

THE SOCIALIST IMPERATIVE

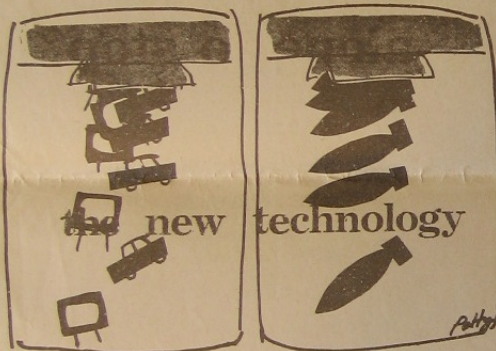
At the very moment when Imperialism is preparing to deepen its exploitation of the underdeveloped world in order to feed the technology of automation, the underdeveloped world is preparing to feed itself. Within this conflict lies the dynamic for revolution.

But most of the countries described as underdeveloped are not underdeveloped at all: rather they suffer from economies which are deformed by landlordism and the production of single-crop exports which are sold at low prices to Britain, Japan and the U.S.

Only revolution can break this chain of exploitation by destroying landlordism and reversing the terms of international trade. Organisations such as 'Freedom from Hunger' are not simply useless; they are positively dangerous since they blind Australians to the basic needs of the poorer nations.

Let us send aid to Asia by all means, but let us ensure that it is aid to groups such as the South Vietnam National Liberation Front.

The case for revolutionary socialism in Vietnam is obvious. The case for revolutionary socialism in Australia is no less compelling.



Socialism is essentially a society in which human needs are uppermost. Compare this to Melbourne today where three or four ton trucks arrive at an accident long before the single ambulance. Every area of our lives is perverted by the demand to make profit.

Television is an excellent example of the complexity with which this process operates. T.V. provides information and culture, but it does this in a way which is both useful and profitable to capitalism.

Firstly, it carries propaganda in the form of news. Secondly, it assists in maintaining consumer demand for planned obsolescence with 'inventions' like colour T.V., larger screens and flashier designs. Thirdly, it provides a means of convincing people that they need the latest brand of 'X' in the larger but emptier packet. Fourthly, it debases culture by vulgarising love into sex and by emphasizing brutality. Finally, by providing packaged culture and pre-digested information, television further restricts the narrow areas of choice and fulfilment remaining open to us. In total, it reduces culture and knowledge to the foul stench of the market.

The extent to which this process has been successful can be seen by some of the methods suggested recently to defeat capitalism. There has developed a 'socialist' trend which is concerned solely with images. For such people the techniques of selling have become the substance of politics. They have adopted far more than parliamentary tactics: they have absorbed petty concerns of the advertising world for gloss. In every way they have rejected the task of building socialism in Australia.

Violent revolution remains a necessary precondition for socialism, not simply because the rulers cannot be defeated in any other way, but because it will only be in the struggle for socialism by revolution that it will be possible to rid ourselves of the collected garbage of our present culture.

- a may day manifesto

Events in France this time last year showed that revolution in advanced capitalism countries remains possible. But what is essential is that the working class adopt a strategy which will exploit such ruptures to the full so that they will result in a transfer of power. Such a strategy must begin now, in times when revolution is not on the immediate agenda.

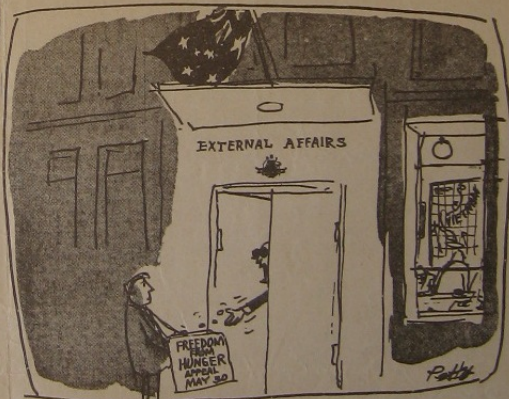
A revolutionary socialist strategy in Australia today adopts policies which point up the reality of imperialism and which establish the practical basis for its overthrow. Three examples will illustrate this.

I. ARBITRATION VERSUS THE SHOP COMMITTEE

The Arbitration system is the greatest obstacle to working-class advance in Australia today. By its very nature it forbids rank-and-file activity. It reinforces the power of officials and suppresses mass participation. It must be replaced by a shop committee system which fights the bosses directly. This would obviously mean an entirely new form of union organisation. From the shop committees would come the basis for the control of factories by workers. This would be a vital step in the direction of socialism.

