolve to rid the ALP of some of the other manifestations of the right-wing bureaucratic handling of the congress. One of the first tasks in this sphere will be to support a motion which was to come in the Aboriginal Affairs report. The NSW president of the Builders Labourers Federation, Bob

Parliamentary Row Exposes Rift in Vic ALP

Pringle, was prevented from moving this motion. He has now submitted the following for the consideration of the Federal Executive:

"That the Federal Executive direct the NSW branch of the ALP to have Federal and State parliamentarians and Labor members of South Sydney Council cease obstruction and accede to the request of the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs to co-operate in development of the South Sydney Aboriginal community project".

In backing the BLF motion Pringle has pointed out the most blatant sabotage of the housing project by the local council which is controlled by the ALP. Some instances cited were threats to the company building the project. The development firm has been required to build unnecessary fences to separate houses from one another. The company has been warned that the council will make it difficult for the company in future constructions, etc.

Clearly the right-wing leadership of the NSW ALP in attempting to keep out all controversial items also tried to defend its racist backers on the council.

It is around these issues of policy, not offices and positions, that the NSW left should be mobilised to defeat the right wing.

people have a direct say in the running of their lives. The report includes observations, such as the following:

"At a time when the education system is increasingly turning out young people likely to become disenchanted with work in which they are not required to utilise their capabilities in routine or repetitive work, job satisfaction will not be attained unless certain minimum psychological requirements are met."

In summing up the reports, Tribune, the paper expressing the views of the Communist Party of Australia, states:

"The unions and all workers will then (when Dunstan tries to educate workers along the lines of his reports) be faced with the choice of increased worker management collaboration or increased powers for the workers at the expense of present managerial authority."

This is a dangerous assessment, because the same reasoning is presented to mislead workers to believe that when the management not only listens to their problems, but puts an elected member of the workers onto some board of management then this is a step towards workers' control. It is such token representation which will encourage "worker-management collaboration".

While the struggle of workers for control over their jobs is important, an isolated call for "workers' control" in this case is so unclear as to be wrong. Socialists should take the opportunity presented by the interest in these reports to point out the necessarily conflicting interests of workers and capitalists, and be on guard against speed-ups and productivity deals which typify job "enrichment".



ALP

him as saying that he would not be deterred from his efforts to bring the trade union movement back into the main stream of the Victorian ALP.

This division in the parliamentary party shows more clearly still the developing conflicts within the "centre" group under Holding, which at present controls the Victorian ALP. The rift between some of the "centre" group unions, which supported Federal intervention in Victoria in 1970 to remove the left-wing control executive of the State party, and the non-union and parliamentary section of the "centre" group has been considerably widened by the election defeat. The continued attempts of the Holding leadership to reduce trade union representation in the party's official bodies and the attempt to play down the ALP's traditional role as the party of the trade unions has caused a back-lash from the unions themselves.

There have even been some attempts to resurrect the old concept of "the 40 unions", which previously controlled the State party through the Trade Union Defence Committee. Through this, all the major unions co-operated to dominate the leading bodies of the State ALP.

This came to an end when Federal intervention split up the "40 unions", and the so-called "27 rebel unions" moved behind the Socialist Left.

The Socialist Left has rejected a return to the "40 unions" idea, and has asserted the need to unite around agreement on socialist policies. The next period will show to what extent the fight for socialist policies can be successful in the unions and the labor movement as a whole.

It was the evening of November 13, 1921, in New York City. West Forty-third Street was jammed with people. They surged back and forth across the street in an angry mood. Margaret Sanger had just elbowed her way to the door of the town hall, where the first US National Birth Control Conference was about to hold a mass meeting on the subject, Birth Control. Is It Moral? Sanger was scheduled to speak. But she was stopped at the door by two policemen.

"Why can't we go in?"
"There ain't gonna be no meeting. That's all I can say."
Sanger was furious. She rushed to a phone booth to call the mayor. But before she could reach him, the town hall doors had opened and the people inside began to join the crowd in the street.

Sanger slipped through the open doors, through the bewildered audience, and on to the platform.
"Don't leave!" she shouted. "We're going to hold the meeting."

The lecture began as the audience scrambled back to their seats. But a cop intervened before she had spoken a dozen words. Several men and women stood up to speak in quick succession, but they were forcibly silenced by the police.

It seems that Monsignor Dineen, secretary to New York's Archbishop Hayes, had instructed Captain Donohue to close the meeting. Dineen was acting as commander of operations at town hall. Captain Donohue of the Twenty-sixth Precinct was just following orders.

Reporters and more cops appeared. Sanger was arrested with several others. Part of the audience followed them and their uniformed escort to the nearby police headquarters.

A New York Times reporter phoned St Patrick's Cathedral to ask if it were true that the Catholic hierarchy was responsible for the police action.

"Yes," replied Monsignor Dineen, "we closed the meeting."

Fifty years later, with the Supreme Court decision of January 22, 1973, American women won the elementary democratic right to control their own bodies by ending unwanted pregnancies through abortion. Predictably the Catholic hierarchy loudly condemned this decision that under civil law women who had abortions would no longer be regarded as criminals. Cardinal Cooke of New York called the court's action "horrible" and threatened a campaign to have it overturned, saying, "I hope and pray that our citizens will do all in their power to reverse this injustice to the rights of the unborn child."

Cardinal Krol of Philadelphia waxed even more indignant, asserting, "Abortion at any stage of pregnancy is evil. This is not a question of sectarian morality but instead concerns the law of God and the basis of civilised society." Having stated his case in this clearly unscientific manner, he accused the court of being "more impressed by magic than by scientific evidence regarding foetal development" because it had ruled that abortions could only be prohibited after the point where a foetus could reasonably be expected to survive outside of its mother's womb.

The fanatical insistence of the church fathers on enforced motherhood has little to do with abortion as such. The Church's real concern is to keep women confined in the male-dominated family structure in the role of mothers and wives subordinate to their husbands. This authoritarian structure is the cornerstone of the social relations needed by the church hierarchy to maintain its own authority among its followers.

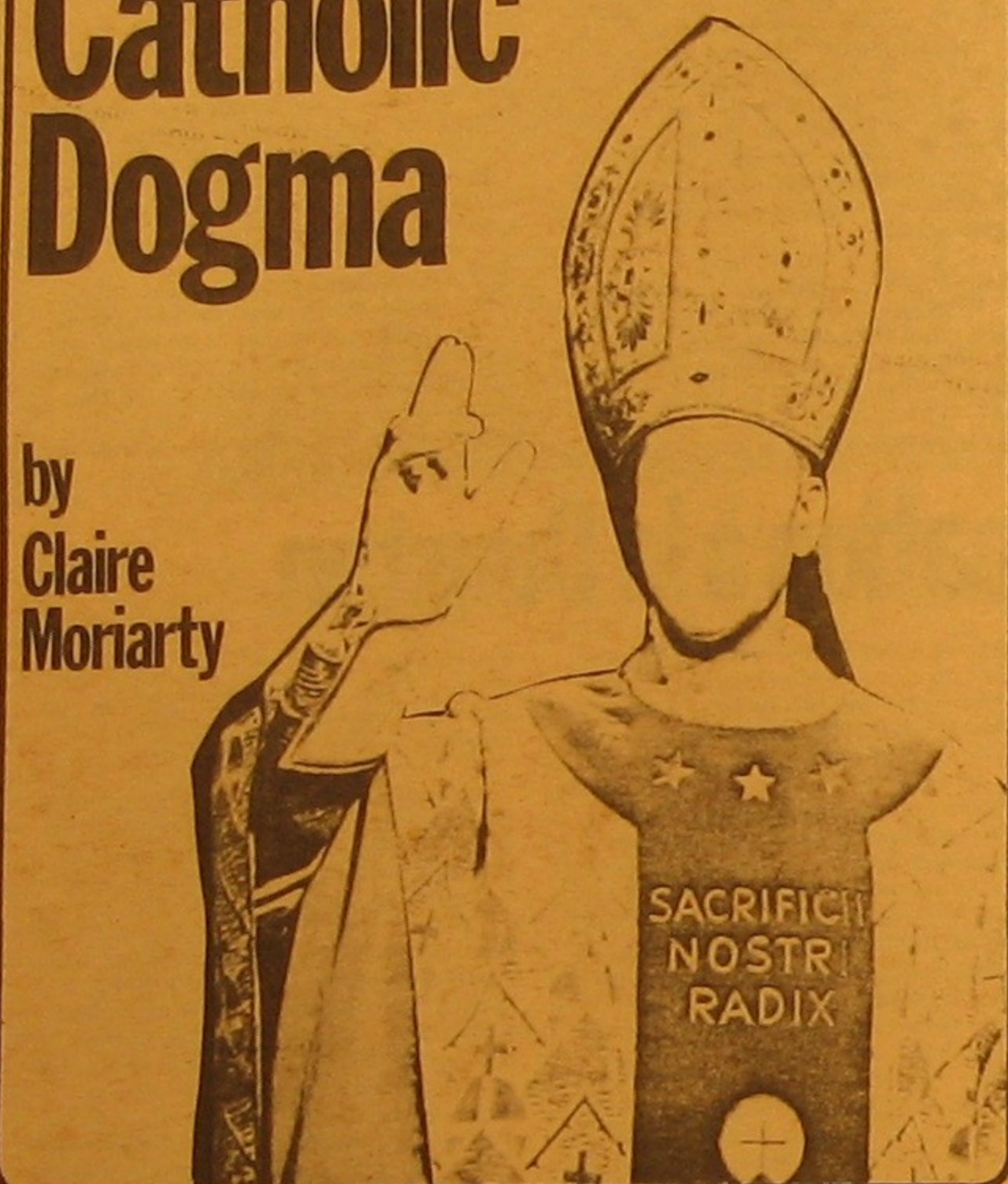
The history of the Catholic Church's position on birth control and abortion goes back many hundreds of years. In early Rome contraception was practically unknown; abortion was known, however, and accepted as a means of birth control. The miscarriage (or "to be born") was not considered human, but simply a part of the woman's body. Abortion was punished if the woman did not have her husband's consent — the punishment, though, was for wifely disobedience not for the act of abortion.

Very early in the Christian era, however, (about 80 A.D.), abortion began to appear in a different light — in conscious opposition to Roman law. The Eastern Church considered it a serious sin, and early Christians were warned, "Thou shalt not slay the child by abortions."

Why the Church Fathers Oppose Abortion

Women's Rights Vs. Catholic Dogma

by Claire Moriarty



The Eastern Church equated abortion with murder.

At the same time a debate had grown up within the Roman Church. Jerome and Augustine, major figures in the development of Christian ethics, had read Aristotle. They were interested in his distinction between the "souled" and the "unsouled" foetus. According to the theological argument, if an unsouled foetus is aborted, it is not murdered.

No one knows why, but Aristotle believed that a male foetus was endowed with a soul forty days after conception, and a female foetus got hers after eighty days. Jerome and Augustine accepted Aristotle's thesis. And so did Thomas Aquinas, another major Christian theologian. They reasoned that abortions were permissible for a male foetus until the fortieth day after conception and until the eightieth day for a female foetus.

The fact that no one knew how to determine the sex of a foetus did not seem to bother them. The church fathers, as they were called, were always careful to maintain a certain ambiguity on these questions.

In 1140 Pope Gratian announced, "He is not a murderer who brings about an abortion before the soul is in the body." Pope Gregory IX upheld that ruling in 1234. In practice, abortion was still viewed as a serious sin, but church penalties were supposed to vary according to whether the foetus had a soul at the time of the abortion.

People began to justify abortion before the foetus got a soul if the woman's life was in danger. Thomas Sanchez, a Catholic theologian, went so far as to portray a foetus that endangered a woman's life as an invader or attacker. If the intent was not to "kill" the foetus but to save the woman's life, church figures seemed to be saying, then abortion could be lawful.

In 1588 Pope Sixtus V abruptly announced that church and secular penalties should be the same for abortion and murder.

on abortion is based on four principles:

1. God is the author of life. The Catholic Church insists that "Every human being, even the child in its mother's womb, receives its right to life directly from God."

2. Human life begins at the moment of conception. What human life is and when it begins has been debated by scientists, doctors, theologians, and philosophers, for centuries. Genuine consciousness begins only at birth. "Viability," that is, the ability to survive as an independent organism — the criterion used by the Supreme Court in its recent decision — can be established on the average only in the eighth month of pregnancy. At conception the fertilised egg in a woman's uterus is not a human being, only a potential human being just as an acorn — also a fertilised seed — is a potential oak tree. Nevertheless, the Catholic hierarchy insists that human life begins at conception, that the foetus is a full-fledged human being.

3. No one has the right to take innocent human life. The fifth of the Ten Commandments warns Thou Shalt Not Kill. The church hierarchy has amended this commandment so that it reads Thou Shalt Not Kill Except in Case of "Just War" or Capital Punishment. Cardinal Cooke has labeled the US war in Vietnam a just war. And the Church itself has put women to death for "having intercourse with the devil." Thus, the hierarchy has accepted a genocidal war in South East Asia and the execution of women for witchcraft, but it prohibits the voluntary expulsion of a thimbleful of tissue from a woman's uterus.

4. Abortion at any stage of foetal development is the taking of innocent human life. The Roman Catholic hierarchy pretends that its opposition to a woman's right to choose abortion stems from its concern for the foetus's right to life. Dr Austin O'Malley writes in *The Ethics of Medical Humicide and Mutilation*: "An innocent foetus an hour old may not be directly killed to save the lives of all the mothers in the world" (p 250). The current pope, Paul VI, said in December 1972 that no woman has the right to abort even if her life depends on it. "By focusing on the woman's health, the question does not advert to the unborn child's right to life," Monsignor James T. McHugh correctly noted.

The church hierarchy insists on calling the foetus an unborn child — or more often, an innocent unborn child — despite the expression's scientific inaccuracy. They insist that the foetus is a human being — not a potential human being, but a full human being complete with legal rights.

Despite the fact that governments issue certificates confirming only a person's date of birth, not the date of conception, despite the fact that a pregnant woman's passport acknowledges only one traveller, not two; despite the fact that foetuses neither vote nor pay taxes, nor are they tax deductible; despite all this, the Catholic hierarchy insists that the mass of cells that science has chosen to call a foetus is endowed with rights so powerful that they displace the woman's right to life should any conflict arise between them.

The Church makes exceptions to this rule on a very narrow basis. It makes exceptions on the basis of the principle "double effect" — the same principle that governs its exceptions to the Fifth Commandment, Thou Shalt Not Kill.

The principle of double effect is based on the premise that an action may be both a good and a bad effect. Thomas Aquinas invented the principle of double effect as a justification for taking another's life in self-defence. The double-effect principle was later extended to cover the deaths of non-combatants in time of war or the execution of an innocent person mistakenly convicted of a capital crime.

The Church justifies killing someone in self-defence because the (good) intent to save your life outweighs the foreseen (bad but unintended) consequence of your assailant's death — in other words, killing in self-defence has a double effect, but the good outweighs the bad.

The Church justifies the deaths of non-combatants in certain wars when the (good) intent to preserve justice outweighs the foreseen (bad but unintended) murder of civilians.

The Church's application of the double-effect principle to abortion is much more stringent. For instance, sometimes a fertilised egg lodges in the woman's Fal-

lopian tubes instead of in her uterus; this is called an ectopic or tubal pregnancy, the Church insists that "Every human being, even the child in its mother's womb, receives its right to life directly from God."

In 1902 the Church explicitly rejected any attempt to save the woman in case of a tubal pregnancy, despite the fact that the foetus in such a pregnancy has absolutely no chance of survival. It was only thanks to an argument advanced by an American theologian in 1947 that this policy was reversed — and, in fact, concealed.

But the 1947 policy stipulated that the foetus could not simply be removed from the tube, as it is in the standard medical procedure. No, the entire Fallopian tube has to go — thus, permanently hindering the woman's capacity to have other children if she chooses — because the Church does not allow direct tampering with the foetus itself.

The Church has streamlined its double-effect principle for use in defending its otherwise indefensible position on abortion. The foetus may not be directly aborted for any reason. However, if a woman's life is threatened by one of three specific, named causes — uterine cancer, appendicitis, or (since 1947) tubal pregnancy — a doctor may remove the uterus, the appendix, or the offending Fallopian tube if the (good, direct) intent is to save the woman's life, even if the (bad but indirect) effect of such an operation is the expulsion of the foetus.

The Church considers no other medical threat to the woman's life sufficient to warrant abortion. A doctor may not, for instance, treat a pregnant woman who has nephritis (an often fatal kidney disease), because the indicated medical procedure involves emptying the contents of the uterus — which, in the eyes of the Church constitutes direct tampering with the foetus. The Church prohibits the treatment of nephritis in pregnant women (despite the fact that there is about one chance in three that the woman will die and near certainty that the foetus cannot live) because the disease does not fall within any of the categories recognised by the hierarchy as governed by the principle of double-effect.

The church regulations for abortion are clearly much stricter than those for self-defence, war, or execution. The Church justifies beforehand any policeman who kills in self-defence, any soldier who kills in time of war, any government that executes in error. But it condemns beforehand any woman who has an abortion. Extenuating circumstances hold for policemen, soldiers, and governments — but not for women.

Obviously what held together the Church's conflicting opinions on abortion was its determination to find the most effective way to control women. If abortions were permissible at certain times, it was because the hierarchy said so; if abortions were ruled out at other times, it was by the hierarchy's decree. Whatever the contradictions and reverses in the church position on abortion, one thing holds true throughout the centuries: the hierarchy has arrogated to itself the power to determine what women can do.

It has become a truism: if men could get pregnant, abortion would be a sacrament. Things being what they are, however, the Church says almost without exception that the rights of the foetus take precedence over the rights of the woman — even over her right to life.

As Daniel Callahan writes: "If the right to life of the foetus is inviolable, then it follows logically (and is in fact the case) that all other human rights become endangered by the need to preserve that one right" (p 431, Callahan, *Abortion: Law, Choice, and Morality*).

This brings up the question of how the foetus heir to such an exalted position — and why the Church holds women in such contempt.

ORIGINS OF THE CATHOLIC SEXUAL CODE

Religion itself arises only with the breakup of egalitarian tribal society. Its institutionalisation accompanies the development of private property in land and the appearance of the authoritarian patriarchal family and, finally, stratified social classes and the repressive institutions of the state.

Before science and philosophy were

separated from religion, the Church acted as the main intellectual and moral defender of the material inequalities of the society in which it existed. No small part of that defence required justifying the subordination of women to their husbands, both to ensure legitimate heirs for the man's property and to help install an unquestioning acceptance of family, church, and civil authority. Within this structure women were denied a place in the general social, productive, and intellectual life of their societies (reflected in the church hierarchy itself, which is restricted to men in all positions of real authority). To make women accept the narrow role of mothers and housekeepers required stressing not only that they be obedient, but that they repress any sexual desires that might lead them to chafe at the chains of patriarchal power. The Church propounded a repressive sexual code in all areas of human interrelationships, of which its stand on abortion is only one example, and has nothing to do with any imaginary "right to life" on the part of the foetus. If women's sexual equality and needs could be denied as "carnal" and evil, it would be easier to make them accept their status as male chattel, childbearers, and household drudges.

The Roman Catholic sexual code developed over a period of nearly two thousand years. Very early, the hierarchy declared that "kissing, touching, and embracing for the sake of sexual pleasure... (are) serious sins." Thomas Aquinas announced in his *Summa Theologica* that "every carnal act from which generation cannot follow is a vice against nature." Pius XI echoed that sentiment in his 1930 pronouncement on Christian Marriage, which banned all forms of contraception (except rhythm) and denounced abortion as murder.

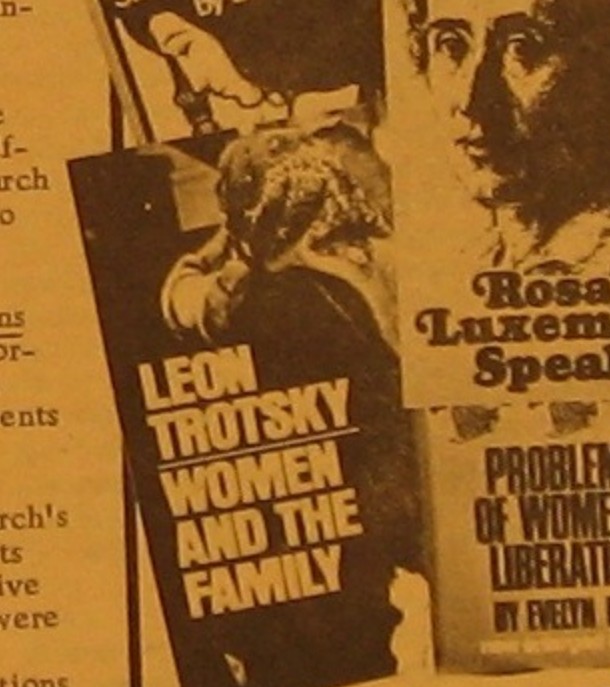
The Catholic Church has been instrumental in welding sex and childbearing together to the extent that in the Church marriage is synonymous with the family.

For the hierarchy, sex has only one function: to produce children. Producing children — and therefore sex — is permitted only within marriage. A Catholic marriage may be dissolved only if some physical or mental disability prevents the husband or wife from having children or if one of them does not intend to have children. A Catholic woman may not at any time refuse to have sex with her husband, and neither of them is allowed to use any form of contraception that works. Abortions are of course ruled out.

The hierarchy very clearly understands its prohibition against contraception and abortion as a safeguard for the patriarchal family. Father Raymond Neufeld wrote in the *Brooklyn diocesan newspaper* the *Tablet*: "Artificial birth control is forbidden all men (he means women, too) by the Law of God in the Sixth Commandment of the Decalogue, not just Catholics in a disciplinary precept of the Church... The Sixth Commandment, Thou Shalt Not Commit Adultery, safeguards the integrity of the person and of the marriage union by forbidding the abuse of sex."

The prohibition against adultery — against sex between a married woman and someone other than her husband or sex between a married man and someone other than his wife — came into being with the development of property-owning society. Society's women were transformed into wives, as much a man's property as his land. Land produced food; women produced children — male heirs to the property or more female producers. The family as we know it began here — not in the Garden of Eden.

The institution of the family enabled men to pass on "their" property to recognised heirs that belonged to them. The



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The Catholic woman finds herself with only two alternatives — celibacy or maternity — because the Church recognises only two kinds of women — virgins or mothers. This is an excellent system for enslaving women and for keeping tabs on whose children are whose. It was designed as an impregnable defence of the patriarchal family. And that is how it operates today.

The hierarchy very clearly understands its prohibition against contraception and abortion as a safeguard for the patriarchal family. Father Raymond Neufeld wrote in the *Brooklyn diocesan newspaper* the *Tablet*: "Artificial birth control is forbidden all men (he means women, too) by the Law of God in the Sixth Commandment of the Decalogue, not just Catholics in a disciplinary precept of the Church... The Sixth Commandment, Thou Shalt Not Commit Adultery, safeguards the integrity of the person and of the marriage union by forbidding the abuse of sex."

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In 1940, Father George Cannon told his parish in Springfield, Massachusetts, "Margaret Sanger with her pill of filth... is coming to interfere with the laws of our Commonwealth. She is coming to enlist the aid of dog-loving women in changing the fundamental laws of our State."

Two years later a birth-control referendum was defeated in Massachusetts. The Church had guaranteed that none of its three major Boston newspapers or any of its radio stations would accept advertising in favor of the amendment. It was an offer they couldn't refuse; the newspapers were only too happy to cooperate. The *Boston Post*, *The Record*, and *The American* printed column after column attacking the referendum and refused to accept a word in its defence.

In 1972 Nixon wrote a letter to New York's Cardinal Cooke assuring the Church of the President's cooperation in the battle against abortion rights. The commander-in-chief of the US forces in Vietnam assured the cardinal of his belief in the "sanctity of life".

Only governments have the power to make it a crime for a woman to control her own body. The Catholic hierarchy does not. It is only the most vociferous of the allies sought by the government to help impose and defend legislative restrictions on sexual and human rights. The January 22 Supreme Court decision marked an important setback for the uterine police and a victory for the women's liberation movement. The court did not grant that concession because of a change of heart in high places. The battle had been shaping up for some time and the Government concluded that the better part of valor was to retreat before masses of American women challenged it directly. As in the past Washington will rely heavily on its allies in the Catholic hierarchy to mount a pressure campaign to try to whittle down the formal concession granted in the court decision.

The Supreme Court decision means women have scored a technical knock-out. But neither the Catholic Church nor the US Government is about to throw in the towel. There are many more fights to come.

Winning the right to choose abortion, like winning the right to vote two generations earlier, has taught us a valuable lesson — it has taught us how to win. Before 1920 masses of women were organised around the suffrage demand; fifty years later we had begun to organise in the same effective way to win abortion rights. Our job now is to remain united and prepared to organise around new issues that will develop in the course of the struggle to win our liberation.

Roman Catholic prohibition against contraception and abortion simply guaranteed such heirs would be produced by forcing women to have children.

THE CHURCH HIERARCHY VS. THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT

The church hierarchy held women in contempt long before Thomas Aquinas described us as mibegotten males. And it has nothing but contempt for us today. "The bishops are underestimating the intensity of Catholic women's feeling because they regard women as a threat. The authority of the Church rests on an anti-woman basis..." said Patricia Brown, co-chairwoman of a coalition of Catholic women's organisations in the November 16, 1972, *New York Times*.

The women's liberation movement has exploded right within the ranks of the Catholic Church. Catholic women in Ireland, France, Italy, and the United States have demonstrated with their sisters for the right to choose contraception and abortion.

Last December, when the situation had gotten so bad that the pope could hear the clamor from his living room, he decided to act. "True women's liberation," he announced, "does not lie in a formalistic or material equality with the other sex, but in the recognition of that specific in the feminine personality — the ability of a woman to be a mother."

The only freedom this assures is the freedom to bear children — willingly or not.

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Only governments have the power to make it a crime for a woman to control her own body. The Catholic hierarchy does not. It is only the most vociferous of the allies sought by the government to help impose and defend legislative restrictions on sexual and human rights. The January 22 Supreme Court decision marked an important setback for the uterine police and a victory for the women's liberation movement. The court did not grant that concession because of a change of heart in high places. The battle had been shaping up for some time and the Government concluded that the better part of valor was to retreat before masses of American women challenged it directly. As in the past Washington will rely heavily on its allies in the Catholic hierarchy to mount a pressure campaign to try to whittle down the formal concession granted in the court decision.

The Supreme Court decision means women have scored a technical knock-out. But neither the Catholic Church nor the US Government is about to throw in the towel. There are many more fights to come.

Winning the right to choose abortion, like winning the right to vote two generations earlier, has taught us a valuable lesson — it has taught us how to win. Before 1920 masses of women were organised around the suffrage demand; fifty years later we had begun to organise in the same effective way to win abortion rights. Our job now is to remain united and prepared to organise around new issues that will develop in the course of the struggle to win our liberation.

GEORGE NOVACK ON THE HISTORY OF THE TROTSKYIST MOVEMENT

SOCIALIST ACTION: Could you tell us when you joined the socialist movement?

NOVACK: I came into the Trotskyist movement of the United States in 1933 after having been radicalised by the great depression, and becoming acquainted with people in the left wing of the Socialist Party and around the Communist Party. I was very active in some of the most important labor defence and civil liberties struggles of that period, including the Scottsboro case. I helped form some of the first groups of black supporters in Harlem for the Scottsboro case. This was only one of a number of such campaigns that my associates and I conducted.

We came into conflict with Communist Party policy on two points. One was their highly factional and sectarian attitude in defence cases against people who didn't completely agree with their policy. But more importantly we began to raise questions after Hitler took power in February 1933, about the policy of the Communist Party in Germany, its calling the Social Democrats "social fascists" — making them the main danger, rather than the fascists — and the refusal to fight for united front action of the Communists and Socialists, and their respective trade unions. We felt that this opened a big gap through which the black-shirts marched to power.

The Stalinists called us "Trotskyites". Well, we didn't know Trotskyism from rheumatism. But when we were so characterised and condemned this drove us to find out what Trotsky and the Trotskyists really stood for. And that's when I began to read Trotsky, *The Militant* which was the paper of the Communist League of America — the name of the Trotskyist organisation — and I and a group of others were won over to the ideas of Trotskyism, which we saw then as genuine Marxism and Leninism.

S.A.: You were involved with Trotsky himself not long after that, is that correct?

NOVACK: My first communication with Trotsky came about in 1934. At that time he was living incognito in France and he was hounded by both the fascists and the Stalinists, and the French Government was anxious to get him out of the country. They considered the presence of the revolutionist a great liability. And I was asked to initiate a committee

to try and get a visa for Trotsky in the United States. The Roosevelt Government refused to give him a visa, so the effort came to nothing. A little bit later, the Norwegian Labor Party came into office in Norway and they offered asylum to him.

The first Moscow Trial broke out in the middle of 1936, when the most infamous charges were levelled against Trotsky and his son Sedov. They were accused of conspiring with the Nazis, accused of wanting to assassinate Stalin, wreck railroad trains, poison the food of workers, and many other nefarious activities. The Norwegian Government which was under heavy pressure from the Norwegian shipowners who had contracts with the Soviet Government, interned Trotsky and his wife so that he was unable to reply to these allegations. At that time an emergency call went out to us in the United States as well as to other co-thinkers of Trotsky throughout the world to do what we could to get him out of internment, so that he could answer the infamous charges against him.

So we revived the American Committee for the Defence of Leon Trotsky, and through our connections with Diego Rivera, the mural painter in Mexico, who went to President Cardenas, we secured a visa for Trotsky to come to Mexico. I can very well remember telephoning Oslo to break the news that Trotsky had secured an invitation to Mexico. And I travelled from New York to Mexico along with Max Shachtman, one of the leaders of the American Trotskyist movement, to greet the Trotskyists upon their arrival in Tampico. That was my first personal acquaintance with him.

S.A.: What was your estimation at that time of Trotsky's role in the revolutionary movement?

NOVACK: By that time I had become convinced that Trotsky was the continuator of the programme and the traditions of the bolshevik movement, as Lenin had applied them. I had begun to learn the true history of his role in the revolutionary movement both inside Russia and on an international scale. I knew that he had led the October insurrection, that he had served in many important posts in the Soviet Republic, that he was the creator and commander of the Red Army. I also knew that he was one of the first of the top bolshevik leaders to resist the anti-

democratic, bureaucratic, nationalist policies of the sections of the party that were becoming heavily bureaucratized and conservatized under the leadership of Stalin.