II CONSCRIPTION FOR WAR AND FOR WORK

The fight against conscription must never be reduced to a fight for conscientious objection to particular wars. The draft must be smashed in its entirety, and the relationship between conscription and capitalism made clear. Conscription is not exceptional in our 'democratic' society. It is the law of capitalist production applied to destruction. In times of relative peace it is useful for taming the spirits of young workers who have not succumbed to the discipline of schools.



"Don't waste it on the ones we're going to shoot."

III. READIN', RIOTIN', 'RITHMETIC.

Students and teachers throughout Australia are not striking to achieve 'more of the same'. Basic to all the protests in the schools and universities is a demand for a new purpose in education, that is, for an end to 'education for industry'. Schools must be run democratically and the content of courses freed from the confines of capitalist thinking.

The task for revolutionaries is to establish organizational and ideological forms which unite those fighting imperialism in the jungles, the factories and the schools.

WORKERS OF THE WORLD UNITE!

THE INTERNATIONALE

ARISE YE WORKERS FROM YOUR SLUMBERS,
ARISE, YE PRISONERS OF WANT,
FOR REASON IN REVOLT NOW THUNDERS,
AND AT LAST ENDS THE AGE OF WANT,
NOW AWAY WITH ALL SUPERSTITIONS,
SERVILE MASSES, ARISE! ARISE!
WE'LL CHANGE HENCEFORTH THE OLD CONDITIONS
AND SOORN THE DUST TO WIN THE PRIZE.

THEN COMRADES, COME RALLY!
AND THE LAST FIGHT LET US FACE,
THE INTERNATIONAL
UNITES THE HUMAN RACE.

SOLIDARITY FOREVER.

WHEN THE UNION'S INSPIRATION THROUGHOUT THE WORKERS' BLOOD HAS RUN
THERE CAN BE NO POWER GREATER ANYWHERE BENEATH THE SUN
YET WHAT FORCE ON EARTH IS WEAKER THAN THE FEEBLE STRENGTH OF ONE?
BUT THE UNION MAKES US STRONG.

SOLIDARITY FOR EVER,
SOLIDARITY FOR EVER,
SOLIDARITY FOR EVER,
FOR THE UNION MAKES US STRONG.

IS THERE AUGHT WE HOLD IN COMMON WITH THE GREEDY PARASITE,
WHO WOULD LASH US INTO SERFDOM AND WOULD CRUSH US WITH HIS MIGHT?
IS THERE ANYTHING LEFT FOR US BUT TO ORGANISE AND FIGHT?
WHILE THE UNION MAKES US STRONG.

ALL THE WORLD THAT'S OWNED BY IDLE DRONES IS OURS AND OURS ALONE,
WE HAVE LAID THE WIDE FOUNDATIONS, BUILT IT SKYWARDS STONE BY STONE,
IT IS OURS, AND NOT TO SLAVE IN, BUT TO MASTER AND TO OWN,
WHILE THE UNION MAKES US STRONG.

THEY HAVE TAKEN UNTOLD MILLIONS THAT THEY NEVER TOILED TO EARN,
BUT WITHOUT OUR BRAIN AND MUSCLE NOT A SINGLE WHEEL CAN TURN,
WE CAN BREAK THEIR HAUGHTY POWER, GAIN OUR FREEDOM WHILE WE LEARN
THAT THE UNION MAKES US STRONG.

IT IS WE WHO PLOINED THE PRAIRIES, BUILT THE CITIES WHERE THEY TRADE,
DUG THE MINES AND BUILT THE WORKSHOPS, ENDLESS MILES OF RAILWAY LAID,
NOW WE STAND OUTCAST AND STARVING MID THE OWNERS WE HAVE MADE,
BUT THE UNION MAKES US STRONG.

IN OUR HANDS IS PLACED A POWER GREATER THAN THEIR HOARDED GOLD,
GREATER THAN THE MIGHT OF ARMIES MAGNIFIED A THOUSAND FOLD;
WE CAN BRING TO BIRTH THE NEW WORLD FROM THE ASHES OF THE OLD,
FOR THE UNION MAKES US STRONG.

BANDIERA ROSSA

AVANTI POPOLO, ALLA RISCOSSA,
BANDIERA ROSSA, BANDIERA ROSSA;
AVANTI POPOLO ALLA RISCOSSA,
BANDIERA ROSSA,
TRIONFERA!

BANDIERA ROSSA TRIONFERA!
BANDIERA ROSSA TRIONFERA!
BANDIERA ROSSA TRIONFERA!
EVIVA SOCIALISME E LIBERTÀ!