S.A.: I understand you played some role in the commission which was set up to hear Trotsky defend himself against the charges of the Stalin regime.

NOVACK: The American Committee for the Defence of Leon Trotsky of which I was the national secretary had two objectives. One was to get asylum for Trotsky, which we did, and the other was to provide a channel through which he could state his refutations of the base charges against him. He had demanded from the beginning of 1936 the formation of an international commission of inquiry, which would take testimony from him, and then weigh the merit or demerit of the slanderous accusations against him and his son Sedov. And one of the matters which we discussed together on the train going from Tampico to Mexico City and subsequently during the next time we met was the steps to be taken in the creation of such an international commission of inquiry. Several months later, we succeeded in convincing a number of prominent intellectuals, headed by the noted educator and philosopher John Dewey, to go to Mexico City in order to hold hearings. I was largely instrumental in helping to constitute that commission of inquiry. I went with the group of which Dewey was a member on the train from New York to Mexico, and listened to the eight days of hearings. The testimony that Trotsky gave in response to the interrogation of the commissioners, has been reprinted in a book entitled *The Case of Leon Trotsky*.

Although Trotsky did not have as good a command of English as of some other languages, he nevertheless for eight days answered in English all the questions, and they were very searching questions indeed, which were directed at him. After the commission had compiled all the evidence that it could, after it had studied the testimony both in the Moscow Trials and the answers given by Trotsky, it delivered its judgement in the fall of 1937.

The verdict was that Trotsky and his son Sedov were innocent of all the charges against them and that in effect the Moscow Trials were frame-ups. At that time, only a restricted number of people

credited the judgement of the Dewey Commission. But after Khrushchev affirmed a large part of the truth about the frame-ups of Stalin (though not all of it by any means) most of the world, including many people who retain a general allegiance to Moscow, no longer believe in the charges laid against the defendants in the Moscow Trials.

I might add that our aim was not simply to give Trotsky a hearing and enable him to answer his accusers, but also to save the lives of Lenin's associates, members of his political bureau who were put on trial during the three Moscow Trials from 1936 to 1938, including such celebrated revolutionists as Bukharin, Rakovsky, Sokolnikov, Krestinsky, Smirnov and many others who had taken leading parts in the struggle against Czarism for the workers' power, and in leading the first workers' state. Unfortunately our efforts were unavailing, and Stalin, as is known, not only put these associates of Lenin to death after trying to discredit their reputation, but murdered or sent into exile hundreds of thousands and even several million people, including some of his most faithful followers. A great deal of this, as I say, was confirmed by Khrushchev in his well-known 1956 speech to the 20th Congress of the Soviet Communist Party.

S.A.: Why was Stalin so concerned about the activities of Trotsky and his followers when they weren't very numerous and Trotsky was in exile?

NOVACK: Well, it may have been that Trotsky's followers were not in numbers so many but they did represent the cream of the people who had led the Russian revolution and helped establish the first workers republic there. It included many of the youth, and many people in responsible positions in the Red Army. Moreover they represented a constant threat to the Stalin tyranny; they were a standing reproach to it, because they kept counterposing the genuine ideas of revolutionary internationalism and workers' democracy to what the Stalin gang was imposing on the Soviet Union. Stalin feared that when there was any kind of crisis within the Soviet regime that this would open a breach through which the opposition could return to power and to the path of Lenin. After having expelled the leaders of the Left Opposition from the Communist Party, demoted them from any positions of responsibility and exiled them to Siberia,

he was still not enough. At the climax of his dictatorship he felt it necessary to wipe them out entirely so that they would no longer present any alternative, even in exile, to his exclusive rule. And therefore he was free to rewrite the history of the Russian Revolution, his own history, and impose these untruths upon the Soviet people, as well as his other practices.

S.A.: In 1938, Trotsky and his followers around the world established the international party called the Fourth International. What was the significance of that step; why was the Fourth International formed?

NOVACK: For the first ten years of the Communist Left Opposition, from 1923 to 1933, its objective, under great difficulties, was to try and change the course of the Communist Parties and the Communist International, and redirect it toward a genuine Leninist path. The big turn came after Hitler came to power in Germany without any resistance from the German Communists and without any reconsideration of its catastrophic policies by the Communist International. At that time Trotsky said he had changed, the Third International has proved itself to be completely exhausted as a revolutionary agency, and it was necessary to set about immediately to form new parties of a revolutionary Marxist type in all countries as the basis for the formation of a new, or fourth, international. There was a period of initial preparation between the proclamation of the need for an international, beginning with 1933, until that international was actually founded in 1938.

S.A.: The Fourth International has developed since that time. Could you tell us a bit about how the Fourth International today compares with the body set up in 1938?

NOVACK: Well the Fourth International was launched right on the eve of the Second World War and this created incredibly difficult conditions for its existence. It is really a miracle that it managed to go through the war and survive because it had many enemies, the fascists who would wipe out any Trotskyism they found; the Stalinists were a pillar then; even the United States Government put the leaders of the Socialist Workers Party, both its trade unions and its political leaders, in prison

during the Second World War. The Trotskyists of Europe were active in the resistance against Hitler, a number of them lost their lives as a result. And the movement after the war was able to reconstitute itself somewhat slowly. Then came the period of the Cold War and the witch hunt, which made it very difficult for a revolutionary movement, and an international, to expand very rapidly. We especially had a very difficult time in the United States under the sway of McCarthyism.

What put fresh wind in the sails of the world Trotskyist movement was the revival of radicalism beginning with the Cuban revolution in the early 1960s. And since that time we have seen not only the longest-standing sections experiencing considerable growth, as we have in North America — the United States and Canada — but above all in countries which have never previously known a Trotskyist movement. This is because of the increasing discredit and disintegration of the social democratic reformists on the one side, and the decomposition of Stalinism on the other. The young people want above all the truth. They want to rally around a stainless banner — they're looking for a genuine programme of revolutionary internationalism, and they have found it in the principles and the programme and the organisation of the Fourth International. That's why for example we have the phenomenon of the growth of the Trotskyist movement in such countries as Australia and New Zealand. But these are only two examples of a much broader process. We find that in a great many countries where there had previously been no groups of Trotskyists there are the beginnings, and in some cases even more, of a Fourth International movement. One striking case is what is happening in Spain under Franco. Today the Trotskyists there are probably the second largest grouping that exists in Western Europe. These are comrades who have earned their spurs in the fight to get rid of the Franco dictatorship, and who through their own experiences have made their way to agreement with our basic ideas against those of the Stalinist movement, the Maoist movement, and the "socialist" reformists.

S.A.: You joined the socialist movement during the depression period. People look back on the depression as the period of great social ferment and radicalisation. How would you compare that period, and the growth of the socialist movement

then, with the prospects today?

NOVACK: Well the radicalisation of the 1930s had many features which were quite different from those of the radicalisation which began in the 1960s and is continuing in the first part of the 1970s.

There it was the workers who came to the forefront and acquired the leading role in the struggles. Quite a different order in the entrance of social forces on the arena of struggles has taken place in the radicalisation of our time. In the United States this began with the civil rights struggles of the blacks, which then passed over into the fight for black nationalism and black power. The blacks gave an impetus to the student radicalisation which began in 1964 with the free speech fight in Berkeley which had already been inspired by the Cuban revolution. After the students went into motion they inaugurated the first anti-war demonstrations. And it has been the anti-war movement which has done more than anything else to change the atmosphere in the United States, but that was not at all the end of the process. Since then we have seen the emergence of the women's liberation movement, gay liberation, the Chicano movement, the Native Indian movement which has just come to a climax in the battle of Wounded Knee. However the radicalisation has been restricted and somewhat weakened by the fact that the masses of white American workers have not as yet taken up a very combative position in relation to the powers that be. However, we think that this is not an enduring situation. We are quite familiar with changes in the attitudes and activities of the American workers as well as workers in other countries under the stress of changed circumstances. And we look forward to a revival of workers' militancy as the climax of the present radicalisation. This radicalisation is already in our view the widest, the broadest, the most diversified of any that the United States has known in the 20th century. And we think that the end is by no means yet.

S.A.: When you joined the Socialist Workers Party in the 1930s, Trotskyists were a relatively small group compared with other left tendencies. How does the balance of forces in the American radical movement stand today?

NOVACK: In the 1930s we Trotskyists had to contend with two very formidable rivals; one was the Socialist Party of the United States which had several tens of

thousands of members, and the other was the Communist Party which had a great influence in the trade union movement and in intellectual circles, and which by the end of the Second World War could count 100,000 members. But since 1948 there has been a slow but steady reversal in the relationship of forces. The social democrats today are simply a skeleton of their old self. All of them are immersed in the Democratic Party, and the chief issue in contention between the different tendencies is, or at least was in 1972, whether as the right wing wished they should support Humphrey, or whether as the left wing wished they should support McGovern. They've no longer any conception of independent socialist politics.

The Communist Party has suffered a steady haemorrhaging ever since 1950 which was accelerated by the Khrushchev revelations and the continuing decomposition of world Stalinism. Although today they have more formal members on their rolls than the Socialist Workers Party, I don't believe that they can mobilise more activists in any struggle that goes on. Certainly that has been demonstrated in connection with the anti-war movement, the feminist movement, and others. In addition, the Young Socialist Alliance — the youth movement that is in agreement with the Socialist Workers Party — is the strongest, best organised, the most cohesive of all the youth organisations on the left. It has stepped into the void left by the self-destruction of SDS; it has representatives on almost 200 campuses and publishes the only regular magazine or publication of radical youth, called *Young Socialist*, which last month actually sold 22,000 copies. So we think that this is very good growing weather for North American Trotskyism. I could tell a similar story about our Canadian co-thinkers, and we try to establish very close working relationships with our co-thinkers in the different English-speaking countries — they're able to utilise our publications, which are quite abundant, in their work, in helping to build their movement. And it is of course a great gratification to come to countries like Australia and New Zealand and find the expanding response that our common ideas are receiving, especially among young people.

On these pages we reprint an interview with Novack which appeared in *Socialist Action*, the fortnightly paper of the Socialist Action League in New Zealand where Novack toured before his Australian visit. Novack was interviewed by Socialist Action editor Keith Locke.



12 Commissar of War Leon Trotsky addressing Red Army soldiers during the war with Poland in 1920



Members of the Opposition on their way to exile in 1929. From left to right: Bugoslavsky, Preobrazhensky; standing left to right, Drobals, Beloborodov, Seznovskiy



Trotsky's study at Prinkipo. On his desk is a copy of *The Militant*, paper of the American Trotskyists, of which George Novack was a former editor.

ON THE PICKET LINE



Teachers Leadership Retreats

BY WENDY ELLIS

The move by the NSW Public Service Board to deregister the Teachers' Federation could have been easily blocked if it had been forcibly opposed by the federation.

The federation has suffered harassment from the State Government for the past eighteen months because of its insistence on taking a more radical stand on education issues than the Government is prepared to put up with. Over the past few months, individual teachers, groups of teachers and the federation as a whole have been attempting to bring out into the open some of the major problems of education in NSW. Following the lead of the traditionally more radical Victorian teachers and teachers' unions, teachers have begun to take action over the size of classes they have to teach. In some cases, especially in inner-city primary schools, the numbers of students in classes have reached unbearable proportions for both teachers and students. The issue of general class-room conditions, again centring around the inner-city schools, came to the fore. All this was a source of embarrassment for Education Minister Willis who has been busy over the past few months trying to convince the public that the NSW education system is the best and fairest in the world.

The general trend towards militancy amongst rank-and-file members of the federation has not been repeated in the upper echelons of the federation bureaucracy. While rank and filers maintained a firm stand on the question of direct action, the federation council on June 16 accepted a recommendation from the executive empowering the executive to send an affidavit to the Industrial Commission capitulating to the no-strike provisions of the federation constitution.

At a mass meeting the week before, a resolution was put to thousands of teachers. It began with a rambling assertion that direct action was not, is not, would not, could not and above all will not be the mainspring of the federation policy. No amendments were allowed. It was then stated that the resolution had the unanimous support of the executive.

That wasn't quite the full story. The resolution had been passed without dissent only after the majority of the executive had rejected an amendment which projected unqualified defiance of the Government and the Public Service Board over the issue of deregistration.

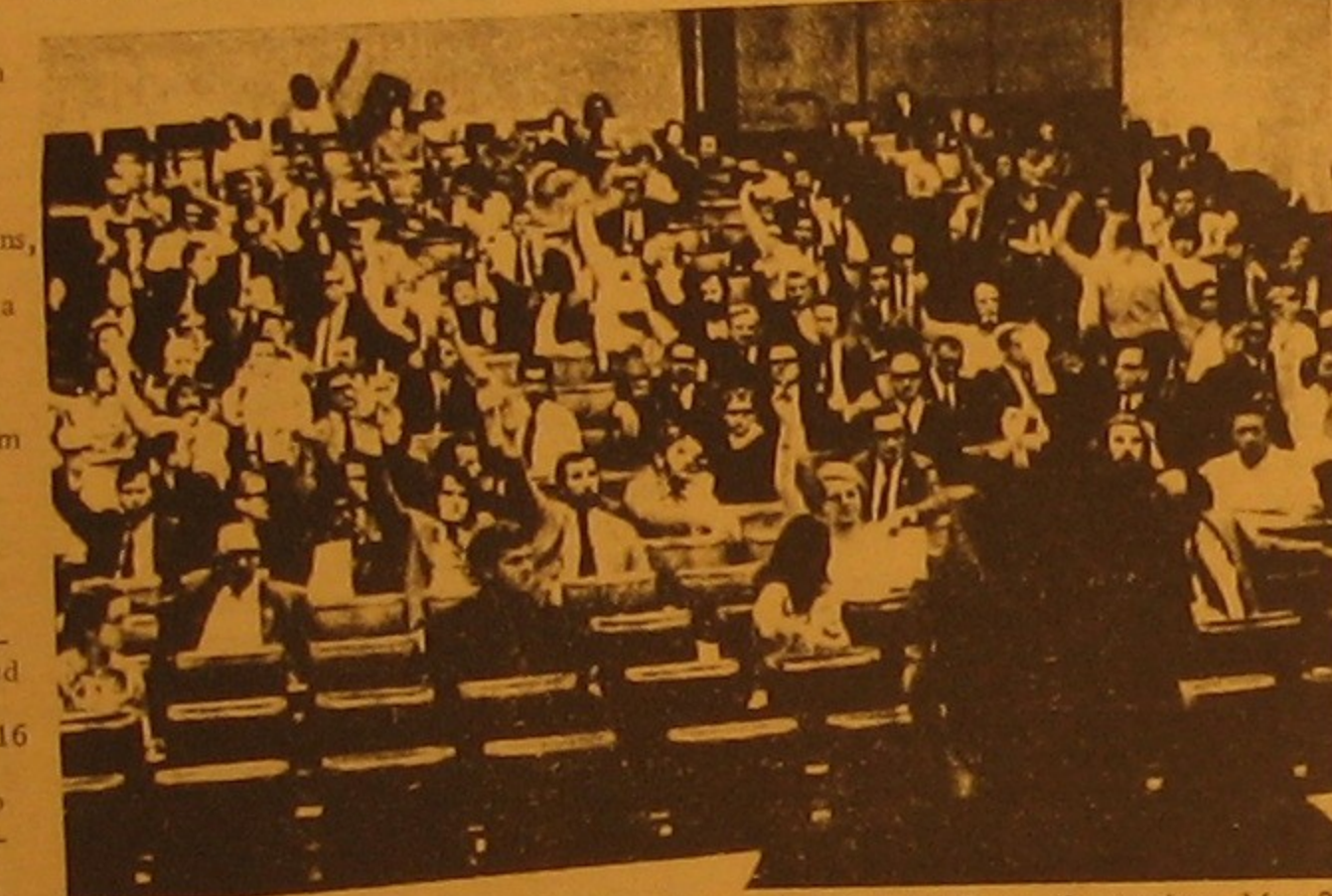
While the stand of the council has been to the right of the rank and file, that of the president of the federation, L.H. Childs, and the deputy president, Neil Pollock, has been even more capitulation towards the Public Service Board and the State Government. Education, the journal of the federation, reported on June 6:

"At the April council meeting on Saturday, April 7, councillors refused to be blackmailed by the board's application and passed a resolution condemning 'in the strongest possible terms the current attempt by the NSW Government and its willing accomplice the Public Service Board to cancel the registration of the NSW Teachers' Federation'. This amendment of the senior vice-president, Col Rennie defeated the president, L.H. Childs' motion: 'This Council, mindful of its obligations to inform the total federation membership of the gravity of the present situation, and to ascertain the views of all members, directs executive not to authorize proposals for direct action for a period of one month from April 7'.

A good example of how this leadership

operated was given at the meeting in the Sydney Town Hall. The executive committee moved the resolution, used most of the time for their own long speeches on it, refused amendments, and, of course, put the left militants in the position of supporting them or aligning themselves with the extreme right. After this warty resolution was supported and the gun was lowered from the head of the left-wing militants to a careless second, Eric Earley moved as a motion the amendment that had been rejected by the executive. It was carried overwhelmingly.

The deregistration attempt against the federation is an example of the willingness of the NSW State Government and the right-wing Public Service Board to break the back of any organised action on the part of workers in any field to challenge the status quo. The quiescent attitude of the Federation Leadership in this matter can only serve to make the position of teachers vis-a-vis the education system worse.



Teachers Federation Special Council meeting, May 26

Brewery Workers Strike

BY MIKE JONES

Thousands of brewery workers in Sydney and Newcastle are on strike in support of a forklift driver who is being victimised by the owners of Tooth's Kent Brewery in Sydney. The bosses claim that on June 12 the driver, Brian Shaw, a union delegate, deliberately dropped six dozen bottles and ran over them. According to Shaw, the bottles broke when a faulty pallet broke and 42 boxes fell from his forklift.

Shaw's work-mates, members of the Federated Engine Drivers and Firemen's Association (FEDFA), walked off the job to protest the sacking. The strike quickly spread to other breweries in Sydney and Newcastle. On Friday June 22, the State Labour Council proposed that the workers end the strike and that an inquiry be initiated into the matter. The FEDFA rejected this proposal. Later, a meeting of union delegates proposed to the owners that the inquiry be held while the workers remain on strike. This proposal, described by the assistant secretary of the FEDFA as a "reasonable compromise", was accepted by the bosses.

The owners' explanation of Shaw's dismissal does not hold water. Workers at the brewery claim that bottles are broken every day with no action taken. However, considering that the company is due to come up against the union's log of claims in the near future, its action against Shaw takes on a new light. After his dismissal, Shaw stated,

"It seems that every time we have a new award to negotiate with the company a man is suddenly dismissed in mysterious circumstances, triggering a strike." Shaw also claimed that several publicans had told the union that they were warned by the brewery weeks ago to expect a strike. Viewed in this light, Shaw's victimisation does not appear at all mysterious.

Public Servants Confront Dunstan

BY DOUG LORIMER

On June 12, more than 1000 members of the South Australian Public Service Association packed two halls and a foyer of the Trades Hall building in Adelaide to hear Premier Dunstan outline his Government's new superannuation scheme.

Dunstan had been asked to speak at the

meeting after the annual meeting of the PSA had called for a royal commission into the State's superannuation fund.

The new scheme will put contributions on a percentage of income basis. There has been considerable discontent amongst public servants at higher levels and in their final years before retirement that they have been required to pay extremely high premiums under the present unit based contribution system.

The PSA has alleged that the Government had made \$7.5 million profit out of the superannuation fund last year and that public servants were paying excessive contributions to boost the size of the fund and were receiving no benefits from the profits, returned from the investment of the fund's money in State enterprises. A PSA spokesman claimed in an interview in the May 20 Sunday Mail that the "State Government is using cheap finance from the superannuation fund to help finance its operations - at the expense of its own public servants."

The government workers demanded to know when Dunstan intended to implement the new scheme, which he had announced during the State elections in March this year. They also demanded that the Government honor its promise to end discrimination based on sex and ensure that all aspects of the scheme are equally applicable to both males and females. Dunstan promised at the meeting that the South Australian Government would introduce the new scheme later this year.

PSA general secretary Mitchell expressed satisfaction with this but warned that "if the scheme isn't in force by the end of the year, then I think Mr Dunstan is in trouble so far as our members are concerned."

Objector Reinstated At Last

BY DEBORAH SHNOOKAL

John Coleman, a clerk, who was sacked from the Commonwealth Department of Works in Canberra a year ago for refusing to compile a list of staff who would be liable to register for national service finally been reinstated. Coleman is a supporter of and contributor to DIRECT ACTION. Reinstatement has occurred only after a protracted campaign of publicity and lobbying, carried out by Coleman, in which he was aided by the Administrative and Clerical Officers Association and the Australian Council of Salaried and Professional Associations. The issue raised was the right of officers to dissent from an instruction on conscientious grounds.

The reason why Coleman's case roused such attention was the fact that officers in the then Department of Labour and National Service with conscientious objections to the National Service Act had been given the opportunity to transfer to other departments or to carry on duties unconnected with the act. But Coleman's refusal to compile the list of names as a matter of conscience and his request for a transfer was met with dismissal when he refused to resign. Coleman's failure to carry out instructions was the sole reason for this action taken against him. The minister of his department, Senator Cavanagh, assured Coleman that his work record was quite satisfactory, apart from the disputed incident.

Since the change in the Federal Government last December, Coleman has appealed to Kep Enderby (member for the ACT), Clyde Cameron (Minister for Labour), Senator Cavanagh (Minister for Works), and the Prime Minister's Department. Coleman's appeal was passed from one bureaucratic department to another. Now, after six months wait, he has finally been reinstated.

Picketing by Land and Sea

BY STEVE GARDNER

Workers at Comalco aluminium plant at Bell Bay, northern Tasmania went on strike on June 8 over the issue of employment. The strike, initiated by the Federated Ironworkers Association (FIA), involves 1000 workers, some of whom are members of 10 other unions.

Comalco had closed its No. 1 pot line last year and the 47 men operating it were employed in other areas of the factory. On reopening No. 1 pot line a month ago, Comalco refused to employ any more than 32 men attempting to justify this indirect lay-off with "remarkable improvements" in the machinery.

The workers' action in winning their right to work has been a novel land-and-sea picket line. They are using their own boats in a 24-hour blockade to prevent ships from docking and materials reaching the plant. Entrances on land have also been blocked.

About 100 women are actively supporting the strike by joining the picket lines and supplying the men with food and beverages.

Tasmanian secretary of the FIA, R.W. Wood, stated in The Sydney Morning Herald on June 18 that: "The workers will stay on strike until the company changes its mind on this. Every member on strike is taking part in the picket lines. We are determined that nothing will get through."

REVIEW LABOR TO POWER

REVIEWED BY DAVID NIZOZ

Labor to Power — Australia's 1972 Election, edited by Henry Mayer, Angus and Robertson, \$4.95.

The Labor victory in the 1972 elections, following 23 years of Liberal rule, has created wide interest both in Australia and overseas. Several major overseas news media such as The Los Angeles Times and the British Broadcasting Corporation have sent special teams to Australia. Having this kind of audience in mind, Australian publishers were quick to grasp the financial gains from ventures in the field of commenting on the Labor victory.

Two books have already been published on this subject and more can be expected. The first, The Making of an Australian Prime Minister, appeared in February, written by two members of the Canberra press gallery, Laurie Oakes of the Melbourne Sun and David Solomon of the Canberra Times. Oakes and Solomon confine their writing to nothing more than a description of the campaign. As has been observed before, this book is an equivalent to an extensive press clipping of the period since the disastrous 1966 elections. Despite its shortcomings, it is a useful summary of the facts. It contains useful material particularly on media magnate Rupert Murdoch.

Labor to Power on the other hand pretends to be the "analytic" book. This book has been built up for months with promises about the deep research and intellectual stimulation contained therein.

The main fanfare in launching this book involved an item by Professor Henry Mayer. Mayer alleged that media baron Frank Packer provided free television time for the reactionary Democratic Labor Party to the tune of \$18,980.

That contribution aside, Labor to Power contains very little other material which deserves the build-up. Over sixty contributions ranging from the actual words of the "It's time" song and a one-page essay by Humphrey McQueen on Australian nationalism to a series of longer articles on the Women's Electoral Lobby. Most contributions will probably have an academic interest only and in some cases even this is doubtful.

The irrelevance of many contributions is only matched by the glaring absence of any comment or reference to so many real causes of the Labor victory. There is ample material on the advertising campaign of the various parties but very little on some of the issues.

Malcolm MacLennan, the leading prophologist in this country, points out in his well-researched essay that the Labor victory in the 1972 election can't be taken on its own. The 2.5 per cent swing in that election must be added up to the 7.1 per cent swing in 1969. The total swing of the two elections amounts to a 9.6 per cent swing to Labor which can be classified as a landslide. That aside very little is mentioned of the reasons for this massive swing. There is not even a mention of the rise of industrial militancy culminating in the O'Shea struggle only six months before the 1969 elections.

The Vietnam war and conscription, cited by Gorton in 1969 and McMahon fairly recently as a major cause of the unpopularity of the Liberals, do not rate an article. This ignorance comes through most glaringly in the analysis of the swing in Victoria. The overall swing towards Labor in that State was 5.5 per cent. Out of 34 seats in that State 33 seats showed a swing to Labor including the largest, 11.6 per cent in Flinders (held by the then Minister for Labour and National Service Phillip Lynch). This trend to Labor is accounted for in the book by two factors. One, the federal intervention into the Victorian branch of the ALP in 1970 and the second, obviously connected to the first in the minds of these academics, the incredible growth in membership in the Victorian branch in the period since 1969.

The major anti-war upsurge in Victoria in 1970 and 1971 culminating in the 100,000 people moratorium demonstrations does not even get mentioned in any of the "analytical" articles in the "heavy" section of the book.

A careful sifting of the book will discover that the anti-war movement had something to do with the Labor victory after all. An article by Frances Cain on the campaign in the seat of Bruce, held by the current Leader of the Opposition, Billy Snedden, throws a new light. In Frances Cain says: "The ALP campaign

grew from the enthusiasm surrounding the local moratorium movement." In this seat as well as others such as Holt, La Trobe and Diamond Valley there was a large number of youthful supporters working actively for the Labor victory who first came into contact with the Labor Party during the moratorium upsurge.

The issue of abortion fared a little better. A contribution by Graham C. Hudson titled Praying for the Unborn covers the campaign in Bendigo, the only seat Labor lost in Victoria. The activities of the Bishop of Sandhurst, Dr Stewart, the bishop attacked by Whitlam as a liar and an evil man were probably responsible for the loss of this rural seat. On the other hand the successful campaign of Dr Moss Carr and Kep Enderby are not discussed. The clear-cut victory of Enderby which was even conceded by anti-abortion candidate Burns wasn't apparently worthy of study.

The process of ignoring the issues of the radicalisation does not carry to ignorance of the groups to the left of the ALP. A whole seven pages are devoted to an article by Angus McIntyre on this subject. The article purports to cover the contest between the Communist Party of Australia and Socialist Party of Australia in the seat of Sydney. Both parties ran their national leaders and the contest created wide interest. McIntyre exposes the long way the CPA was prepared to go in order to try to impress overseas communist parties. Pointing out that the SPA announced the candidature of Pat Clancy first, he alleged that one of the reasons Arsons was chosen was his ability to obtain the donkey vote. The main point in McIntyre's contribution is made in a passing remark on the irrelevancy of the contest. "The Seamen's Union indicated its preference for the SPA over the CPA by donating \$750 to the former and \$250 to the latter. (It also donated \$5000 to the ALP).

This chapter is also used to dismiss other political groups. The Socialist Workers League and the Socialist Youth Alliance, referred to as the DIRECT ACTION group and other organisations only rate a few lines.

It is one thing to offhandedly dismiss DIRECT ACTION; it is much more difficult to eliminate our ideas.

In a chapter called Parliamentary Cretinism John Lonie and John Playford, lecturer and senior lecturer respectively in politics at the University of Adelaide comment:

"Many businessmen believed that any improvement in the position of the Australian bourgeoisie vis-a-vis its overseas counterparts would depend on the setting

back of any working-class upsurge for dramatically improved living standards, a more dynamic intervention by the state in the economy (including "indicative planning" and an "incomes policy"), and a larger trade with the Soviet Union and China. The ALP looked more likely than the divided Liberals to implement these sorts of policies."

If this sounds familiar to DIRECT ACTION readers then they are right. In an article called The ALP and the Ruling Class in DIRECT ACTION 32, December 7, 1972 Sol Salby wrote:

"Many businessmen feel that any improvement in the position of the Australian bourgeoisie vis-a-vis its overseas counterparts will depend on three things: a) the setting-back or taming-down of any working-class upsurge in response to the employers' offensive on the workers' living standards; b) a more dynamic intervention by the state in the economy including "indicative planning" and "incomes policies"; c) a larger trade with the workers' states in particular the Soviet Union and China.

"On all three points the ALP looks far more likely to implement those policies designed to help the employers in their current difficulties."

The academics who allocated a whole seven pages to the left did not put any of the actual views of the left in the article on the "left". It is a pity that the introduction of any political analysis to one of the most significant and interesting events in the post-war period had to come through the back door using material from DIRECT ACTION.

The 1972 election was characterised by a massive upsurge of support for Labor among youth, women, workers and students. None of this is analysed. If ever there was a need for some analysis it should have been in this area. Who carried the Labor rallies? Who carried out the work of leafletting? How widespread was support among the employing class? What was the impact of the abortion issue? It seems that academics are not interested in these questions, let alone the answers to them.

Their inability to answer any of the real questions, worse still the lack of interest in even probing the questions is a serious flaw. The pretension expressed herein is typical of a book which is "academic". For all the fanfare Labor to Power fails to cover the topic of Australia's 1972 elections. Political scientists may be able to calculate that 76.5 per cent of new voters voted Labor but this fact alone is not sufficient. We have to know why. On that score Labor to Power is an utter failure.

the topic: "Workers control, workers' participation, self-management and socialism." A lead paper, roneoed beforehand, was delivered by Jack Sponberg, an organiser of the AMWU and a well-known left-wing ALP member.