WE PEASANTS, ARTISANS AND OTHERS
ENROLLED AMONG THE SONS OF TOLL,
WE'LL CLAIM HENCEFORTH THE EARTH AS BROTHERS,
DRIVE THE INDOLENT FROM THE SOIL,
ON OUR FLESH TOO LONG HAS FED THE RAVEN,
WE'VE BEEN TOO LONG THE VULTURE'S PREY,
BUT NOW FAREWELL THE SPIRIT CRAVEN,
THE DAWN BRINGS IN A BRIGHTER DAY.

NO SAVIOURS FROM ON HIGH DELIVER,
NO TRUST HAVE WE IN PRINCE OR PEER,
OUR OWN RIGHT HANDS THE CHAINS MUST SHIVER -
CHAINS OF HATRED, OF GREED AND FEAR,
ERE THE THIEVES WILL OUT WITH THEIR BOOTY,
AND TO EACH GIVE A HAPPIER LOT,
EACH AT US FORGE MUST DO HIS DUTY
AND STRIKE THE IRON WHILE IT'S HOT.

THE RED FLAG

THE PEOPLE'S FLAG IS DEEPEST RED;
IT SHROUDED OFT OUR MARTYRED DEAD,
AND ERE THEIR LIMBS GREW STIFF AND COLD
THEIR HEART'S BLOOD DYED ITS EV'RY FOLD.

THEN RAISE THE SCARLET STANDARD HIGH,
WITHIN ITS SHADE WE'LL LIVE AND DIE!
THOUGH TOWARDS FLINCH AND TRAITORS SNEER
WE'LL KEEP THE RED FLAG FLYING HERE.

LOOK ROUND, THE FRENCHMAN LOVES ITS BLAZE;
THE STURDY GERMAN CHANTS ITS PRAISE;
IN MOSCOW'S HALLS ITS HYMNS ARE SUNG;
CHICAGO SMELLS THE SURGING THROUGH!

IT WAVED ABOVE OUR INFANT MIGHT
WHEN ALL AHEAD SEEMED DARK AS NIGHT;
IT WITNESSED MANY A DEED AND VOW -
WE MUST NOT CHANGE ITS COLOUR NOW!

IT WELL RECALLS THE TRIUMPHS PAST!
IT GIVES THE HOPE OF PEACE AT LAST,
THE BANNER BRIGHT, THE SYMBOL PLAIN
OF HUMAN RIGHT AND HUMAN GAIN.

IT SUITS TODAY THE WEAK AND BASE,
WHOSE MINDS ARE FIXED ON PElf AND PLACE,
TO CRINGE BEFORE THE RICH MAN'S FROWN,
AND HAUL THE SACRED EMBLEM DOWN.

WITH HEADS UNCOVERED SHEAR WE ALL
TO BEAR IT ONWARD TILL WE FALL!
COME DUNGEON DARK, OR GALLONS GRIM,
THIS SONG SHALL BE OUR PARTING HYMN.

THE THIELMANN COLUMN.

SPANISH HEAVENS SPREAD THEIR BRILLIANT STARLIGHT
HIGH ABOVE OUR TRENCHES IN THE PLAIN;
FROM THE DISTANCE MORNING COMES TO GREET US,
CALLING US TO BATTLE ONCE AGAIN.

FAR OFF IS OUR LAND,
YET READY WE STAND
WE'RE FIGHTING AND WINNING FOR YOU
FREIHEIT!

WE'LL NOT YIELD A FOOT TO FRANCO'S FASCISTS,
EVEN THOUGH THE BULLETS FALL LIKE SLEET,
WITH US STAND THOSE PEERLESS MEN, OUR COMRADES,
AND FOR US THERE CAN BE NO RETREAT.

DIE HEIMAT IST WEIT,
DOCH WIR SIND BEREIT.
WIR KÄMPFEN UND SIEGEN FÜR DICH:
FREIHEIT!

This manifesto has been produced by a group of Revolutionary Socialists who operate from an action centre known as The Bakery at 120 Greville Street, Prahran.

If you are interested in joining this group write to the above address. Or attend one of the discussion evenings held at The Bakery every Monday at 8 p.m.

This discussion for May will centre on:

"FRANCE - A YEAR LATER"

May 4th *New Contradictions in Capitalism?*

May 11th *The Role and Nature of a Revolutionary Party*

May 18th *The Role of Students and Workers*

May 25th *The Opening Perspective in Australia.*

ALL ARE WELCOME TO ATTEND

Donations to cover the cost of this Manifesto can be sent to The Bakery.