Moreover, the draft resolution submitted by the planning committee as the first resolution to be dealt with in the final session dealt at length with the definition of workers' control. It said in part: "Workers' control means the growing challenge to the 'sacred rights' of the boss and the capitalist state over production and people's working and social lives. It means the development of the control and power of the workers over different aspects of production and their total lives, until they become aware of the need to do away with the capitalist system and take power into their own hands, through a socialist and truly democratic system based on workers' control and self-management."

The conference resolutions also dealt with Papua-New Guinea, Spain, French Tests, women's liberation and rights, migrant workers and other issues.

Finally, I would point out that my article in Tribune immediately after the conference did not, as Jim McIlroy claims "brand these criticisms (of CPA policies) as an attempt to 'disrupt' the conference." My criticisms were directed to the disruptive tactics of the Healyites and the Spartacists.

I have quite strong disagreements with the SYA-SWL and the Communist League and to a lesser extent with the International Group. But none of these three groups were in any way disruptive. You and the other two groups entered into the discussion in a rational way and therefore got a much more sympathetic hearing than the Healyites or Spartacists from the rank-and-file workers there who, in their majority, belonged to no

party or group.

On the other questions raised for debate in Jim McIlroy's article, I will reply elsewhere.

Dennis Freney.

DA REPLIES

Dennis Freney is formally correct in stating that the agenda for the second session of the conference provided for discussion of the topic "Workers control, workers participation, self management and socialism". However, the mere fact that this was the title for the discussion does not mean that either the lead speaker Jack Sponberg, or any other organisers of the conference, made any attempt to define workers control or to make a clear distinction between workers participation in running industry in the interests of the capitalist class and genuine workers control of industry which can mean nothing less than nationalisation of industries under a workers' government.

The text of the resolution quoted in Dennis Freney's letter is far from satisfactory, and merely increases the confusion that prevailed at the conference. Does it mean raising the demand for nationalisation of industry or not? What does "... the development of the workers over control and power of the workers over different aspects of production" mean in practice? Does it mean clearly setting out a programme of struggle towards the goal of taking possession of the means of production by the workers?

The whole point about the position of the CPA on this question is that it completely evades the issue, and leaves the distinct impression that what the CPA means by workers' control is the participation of workers in making industry more efficient under capitalist ownership.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

SUGGESTIONS

To the Editor,

I would first like to make a suggestion. When you briefly summarise SYA aims in DIRECT ACTION, you say "If you are for a socialist Australia..." but then go on to say "If you are against the bureaucracies in the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe and China". I think this implies we are against Stalinism in all Socialist countries, but we are only against capitalism in Australia. I suggest you change it to "If you are for a Socialist World" or "If you support the worldwide struggle against capitalism" or something similar.

Secondly, I would like to mention how very little is said in DIRECT ACTION about the black struggle. Tribune, which only has 12 pages, always has a considerable amount about blacks in every issue. However, DIRECT ACTION 40 was full of abortion, resembling a leftist women's weekly, while there was not one word about the black struggle. Don't get me wrong - I believe in women's liberation and I am certainly not charging that you are racist. And of course women's liberation is a larger struggle than black liberation. But whenever you mention mass movements or oppressed layers, women always come first, while blacks always come last, or are often not even

mentioned. I was also disappointed when no mention was made of Wounded Knee. Also, I would just like to say it would be a good idea if another Black Moratorium was held this National Aborigines Day (July 14) just as a women's action was held on Mothers Day.

Overall, I think 24 pages is a great improvement, and I hope we can keep plenty of pages for the very interesting World Revolution column.

J.A. Stuart,

WORKERS' CONTROL CONFERENCE

To the Editor,

I am writing as a member of the planning committee of the National Workers Control Conference, held in Newcastle last Easter to correct one factual error in the article by Jim McIlroy on the conference in DA, May 24.

Jim states: "The organisers of the conference, however, in preparing the agenda and principal draft resolutions, made no provision for discussion aimed at defining workers' control."

In fact, the second session of the conference was devoted entirely to discussing

The World Revolution



Watergate Exposes Attacks Against Radicals

BY CHRIS GRAHAM

The Watergate scandal has not received the same amount of publicity during Brezhnev's visit. While this was not the least of the benefits obtained by Nixon during Brezhnev's visit it does give him a temporary reprieve. Watergate has left an indelible imprint on American and world politics; no machinations by Stalinist bureaucrats nor bourgeois media bosses can quite repair the damage Watergate has done to capitalism.

And in spite of this, the old American adage "You ain't heard nothing yet!" is by no means "inoperative."

WATERGATE: ANOTHER DAY, ANOTHER LIE

The testimony of former White House aide John Dean, who will appear in the Senate hearings on Watergate on June 25, could be a potential powder-keg. Dean has already revealed that he discussed the Watergate cover-up with Nixon "about thirty-five or forty times." He claimed that Nixon asked him how much it would cost to bribe the Watergate defendants into silence.

Dean further charged that the Administration exerted "improper" influence on Judge Richey, who was presiding over the \$US6.4 million suit brought against CREEP (the Committee to Re-Elect the President) by the Democrats over the bugging of Watergate. Dean claimed that as a result of this pressure Richey delayed hearing some particularly damaging submissions on the bugging until after the presidential elections on November 7.

Another allegation made by Dean was that Nixon illegally obtained a three hundred thousand dollar donation from the dairying industry in 1971 in return for an increase in subsidies.

Dean also charged that the Nixon Administration organised several attacks on anti-war and radical groups.

Another revelation which gives this last charge substance is the disclosure by the New York Daily News that former FBI

director Hoover actually supported an Administration scheme to spy on various radical organisations. The Daily News revealed that Hoover only opposed this scheme because Nixon refused to put his authorisation for it in writing. Hoover just didn't want to be made anybody's scapegoat. A lot of White House officials — or rather ex-officials — must be wishing now that they had Hoover's foresight!

We have stressed in our coverage of Watergate that the basic issue is not the "constitutional violations" of this or that politician, but the nature of the capitalist system as a whole, as it has been revealed by the Watergate affair.

The central issue that has been thrown up by Watergate is not simply the bugging of the Democratic Party headquarters, but rather the concerted campaign of lies, sabotage, and intimidation waged by the American ruling class against the mass protest movements, the anti-war, women's liberation, black and labor movements, which are challenging the basis of capitalism.

THE GAINESVILLE EIGHT

On July 14 last year, eight leaders of the Vietnam Veterans Against the War were indicted on a charge of conspiring to violently disrupt the Republican convention. The charges are based mainly on information supplied by an FBI informer William Lemmer who, as we noted in the last issue of DIRECT ACTION, had admitted that most of the information he gave the FBI was fabricated in order to increase his payment.

There is no doubt that the indictment is an attempt by the Administration to divert attention from Watergate. Indeed the May 24 issue of the Washington Post noted that there was something of a discrepancy between the charges laid against the VVAW and its actions over the last year when it actually strove to prevent terrorist measures being adopted.

Far from diverting attention from the Watergate affair, the indictment of the Gainesville Eight will only serve to strengthen the growing suspicion that



Seven of Gainesville Defendants with attorneys

Watergate is symptomatic of the Nixon Administration's attempts to squash dissent. Watergate James McCord has revealed in his testimony before the Senate committee that he received regular reports on the VVAW from FBI agents.

In order to make this connection, the VVAW has subpoenaed former White House officials Mitchell, Haldean and Erlichman to give evidence at the trial.

MAYOR DALEY SPIES ON CHICAGO BLACK PANTHERS

As we have pointed out in previous issues of DIRECT ACTION, bugging, intimidation and repressive measures in general are not the exclusive property of the Republicans. The record of the Democrats, in whose party Mayor Daley of Chicago is a key figure, in this respect is no less unblemished than the Republicans.

The Chicago Sun-Times has revealed that Daley had conducted a spy operation against radical organisations, particularly the militant Black Panther Party. This new exposition is typical of the Watergate-type methods which the capitalist class uses to maintain its rule.

According to the Sun-Times, this operation was supervised by Joseph Power, the chief judge of the Cook County Criminal Court, who regularly reported his "findings" to Daley.

One of Power's direct subordinates was John J. Clarke, a probation officer whose real job was to spy on the Black Panthers. In 1970 Power appointed Clarke as a "staff investigator" in the grand jury hearings on the murders of Black Panther leaders Fred Hampton and Mark Clark. Hampton and Clark were shot in a police raid on December 4, 1969. The grand jury revealed that contrary to the claims of the police that they were "attacked" by the Panthers, only one of the ninety-nine bullets found at the site of the shootings had come from a Panther gun.

Further, the investigations revealed that in August 1969 the Justice Department had set up a special task force to spy on and intimidate the Black Panthers.

With evidence pointing to the guilt of the organiser of the police raid, former Cook County State's attorney Hanrahan, Clark attempted to sabotage the grand jury. He introduced two witnesses who falsely claimed that Panther members had shot at all this was that the prosecutor had Clarke thrown out of the hearings for attempting to "sabotage the investigation."

Hanrahan and thirteen cops were indicted as a result of the grand jury findings. Judge Power refused to accept the case and tried unsuccessfully to have the charges dropped. The trial itself turned out to be a whitewash and Hanrahan and the police were acquitted on October 25, 1972.

A feature of even the most informative coverage of Watergate in the bourgeois press has been its attempt to convey the impression that Watergate is simply an aberration, and not indicative of the system as a whole. These new revelations provide yet more proof that Watergate-style espionage against the anti-war, women's liberation, black and labor movements is not limited to the Nixon Administration, but is part and parcel of the whole capitalist system which places profit above human needs.

Such revelations are placing the American ruling class in the following dilemma; whether or not to impeach Nixon. Even a month ago this prospect was unthinkable; the damage of an impeachment trial was thought to be too great. But the increasing revelations of Watergate render this alternative to be less unacceptable, and debate is now proceeding on whether impeaching Nixon might do less damage. This dilemma shows the extent of the damage done by Watergate to US imperialism.

Argentina: The Struggle Continues

BY MIKE JONES

The following article is based on reports from the Argentine revolutionary socialist weekly Avanzada Socialista.

The release of 1000 political prisoners since the inauguration of President Hector Campora on May 25 (see DA 42) has not stopped the mass mobilisations demanding an end to the political oppression of workers that has characterised Argentine society for the last decade. Campora's amnesty decree, later ratified as law by the new Parliament, was entirely in response to mass pressure from below, both inside and outside the ranks of the ruling Justicialist Party.

What remains to be done by Campora, and what is currently the central issue of the massive student and worker demonstrations, is the reinstatement of the thousands of workers laid off for political reasons by the ousted military regime.

An example of the workers' determination to go all the way in ending the political oppression of the old regime occurred on June 1 in the provincial city of San Nicolas. Members of various political groups including the Juventud Peronista (JP — Peronist Youth), Partido Comunista (Communist Party) and the Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores (PST — Socialist Workers Party) together with laid-off members of the Somisa (a large metal-workers' union) demonstrated outside the municipal building demanding the reinstatement of 500 workers. The group, calling itself the Movimiento 2 de Marzo (March 2 Movement) was opposed not only by the factory owners but also by the union bureaucrats who claimed the bosses had acted correctly in laying off the workers.

The lesson of the San Nicolas confrontation is that the Peronist-controlled union bureaucracy is not prepared to risk a confrontation with the Argentine ruling class that might lead to a withdrawal of bourgeois support for the new government. The fact that they were willing to release known guerrilla leaders and activists from prison while maintaining a firm stand against the reinstatement of rank-and-file worker militants reflects the relative importance with which the ruling class views the two groups.

The conflict between rank-and-file militancy and bureaucratic reaction is reflected within the Peronist movement itself, especially in the youth of the party. The majority of the students who marched on Villa Devoto prison on May 25 were members of the Peronist Youth, and Peronist workers were prominent in the San Nicolas confrontation.

The Peronist Youth's left-wing stance had not prevented it from following a sectarian line on participation with other political tendencies. Avanzada Socialista, weekly organ of the PST, reported in its May 30 — June 6 edition:

"For months, the Peronist Youth has repeatedly refused to take part in united actions with different left currents to obtain the release of the prisoners. It proceeded with the same sectarianism in the march on Villa Devoto; it refused to organise it in a united manner, to fix a time and place, obliging those who wished to participate to assemble first at the Plaza de Mayo and submit to the organisation and programme of the Peronist Youth!"

Elsewhere in the same issue, reporting on a demonstration held on May 26 in which the Juventud Socialista de Avanzada (JSA — Vanguard Socialist Youth, the PST's youth group) participated, Avanzada Socialista stated, "The JSA was the only group which in its banners, slogans and leaflets posed two questions of fundamental importance: liberty for the soldiers imprisoned under Law 17,401 (the law against 'subversive' activities)... The other problem is the demand that the Government of Dr Campora declare an amnestia of the lay-offs and expulsions suffered by the thousands of worker activists who are carrying on, in factories and in the streets, the struggle against the dictatorship."

"Why can't there be a single mobilisation of all tendencies?"

"In the days before the 26th the JSA continuously attempted to arrive at an agreement with the Peronist Youth and other groups in order to effect a united mobilisation for the freedom of the prisoners and against imperialism."

"Lamentably, we could not concretise this common action: the sectarianism demonstrated by the JUP served no purpose..."

The conflict between the bureaucracy and the rank and file expressed in the current mobilisations is the workers' answer to the "conciliatory" politics of the Peronists. Some people have compared Campora's call for "sacrifice" (on the part of the workers) with the sacrifices made by the Cuban working class after the revolution. However, as Avanzada Socialista points out, "But while we are not doing here the same as in Cuba, nationalising all the giant enterprises, foreign and Argentine, refusing to pay the external debt, expropriating the latifundias (large estates) of the oligarchy in order to carry out agrarian reform, every sacrifice will be useless. It will only serve to fill the purses of the giant octopuses outside and inside the country."



Buenos Aires, May 25

"In Cuba, first they made the socialist revolution. They liquidated imperialism, the oligarchy and the national ruling class and the army of the exploiters was replaced by popular militias. With these guarantees came, afterwards, the sacrifices."

"Here in Argentina we have broken with the military dictatorship. But the most important task is still before us: to make the Revolution."

US Farmworkers Fight for Union

BY PHIL JEANS

Since mid-April, farm workers on grape farms in the Coachella Valley, California, have been waging a struggle for the existence of their union, the United Farm Workers Union (UFWU). The farm workers are mainly Chicanos (Mexican Americans) and Mexicans.

After a five-year fight, involving international boycotts of grapes, the growers signed a three year contract with the UFWU in April 1970 granting much improved conditions of work and the abolition of the exploitative and discriminatory labor-contractor scheme.

(Contractors recruit workers and then contract to harvest a crop for a particular grower. To get maximum production the labor contractor takes on only the fastest and most able-bodied workers, discriminating against all others.)

When the contract with the growers expired this April, the growers, in collusion with the Teamsters Union officialdom, launched a campaign to smash the UFWU. The UFWU responded with a strike.

Since that time the UFWU has built a concerted campaign to fight back. Many unions have expressed support as have many teamster locals. The unions

have joined together to organise pickets of US stores selling scab grapes and to collect material aid such as food and money for the strikers.

George Meany, president of the AFL-CIO (American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organisations — the US equivalent of the ACTU), opposed the teamsters (whose officials are also implicated in the Watergate events and an underworld scheme to siphon off millions of dollars from the union's pension funds) and the AFL-CIO has given the UFWU \$1.6 million.

The contribution from the AFL-CIO has allowed strikers to receive strike pay of

\$90 a week, thus allowing a much wider and effective strike. The teamsters have responded with recruiting scab labor and paying 125 goons about \$60 a day to protect those scabbing on the strikers. One UFWU organiser has been assaulted by the teamster goons and hundreds of strikers have been arrested on trumped-up charges.

The determination of the strikers was made clear when at a mass meeting in support of the strike 2000 workers and their supporters raised the chant, "Pasas si, uvas no!" (Raisins yes, grapes no!) This will require the workers staying out for at least the five weeks of the harvest.

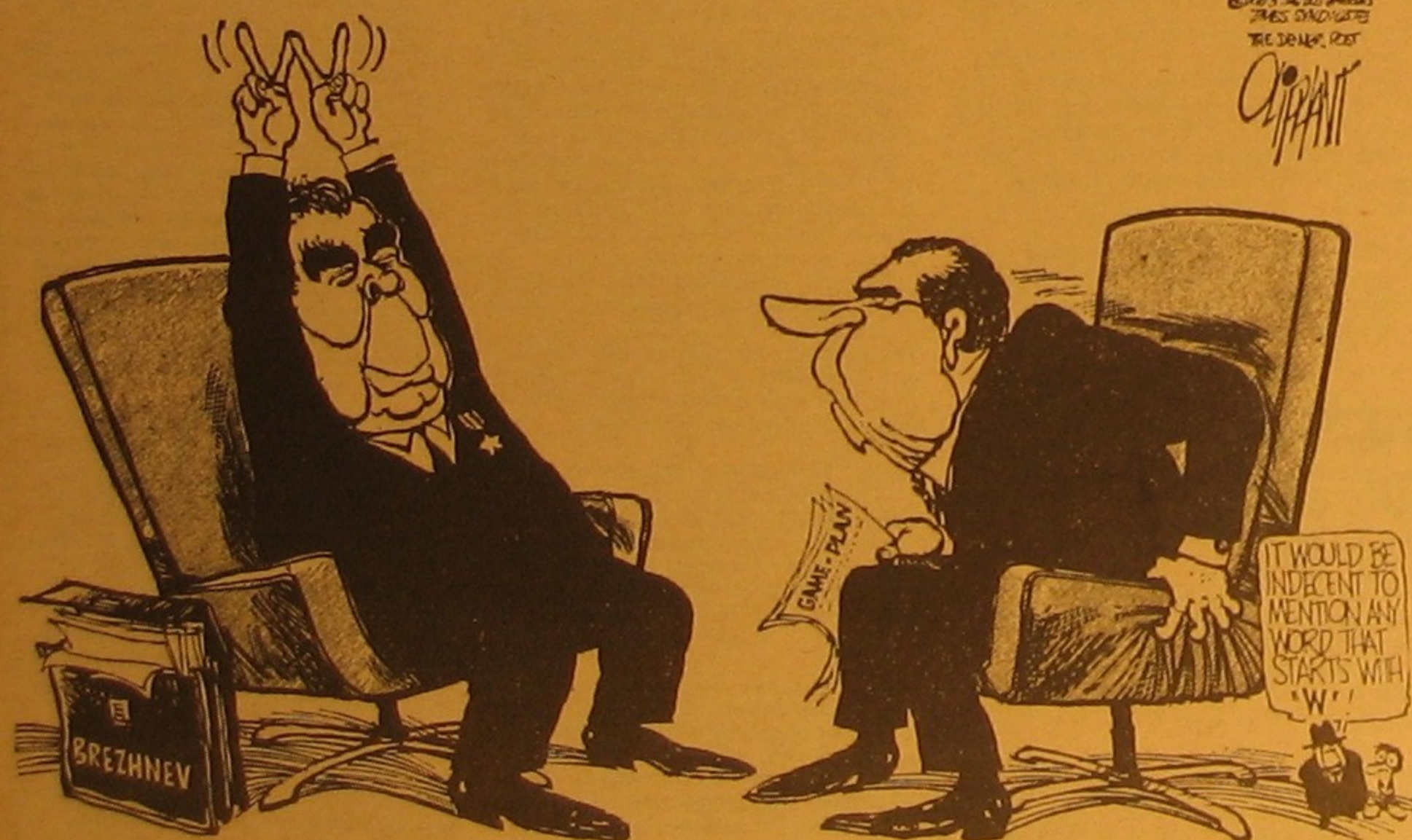
On the other hand, the growers are determined to defeat the strikers by any means, including physical violence. Statements like, "there are going to be some skulls cracked!" make their intentions clear.

The UFWU has organised a wide periphery of support, as well as a sound financial base in their struggle against the growers and the union bureaucracy.

There have been reports that grape juice and other products produced by scab labor are being exported to Australia. This attempt to by-pass the boycott on scab-labor products in the US should not be allowed to succeed. The boycott must be extended to Australia.



Rally of 2000 Coachella Valley farmworkers



"You promised you wouldn't mention that!"

Sadat's "Internal War" on Students, Workers

BY JON ROTHSCHILD

Citizens of Cairo, denied a free press, the right to organise political groups, and the right to hold meetings freely, frequently express their political attitudes through nikaat, humorous anecdotes, often at the expense of political officials. One of the most popular of the nikaat currently making the rounds was described by correspondent Said Khayatt in the May 28 - June 10 issue of the fortnightly *Afrique-Asie*.

It seems that President Anwar Al-Sadat is throwing a party at his villa at Gizeh. Naturally, attendance is closely guarded only and the entrance is closely guarded by soldiers. Along comes Abdel Hallim Hafez, Egypt's most famous male singer. He has forgotten his invitation. "Prove to me who you are," demands the guard. Hafez sings a few bars. "All right," says the guard, "you're Hafez, go on in." A few minutes later comes the famous dancer Nagwa Fouad, who has also forgotten her entry card. Challenged, she dances a few steps. The guard, satisfied as to her identity, lets her pass. Then along comes Sadat himself, who, unaccountably, has also mislaid his invitation. He is stopped by the soldiers on duty. Infuriated, Sadat declares that he is the President. "What can you do to prove to me who you are?" the soldier asks. Sadat, a bit confused, shrugs. "Nothing," he admits. "All right," replies the guard, "you're Sadat, go on in."

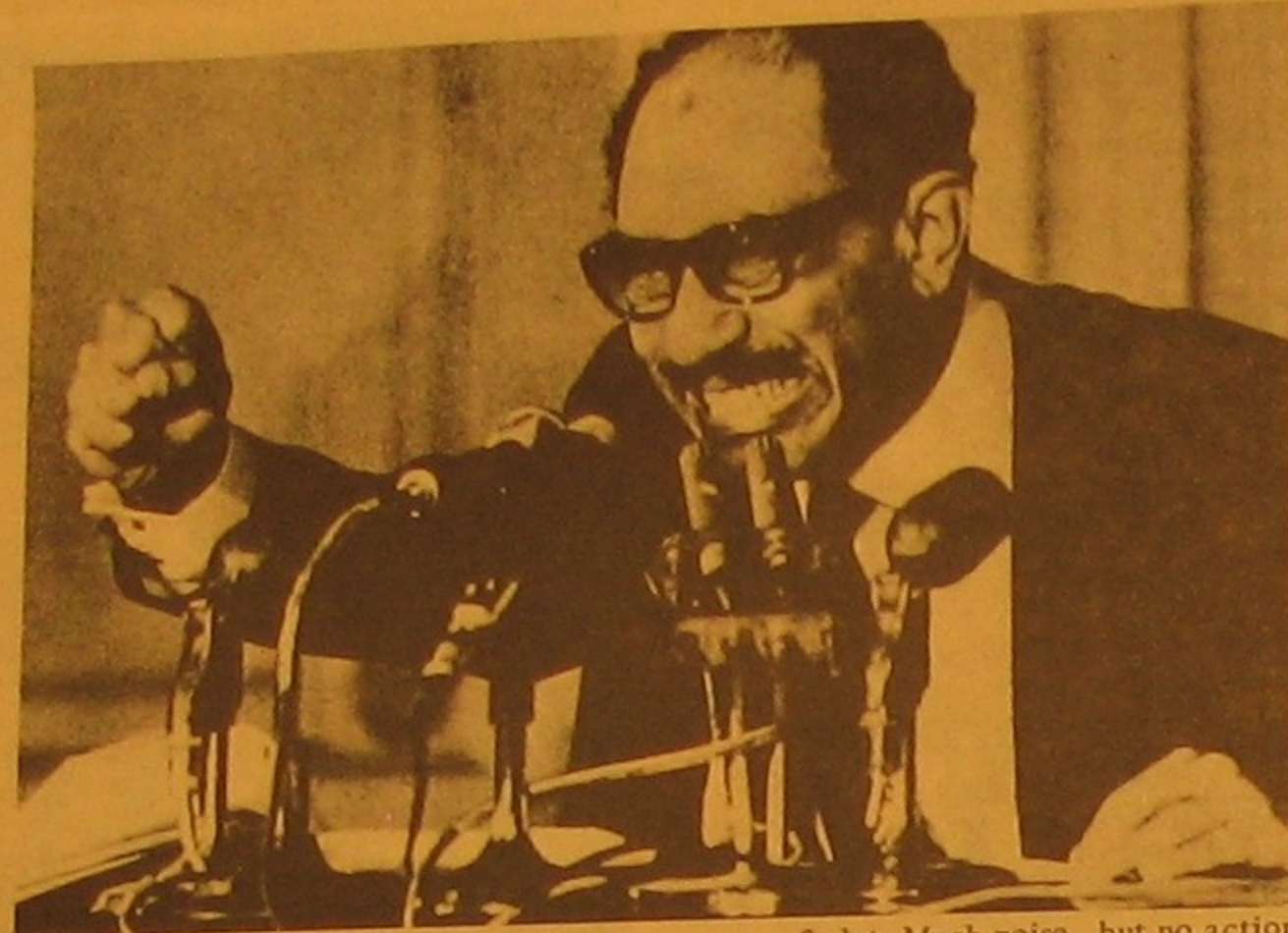
A better description of the regime would be hard to find. Late last March, when Sadat proclaimed himself Premier, named himself military governor-general and declared the opening of "the stage of total confrontation", he said he would give himself two months to break Egypt out of the internal and external impasse it found itself in. Sadat's unfulfilled promises, as Khayatt pointed out, have become part of Egyptian folklore. So there was no major outbreak of dissatisfaction when yet another of the President's self-imposed deadlines quietly expired.

But the impasse is real and its effects are no less pressing. The domestic situation has continued to deteriorate; there is still no prospect of freeing the Sinai peninsula from Zionist occupation. Having appropriated all power to himself, Sadat stands deprived of potential scapegoats. He is therefore under unusual pressure to accomplish something. Unable to do so, he has turned toward a combination of diplomatic bluster and intensified repression, the latter reaching such a pitch that some student militants in Egypt have begun referring to Sadat's "internal war."

THE INTERNAL CRISIS...

A measure of the Sadat regime's precarious position has been the durability of the student movement. Last December and January, major confrontations between the students and the Government resulted in a wave of arrests of student activists and some of their supporters in the trade unions and in cultural and journalistic sectors.

The student upsurge was initially not as broad as the one that took place about



Sadat: Much noise, but no action

a year earlier, in January 1972. But it was clearly deeper and has engendered a more profound political radicalisation.

Sadat broke the mobilisation with arrests, but the movement continued to make its presence felt throughout February and March, even producing a clandestine daily newspaper. The students put forward a broad, if somewhat imprecise, programme demanding real mobilisation of the population against Zionist aggression, abolition of one-party rule, institution of free elections, and elimination of the privileges of the immobile bureaucracy.

But more than that, they advanced demands in support of the trade-union movement, especially in support of the workers in Helwan, an industrial area that has been in the forefront of action against the regime on the economic front. They appealed to the workers to "integrate the trade-union struggle into the political struggle."

Two factors seem to have prompted Sadat's turn to extended repression. The student movement did not sink back into inactivity, as it had after the January 1972 upsurge. And the economic situation has created a crisis situation that increases the possibility that the workers, who have been passively sympathetic to the students, will take to action themselves.

In his *Afrique-Asie* report, Khayatt described the Egyptian economic situation as "catastrophic". It does not seem to be an exaggeration. An Associated Press dispatch printed in the April 7 *Christian Science Monitor* reported that the price of meat has risen 25 per cent during the past year. It is illegal to buy meat three days of the week. Milk has gone up 50 per cent and fish 100 per cent in the past year. The price of most vegetables has doubled.

According to official statistics, the general cost of living rose by more than 12 per cent in 1972. For the previous four years it had averaged 5 per cent a

release them within two weeks of their arrest.

The arrests are said to be continuing. Students are seized in "relatively small groups." In this way, Sadat has avoided triggering a broad militant response of the type that erupted last December when he made the mistake of arresting a large number of students at once. The Government has also instituted the practice of torture, an attempt to force the prisoners to "confess" to having violated the "national unity law," the catch-all repressive legislation under which most of the arrests are made. Student militant Nabil Subhy, Al-Hurriah reported, has been transferred from prison to a hospital for nervous disorders, where he will undergo "electric shock therapy." Earlier, Subhy had been tortured; according to the report, his fingernails were torn out in an effort to get him to confess.

Many of the prisoners are women. Most of these are held in the Qantara Prison in Cairo and have received the same torture treatment as the male prisoners.

Two of the best-known Qantara inmates are Safinez Kazim and Siham Tewfiq. (Kazim's husband is the poet Ahmed Fouad Nagm, a supporter of the present movement who has also been imprisoned.) When the other prisoners protested the brutal treatment Kazim and Tewfiq were being subjected to (beatings, etc.), the prison administration intensified the regimen, eliminating exercise time, stopping visitation rights, and cutting down food supplies.

Al-Hurriah's report also confirmed a report, which had appeared in the April 19 issue of the Paris daily *Le Monde* but had been denied by the regime, that the old concentration camp at the Kharga Oasis in Upper Egypt that had served as home for 3,000 Communist Party members from 1959-1964 has been reopened. Money for operating the camp has been included in the Government's budget.

Al-Hurriah further reported that forty-six students are scheduled to be tried soon. The charge is that they "opposed the socialist order" of the Sadat regime! The May 23 issue of *Le Monde* reported that fifty-three prisoners are scheduled to stand trial before the State Security Court on charges that they engaged in subversive activities. There is no indication whether the groups overlap.

But the "internal war" is not limited to arrests and torture. A more broad-ranging repression is going on as well. Journalists, whom Sadat has described as the second "subversive focus" after the students, have been subjected to a sweeping purge. Khayatt reported in *Afrique-Asie* that many reporters have been fired, charged with being "counter-revolutionaries." Most of them have not been told which specific views of theirs qualify for that designation. Attempts to get clarification on this from the state prosecutor have been unsuccessful.

Cultural life in Egypt has also felt the sting of the internal war. The majority of plays produced this year were either shut down or censored, Khayatt reported. And the restrictions are in no way limited to plays about Egypt. Peter Weiss's *Maria-Sade* was closed down after two weeks of performances. The Government explained that the play was suspected of making allusions to the Sadat regime.

Given the virtually total leadership vacuum that afflicts the Egyptian opposition movement, it is possible that Sadat may be able to wage his internal war for some time without meeting determined organised resistance on a mass scale. But it will not be possible for him to do this indefinitely. Contempt and disgust for the regime—expressed so clearly in the Cairene nikaat—is growing at least as fast as the repression.

Sadat's last resort in the event of a major confrontation with the student and worker masses is the officer corps, which stands prepared to extend the current repression to direct military rule. There is one problem. "The officers are a soldier of us than they are of Israel," a soldier told Khayatt. "They don't even dare give us arms, because they're afraid we'll turn them against them." In large part, the outcome of the present internal war may well depend on whether the officers' fears prove to be justified.

Brezhnev Wants 'Stability' in W. Germany

BY CHRIS GRAHAM

In his report on the visit of top Soviet Union bureaucrat Brezhnev to West Germany last May, *New Times*, an English language Soviet weekly, commented, "The day of Mars, the god of war, is over. He is being superseded by other gods, notably Mercury, the god of trade."

Mercury, in the person of Leonid Brezhnev, arrived in Bonn on May 18 for a four day session of talks with Chancellor Brandt. On May 19, three agreements were signed. Chief of these was a ten-year economic co-operation agreement providing for such things as establishment of industrial complexes, modernisation and expansion of production of raw materials, and exchanges of patents, licenses and technical information.

Brezhnev and Brandt also signed a "cultural co-operation" pact, and an "air travel protocol", allowing West German planes bound for the Far East to fly over Soviet territory.

But these agreements do not tell the full story of relations between the Soviet bureaucracy and German imperialism. In fact the two agreements had already been initiated two weeks before Brezhnev's visit. The real significance of the visit lies in the fact that the Soviet bureaucracy is willing to add further to its history of collaboration with imperialism by offering to help alleviate imperialism's economic problems, in return for concessions to the Soviet bureaucracy.

Brezhnev clearly indicated this in a specifically televised address to the West German people:

"The quarter century of the cold war is now giving way to relations of peace, mutual respect and co-operation between the states of the East and of the West..."

"...Apart from the expansion of trade, there is an opportunity for consolidating deals (!) on a long term scale (!)... and aimed at carrying out important joint projects."

"...This means specifically an opportunity for more rational organisation of production and nationally guaranteed employment (!) for the workers of your country."

Brezhnev's actions backed up his words. On the evening of May 19, he held a meeting with the top brass of German



Brandt and Brezhnev reviewing West German honor guard

imperialism, including such monopoly capitalists as Ernst Mommesen, head of the notorious Krupp operations, Walter Scheel, the West German Foreign Minister, and Hans Friedrichs, the Minister for Economic Affairs, were also present. At the meeting Brezhnev revealed his perspectives for "peaceful co-existence" deferring any perspective for socialist revolution in Western Europe.

The agreement signed that morning, Brezhnev said, was only the beginning.

He said he hoped to be able to work in co-operation with the West German bourgeoisie for "thirty, forty, or fifty years!"

This remark displayed a confidence in the future of capitalism that even the bourgeoisie did not share. But the thrust of Brezhnev's remark was political rather than economic. It was designed to reassure the bourgeoisie that the USSR would not try to extend the social system prevailing in the German Democratic Republic (East Germany) to West



US troops training in West Germany. Brezhnev would rather see Nato continue than face "chaotic situation" in Europe.

Germany. Brezhnev was also trying to undermine West German parliamentary opposition to the East-West detente.

Brezhnev's reassurances come at a time when the bourgeoisie can well afford to make use of them. Indeed, since the onset of the recession, the imperialists have looked to trade with the workers' states as a panacea. West Germany is already the Soviet Union's largest capitalist partner. According to the May 21 *Der Spiegel*, West German exports to the USSR totalled 2/3 thousand million Deutsche-marks; imports from the USSR at 1.4 thousand million Deutsche-Marks.

Impressive as these figures are, they amount to but a tiny fraction of the trade of either country. Trade with the Soviet Union accounts for only 1.3 per cent of West Germany's total trade. Conversely, trade with West Germany accounts for only three per cent of the Soviet Union's foreign trade. West German capitalists are particularly concerned that United States trade with the Soviet Union is rapidly increasing. It was the prospect of turning that situation around that motivated the West German bourgeoisie to parley with Brezhnev.

West German Chancellor Brandt had additional motives for inviting Brezhnev. The detente with the Soviet Union has succeeded in dividing the Christian Democratic opposition party. The head of the Christian Democrats, Barzel, was forced to resign when a caucus meeting voted against his policy of voting against the treaty with Brezhnev, but supporting another proposal that East and West Germany apply for separate membership of the United Nations. The caucus meeting voted against supporting either proposal.

As well as silencing his critics on the right, Brandt utilised Brezhnev's visit to counter-act his socialist critics both within the Social Democratic Party and on the far left. The youth organisation of the Social Democratic Party, the Jusos, have voiced telling criticisms of Brandt's reformist policies, which Brandt hopes will be offset by his parley with Brezhnev.

In an effort to exploit the Sino-Soviet split, Brandt has moved against the pro-Peking *Kommunistische Partei Deutschlands* (KPD - Communist Party of Germany). On May 14 police raided the KPD offices, alleging that they planned to "disrupt" Brezhnev's visit. In reality the raids signal a new wave of repression against the German left. Realising this, the *Gruppe Internationale Marxisten* (International Marxist Group - German section of the Fourth International) called for the setting up of a united-front defence campaign to counter the repression. That Brezhnev was silent on this attack on the left is not the least indication of the nature of his visit.

Perhaps Brezhnev was too preoccupied with the current purges in his own Politburo to take notice. In order to assure himself of the fullest possible backing for his detente with imperialism, Brezhnev recently purged (the official Soviet phrase is "relieved of duty") leading opponents of both his detente and his domestic policies, Pyotr Schlest and Gennady Voronov, from the Politburo. They have been replaced with firm supporters of the "Brezhnev line". Most important of these are Foreign Minister Gromyko and Defence Minister Andrei Grechko, who are expected to play leading roles in the detente with imperialism.

Brezhnev's visit to West Germany marks a new low in the shameful history of Stalinist "peaceful coexistence". This was most fully expressed by Brandt in a televised interview just after Brezhnev left. Brandt remarked that it was his view that Brezhnev recognised Nato and the Common Market as "realities". "The Kremlin", Brandt said, "has come to the conviction that for the moment it is more reasonable to begin with existing alliances rather than see them replaced by a chaotic situation."

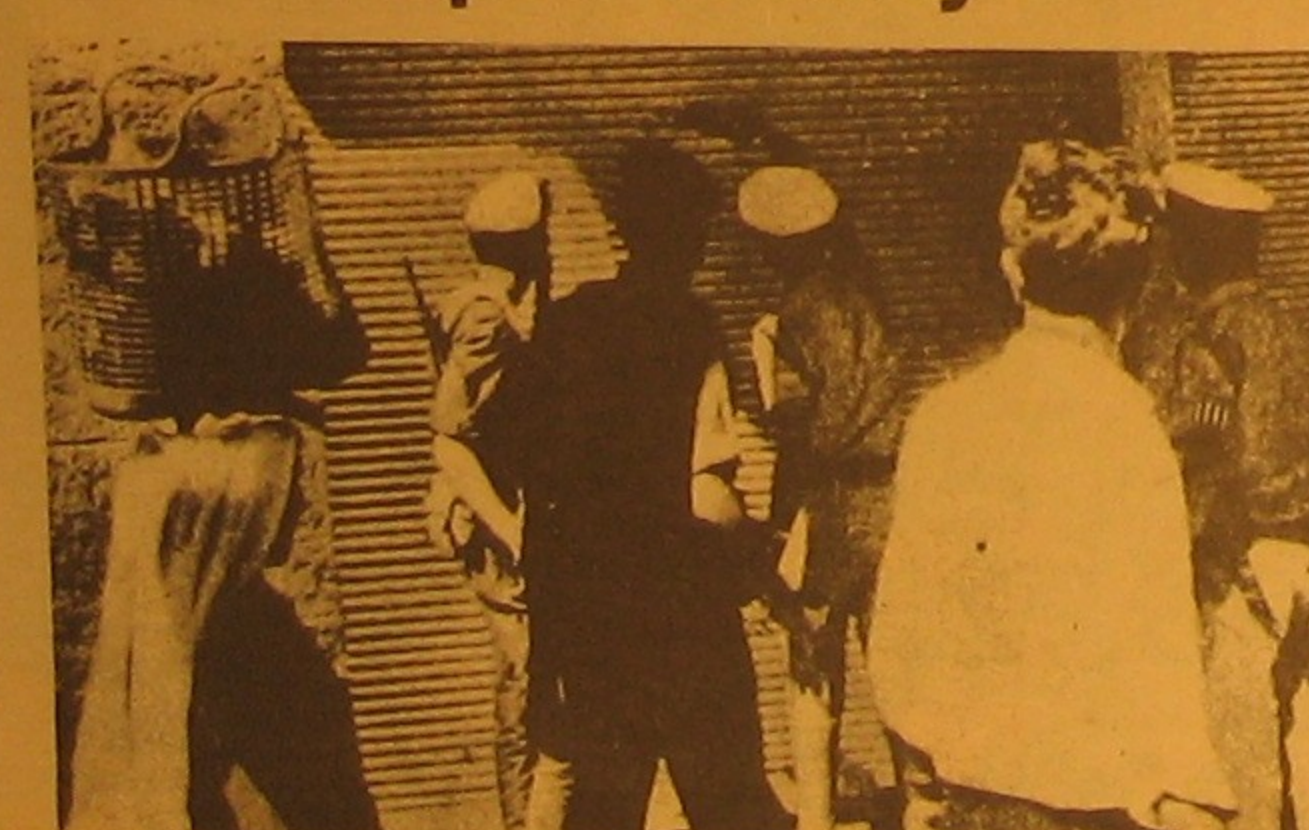
The whole conduct of Brezhnev's visit to West Germany, as well as the history of the bureaucracy which he represents, bears out that the "chaotic situation" to which Brandt referred - socialist revolution - is as much anathema to the Stalinist bureaucracy as it is to imperialism.

Palestinians Protest in Occupied Territory

In the first organised general protest in more than four years, Arab shopkeepers in East Jerusalem staged a general strike on June 5. The date marked the sixth anniversary of the six-day war in which Israel occupied the West Bank of the Jordan River.

"Israeli soldiers with buckets of black paint marked the front of about 20 stores with an X in a circle - a symbol that in past years meant the shops would be closed and their goods confiscated. The purpose today seemed to be to intimidate the shopkeepers," reported Terence Smith in the June 6 *New York Times*.

Smith also reported that ten shopkeepers who refused to reopen were arrested, but that no charges were lodged against them. Other protests included the raising of Palestinian flags and the painting of slogans. Actions were reported in a number of areas on the West Bank, including Ramallah.



Israeli soldiers marking store of Palestinian who participated in protest strike

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GAY LIBERATION

A TALK BY JEFF HAYLER

The following are major excerpts from a talk given by Jeff Hayler, gay activist and newly elected chairman of Macquarie University Students' Council, to a recent DIRECT ACTION forum, in Sydney attended by some 60 people

This talk will fall basically into three sections: the origins and forms of oppression, which will probably be quite familiar to those gays in the audience and to many others, a section on the gay liberation movement in Sydney and how I see it developing at the present time and finally the attitudes that I think the

traced back to the origins of the family. The family very readily took over from religion the role of chief oppressor. Indeed the family has become an integral part of the oppression in that we are all, presently, raised within this oppressive structure. The sacrosanct nuclear family is continually held up as the great



Jeff Hayler speaking at Macquarie University

Socialist Youth Alliance, the Socialist Workers League and socialists in general should have to gays and the gay liberation movement.

Contrary to the beliefs of many people, I don't trace the origins of homosexual oppression right back to the beginnings of the nuclear family and patriarchal society. I trace actual oppression of homosexuality only to the onset of Judeo-Christian ethics. With the rise of Christianity came the concept that sex is for procreation only, and since homosexual sex is for pleasure only it was therefore animalistic, it was uncivilised, it was downright unnatural.

Certainly some of the types of oppression that were applied to homosexuals can be traced back to patriarchal society and the virtues thereof.

The virtue of masculinity and its equation with superiority was a form of oppression originally directed at women but it was later directed at homosexuals as well. (A direct result of this is the bitch-butche role playing — an attempt to conform to the model of the nuclear patriarchal family).

So to this extent the oppression can be

goal for us all. It's terribly oppressive to be constantly confronted with this as the "way of life", the ideal situation. You grow up and get married and have kids and live happily ever after.

The pressures to conform as you grow wherein boys are given "boys' toys" to play with and are encouraged to go out and climb trees and muck around like that and girls are encouraged to play with dolls and do housework and imitate mother in a nice subordinate role. Clothing also emphasises and enforces these roles. When you grow up you're pushed into boy-girl relationships, again with the constant goal of forming another nuclear family.

Parents in this role are an extremely oppressive force. You just hide things from them for a while but eventually it gets to the stage where it just doesn't matter any more but you can get a terrible guilt complex from it all. The Church of course still plays a major role. Christianity and the idea that homosexuality is sinful or bad, unnatural, terrible, disgusting, disgraceful, shameful, again constantly thrust guilt complexes upon you. School reinforces the type of "normal" morality, the "normal" discipli-

plined. Course selection is another means of identifying sex role. Girls are pushed into courses like needlework and domestic science and boys go into sports and craft. Such constant emphasis on sex-roles are designed to fit you into a capitalist society later on. Sex education is another area in which the heterosexual family stereotype is reinforced and idealised. The content of books, of actual subject matter, excludes the contributions of homosexuals in many cases.

Words also play a very important part in the oppression of homosexuals, especially the connotations of certain words such as fairy, pansy, poofster, queen, dyke, lesbian, butch, deviant fag, faggot and misleading phrases like "scream like buggery" (which I can testify is quite untrue — buggery can be extremely enjoyable). It's a general attack on people who don't live up to the ideology of male superiority. Often it's subtle. Words are used like "aberration", "deviation" when references are made to homosexuality. The media uses these words to a great extent but it also has another role in defending the capitalist system in its exploitation of humans, in its exploitation of sex in advertising and reinforcing sexual stereotypes and the

very depressing. And then there's the misconceptions that employers have about homosexuals as unstable, as unreliable, as security risks. Teachers in NSW aren't allowed to be homosexuals. For example, if you admit your homosexuality you're liable to lose your teachers' college scholarship.

There do occur, however, occupational "ghettos" where sex-roles are not so important and role playing isn't as necessary such as acting, designing, fashion. Here there isn't so much emphasis on role playing and gays don't have to suppress themselves to survive and therefore they tend to enter these areas of work.

The law, of course, is an institutional oppressor. Sodomy is outlawed. Indeed in the law statutes it's called the "abominable crime of buggery and bestiality". They refer to both in the same breath and it's the only time when a qualitative judgement is made over a crime, the only time when an adjective is added to the word "crime", the "abominable crime" of buggery. Police are the law's instruments of enforcement. There are quite a number of homosexuals in the police force and some of them are quite



New York Christopher Street Liberation Day march, June 27, 1971

activities. Justice can be very capricious, especially if you have a great fear of revelation. This means you have great difficulty in denying charges of blackmail or opening yourself to police investigation if you're facing blackmail.

Psychiatry is possibly the most direct form of oppression for it generally actively sets out to either change or nullify a person's sexuality. It is a direct threat. Homosexuality is treated as a disease to be cured or at best an unfortunate affliction to be sympathised with. I reject any sort of idea of aversion therapy because it's inhuman, it's crude, and it attempts to change a person and his or her personality. This usually only achieves an asexual being. But psychiatry tends to avoid the basic issue and indeed many times we all do, and that is where the fault lies, not with the homosexual but with society. I'm not ashamed of my sexuality. Why should I be? Why should I be ashamed of departing from some foreign norm? I don't accept heterosexuality as the norm.

Finally, there's the problem of self-oppression. If you aren't extremely careful, you tend to be overwhelmed by the values and styles of the society and in fact internalise its forms of oppression. For instance, there was a stage in the development of my sexual consciousness not so very long ago, in fact a very short time ago when I had great dislike of transvestites and drag-queens. I thought they were "queers", "unnatural". You wake up to yourself after a while, I suppose. Use of language is another danger area. Paul Foss picked me up on this one. I frequently use the word "it" to refer to a person whom I've picked up on the beat or someone with whom I've had a sexual experience. It's simply a case of saying to yourself, "I'm normal, I just have sex with boys instead of girls."

Paul Foss, in one of his articles, once said, "gay liberation is a radical movement run by homosexuals that a) rejoices in its homosexuality, b) articulates and exposes oppression, and c) reclaims lost cultural and personal expression". That is one perspective of gay liberation, and I don't think Paul sees that as the only perspective. Another one put by Dennis Altman in an article reads: "Unlike the old homophile movements, gay liberation sees with Marx that the liberation of each depends on the liberation of all and it has thus sought to build alliances with other oppressed groups. For the homosexual can only win liberation with the general sexual liberation of all, one that will move far beyond the much vaunted 'permissive society' to a genuine release of our erotic and loving instincts which are held back by the oppression that is necessary for the maintenance of our repressive and inhuman civilisation." Again, that isn't Altman's exhaustive view of gay liberation. Those two illustrate the dual perspectives of gay liberation, that of consciousness-raising, getting homosexuals together, making them aware of their own homosexuality, raising their own consciousness and self-identity, and secondly action "directed more towards straight society".

Nevertheless, there are instances of "poofster-bashing". Today is the anniversary of Duncan's murder in Adelaide. This murder, through drowning, is generally considered to have been the result of a vice-squad bashing. Number plates are taken of cars doing beats, people are stopped and questioned, sometimes taken to police stations and questioned there. It's all very intimidating. There's also the problem of physical violence by "poofster-bashers", and the attitudes that the police take to such

campaigns, I was constantly exhilarated by the fact that I was being freed, the chains were being cut. It's an amazing experience. It was a very moving time and culminated in my writing a very emotional article in National U which was an example of what it meant to me and how important that liberation was.

The act of self-affirmation redirects the guilt and the shame that you have been taught to feel about your sexuality at the oppressors. You redirect that dread, that hate of your own sexual feelings, at the society that inculcates those very feelings in you. This anger, of course, has great revolutionary potential because it is directed at the basic institutions of society which are vital to the continued hegemony of capitalism — bourgeois government, religion, the family, and ultimately capitalism itself.

Gay liberation at present is mainly directed towards educating our own brothers and sisters, increasing their own sexual awareness, rather than action directed at the oppressing forces. It's basically a time of consolidation but I think we must certainly start directing our forces towards the oppressors. Many homosexuals quite enjoy the life of beats, of camp bars and dances and such like, they're only really concerned about their homosexuality when it comes to job security. It can be quite fun moving in a number of different worlds. I move in three worlds myself at the moment: the normal gay world in Sydney, gay bars and beats and such like, Macquarie University where I have more or less total freedom in a square environment, and my job at an RSL club, as a casual steward where I'm totally repressed and as a matter of tactics I don't reveal my sexuality because I have great fears of losing my job. Gays are among the most exploited of all workers. They're subject to being sacked for their very being, their very sexual existence. That's a tremendous threat to have hanging over you.

The closeness of the gay ghetto and the way it's confined gives good opportunity to advertise such things as gay lib dances and you tend to get a very good roll-up. And of course that provides significant potential for propagandising. It's quite easy to get homosexuals together and with the correct strategy, then, it's possible to mobilise gays. This has been done in the US with the Gay Activist Alliance which runs dances and has used them as staging grounds for demonstrations later on in the evening.

Gay liberation in Sydney formulated a list of immediate aims which I consider were certainly not viable as immediate aims. In 1972, a publication set out the immediate demands as: "That all discrimination against gay people, male or female, by the law, by employers and by society at large should end, that all people who feel attraction to a member of their own sex be taught that such feelings are perfectly valid, that sex education in schools stop being exclusively heterosexual, that psychiatry stop treating homosexuality as a sickness thereby giving gay people senseless guilt complexes, that gay people be as legally free to contact other gay people by newspaper ads, on the streets and by any other means that they want as are heterosexuals and that police harassment should cease right now, that employers should not be allowed to discriminate against anyone on account of their sexual prefer-

ences, that the age of consent for gay males be the same as for straights, that gay people be free to hold hands and kiss in public as are heterosexuals." It says later on that, "We do not intend to ask for anything, we intend to stand firm and assert our basic rights."

But this in fact implies that these demands can be achieved under the present system. Under capitalism, I don't think the term "basic rights" has any meaning whatsoever. I don't think there's any such thing as a basic right under capitalism. And so, I think that the limitation of the aims was that it was not recognised that they were beyond achievement in the immediate future and therefore they lacked a sense of revolutionary purpose, did not provide an immediate perspective.

There are some signs, however, of a regrouping of the gay liberation movement in Sydney. The newsletter is going to reappear, and a national newspaper, Radical Homosexual, will hopefully start up in July and this may well provide a national forum for ideological debate within the movement. It may provide a unifying thread for the various liberation movements throughout Australia. Here in Sydney, the campus groups are hopefully going to come back together again. There's been one established at Macquarie of which I'm president. We've actually set up an organisation with 17 financial members and we have some hopes of doing things on campus and, in conjunction with other groups, on a Sydney basis.

Many gays are satisfied, as I said before, with the gay sub-culture, with the gay beats and gay bars. They don't mind as long as they're left alone in the ghetto, so to speak. Gay liberation, I feel, should reject the concept of a homosexual "way of life" for this is a concept fostered by straight society to emphasise the departure of homosexuals from the "norm" of heterosexuality. There should be no distinction between homosexuals and heterosexuals — it should be mere sexuality.

Homosexuals form two groups however. There is the group of homosexuals who recognise their homosexuality and in fact get off with other members of their

own sex, often referred to as "overt homosexuals" and there's the other group that are blithely called "latent homosexuals". It is this latter group of homosexuals which must be reached if there is going to be any more than tolerance by straight society and it is in this particular area that socialists such as the Socialist Workers League and the Socialist Youth Alliance have something to offer gay liberation in that this latter group of people are predominantly working class and may more easily be radicalised by the labor movement. At the same time gay liberation can attempt to radicalise the overt homosexuals.

What attitudes should the Socialist Workers League and the Socialist Youth Alliance adopt on this issue to bring about the radicalisation of all homosexuals? There are three possible courses. They can take no part in the gay struggle. I don't think this is likely in view of the past attitudes that these organisations have adopted to the gay movement. A second course of action is that of supporting the freedom of homosexuals. This is basically a reformist course and perpetuates the myth of the homosexuals as a distinct species that should have rights distinct from heterosexuals. I think that to adopt this line of support just for homosexuals would be rather opportunistic. There is a third course of action, that of supporting homosexuality, within the context of an overall programme of sexual liberation and the free expression of all sexuality.

Sexual oppression and sexual restrictions arose with the development of class oppression and the overthrow of class oppression is an essential pre-requisite to the sexual liberation of which I speak. We must remember that sexual oppression concerns attitudes as well as institutions so that the end of class society will only destroy the institutional nature of the oppression. We'll still have the psychological oppression of years of prejudice and in this respect the SWL and SYA must adopt the policy of supporting homosexuality, of supporting sexuality and in this way raising the consciousness of their members and their audience to the fact that the struggle for freedom of sexuality is a part of the struggle for a socialist society.

SWL and SYA should take an active part in the gay liberation movement as well as providing publicity in support of actions. SWL and SYA should encourage their members, their gay members to take an active role in the gay liberation movement and to attempt to recruit members in the gay liberation movement by demonstrating the inter-relationship of their struggles. In this way gay liberation may formulate a programme of demands which may provide the movement with a real revolutionary orientation.

What demands should we put forward? I think that the demands that we should make at this stage are demands such as the repeal of anti-gay laws and all laws pertaining particularly to oppression of gays. There should be laws enacted to protect gays from exploitation and discrimination, not only protecting them but all oppressed groups. Demands for sexual freedom and for an end to the role-typing which dominates our society and challenge the institutions and ideology of the capitalist system should also be made. Gay liberation is in need of revolutionary leadership and a revolutionary perspective, and I think that the SWL and SYA may well be able to help provide this.



Gay Liberation demonstration outside ABC in Sydney

concept of the sex-object. One of the objects of gay liberation is surely sexual emancipation, thus making people more sexual beings and hence less open to exploitation along these lines.

Employment and the prospects for employment are probably some of the most pressing considerations for homosexuals in the revelation of their identity. There is the fear of dismissal or hostility from fellow workers. From personal experience, when I was working in an insurance company, and I came in looking particularly haggard in the morning, "Did you have a good time with the girl friend last night?", which I found

sympathetic. I don't know any personally, but I have friends who know them and they can be very helpful to gays.

Nevertheless, there are instances of "poofster-bashing". Today is the anniversary of Duncan's murder in Adelaide. This murder, through drowning, is generally considered to have been the result of a vice-squad bashing. Number plates are taken of cars doing beats, people are stopped and questioned, sometimes taken to police stations and questioned there. It's all very intimidating. There's also the problem of physical violence by "poofster-bashers", and the attitudes that the police take to such

DIRECT ACTION FORUMS

Sydney

Friday, July 6, 8.00 pm
"ABORTION — HOW WILL WOMEN WIN THEIR RIGHTS?" Nita Keig, managing editor of DIRECT ACTION, discusses the struggle to win repeal of all abortion laws and the different strategies put forward to achieve this aim.
Friday, July 20, 8.00 pm
"HEALTH SERVICES, THE AMA AND THE LABOR GOVERNMENT". Gordon Adler, a Sydney doctor and a socialist analyses the crisis in health services and the confrontation between the reactionary AMA and the Labor Government.

Melbourne

Thursday, July 12, 8.00 pm
"THE IMPACT OF THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION ON THE AUSTRALIAN LABOR MOVEMENT". Noted labor historian and author Brian McKinlay looks into and analyses some little known facts about the effect of the Russian Revolution on the labor movement in this country.
Thursday, July 26, 8.00 pm
"BEHIND THE WATERGATE SCANDAL". Renfrey Clarke analyses the crisis of capitalist politics in the US and the implications of the Watergate exposure.

Assembly Plant



This interview was recorded with four migrant workers on the picket line outside the main gate of the Ford motor car assembly plant at Broadmeadows, Victoria. The workers, two Lebanese, a Greek and a Yugoslav, had just participated in one of the most militant industrial demonstrations in Melbourne since the Depression.

The demonstration was a completely spontaneous expression of the inhuman production-line conditions suffered by Ford workers and the pitiful wage offer served up to them by the company and the union bureaucracy, and a testament to the neglect and utter bankruptcy of the union leaders involved.

For purposes of brevity, the transcript of this interview has been edited to the extent that individual responses appear below as collective answers.

Ford Strikers Interviewed

DIRECT ACTION: What sort of work do you do inside, and which is your union?

* We are all production-line assistants in the Vehicle Builders Union.

DA: What are your wages?

* Sixty-six dollars for a week's work.

DA: Under what conditions were you working before the strike?

* Conditions vary from plant to plant. (There are three main plants at Broadmeadows: The car assembly and truck assembly plants, plus a separate plastics division). On the car assembly line things have gotten up in the last few months. We have been asked to work much harder lately. It's no wonder that the cars we produce are shithouse — they are made so quickly.

DA: How long have you been out on strike?

* This is our fourth week. During all this time we have had no strike pay. We have little money left to keep going. There is a strike committee, but we have not seen any money from it. Our families are just now beginning to feel the pinch.

We stopped work asking for an extra \$20 a week. As far as we're concerned we will be staying out until we get it.

DA: What sort of offer did the company make for a return to work?

* It wouldn't be enough to buy an extra packet of cigarettes. (Every worker who had emerged from the afternoon shift was greeted with the chant "Have a cigarette!" from the workers on the picket line.)

The five per cent increase which the company offered amounts to nothing. They said they would add the increase on to our bonus, not our full wages. This means that the increase would come to about fifty cents a week.

DA: What is the main nationality working at Ford?

* The whole United Nations is here. There is really no main group. People come from Italy, Greece, Turkey, Lebanon, Yugoslavia, Germany, Malta. There are also Spaniards, Arabs and a few Australians.

DA: Is there any hostility between these groups?

* Look around you today — there's your



were nearly two thousand of us waiting outside by 8.00 am. There were a few police hanging around; but it wasn't until we tried to break down the main gates that the horses were sent in.

Everybody was angered by the cops, so we stopped one of the garbage trucks from the cafeteria and used the rubbish to pelt the cops. By this time most of the windows in the assembly plant, offices, and security officers headquarters had been broken. Things happened very quickly. We didn't see the security headquarters go because we were helping to smash the brick wall... (Under the pressure of the crowd a ten feet high brick wall surrounding the plant gave way and crumbled).

DA: What are your feelings about the way the union leadership has handled this strike?

* As far as the VBU is concerned — That's it. This is the final straw. It is possible to leave the VBU. Some people have been talking about joining the AMWU. We aren't exactly sure of where we can go. There is nothing new in the way the VBU has neglected the assembly-line workers. Something

which the VBU fails to understand is that we are the union. If today has proved anything, it has shown the union that we are determined to take things into our own hands.

DA: The most unusual aspect of the Ford action has been its apparent spontaneity. Who is leading the strike on the factory floor?

* Everyone is a leader. Some of the shop stewards are behind us. However, most have been taken by surprise over this morning's action. The shop stewards thought that most would return to work despite the closeness of the vote at Monday's meeting.

None of them would have dared to have interfered with the action this morning. Even the most popular shop steward was booed from the microphone.

A couple of the Greek shop stewards are OK. But they have had as much difficulty in talking to the assembly line as the company officials and the unions.

DA: Finally, where will you go from here?

* That all depends on a number of things. We are determined to keep going — but without a proper strike fund it will be almost impossible. The most important achievement for us has been to show the unions, the bosses and the rest of the world, that we are not going to put up with this factory any longer.

Strike Fund

Contributions to the Ford's strike fund may be sent c/- VBU Offices, Trades Hall Carlton South, Melbourne.

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DIRECT ACTION is currently running a fund drive to raise \$5000. A supporter has offered to match all donations up to \$2500. The money raised will meet our minimum technical needs — new typesetting and heading equipment. The rest is up to you — our readers and supporters so send in your donation now and double (y)our money!

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